

# PHC in Israel



IS YOUR  
SON'S FAITH  
STRONG ENOUGH  
TO **STAND?**

Summer 2016

On May 13th, 2016, Dr. Middleton, the Director of the Strategic Intelligence Program, along with two Patrick Henry College students left the United States for the Middle East. The trip was the first course offered by Patrick Henry College that incorporated a foreign, multi-week trip.

The course addressed the need for increased understanding of the Middle East, focusing on the historical interplay of geography and culture as they pertain to current tensions. By physically travelling to Israel, Jordan, and other Middle East regions, the students (Hailey and Chase) better understood the Israeli geography and culture instead of only studying maps, photos, and satellite images in a classroom.

During their time overseas, they met with agencies and organizations that provided on-site lectures and field work. Hailey and Chase met academic and regional experts from institutions such as Hebrew University, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, and the Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East. They also met current and former officials from the local Israeli governments.

This document is a travel log of every day the group spent in Israel. It is chiefly written by Dr. Middleton, supplemented with quotes and insights from Hailey and Chase.

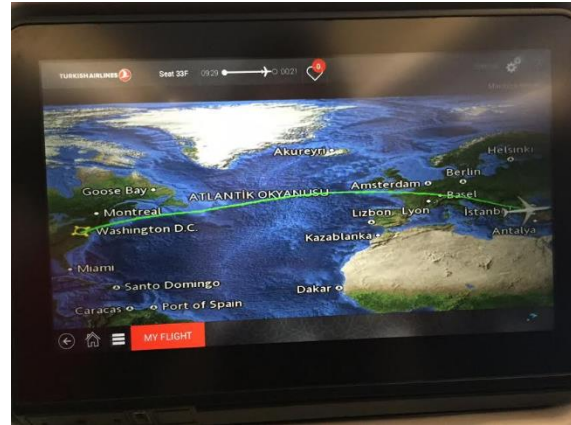
---

# May 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## Thoughts on in-bound travel.

Friday evening.

Once we figured out that Turkish Airlines counter is on the back side of the check-in counters at Dulles, we met up and checked in without any problems. It was a very full flight, but fortunately I was in a short row with an extra seat in front but on seat on my right in our row, which provided some extra leg room. Long flight, but good. Turkish Airlines deserves its very positive reputation. Food was excellent and service was very good, but a 12 and a half hour flight is still a long flight!



## Saturday.

We had a 6 and a half hour layover in the Istanbul Airport. Pretty crowded. Lots of high-end shopping area, and not much lounge area. Fortunately, we found a nice gate area without very many people in it and spent most of our time there. It was an interesting experience to see the Islamic travelers praying in public.

**Ice Cream Comedian?!** The ice cream vendor in the transit lounge had a set of 'magic tricks' he performed with our ice cream cones. His long paddle he used to scoop the ice cream was cold enough that it stuck to the ice cream. He use that to twirl the cones upside down and made the cones dance so it was a challenge to take it from him; and at one point he offered a taste of the ice cream from his paddle, and I ended up with ice cream on my nose! He also used a double cone to magically leave us holding only: an empty napkin or an empty cone. He delivered this with a deadpan expression reminiscent of W.C. Fields, and we got quite a laugh from his routine. We enjoyed the ice cream, too!





# May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Sunday (very early morning).



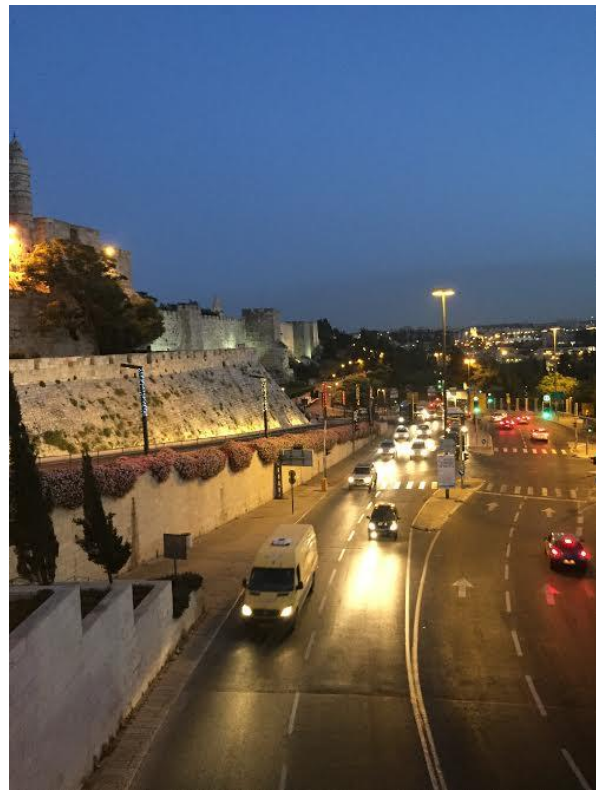
We arrived safely in Tel Aviv about 2:30 am. Went through passport and customs without a hitch. Not as evident a security presence as when we were here several years ago (may be that they are just in plain clothes, now, vs the uniformed presence we saw on our earlier visit). Very modern, even glitzy, airport central lounge area. Lots of people took selfies overlooking the impressive water fountain in the middle of the ground level.

It was wonderful to have Sally Shiff meet us at Ben Gureon Airport, with her little dog, Chi-Chi. Piled all our luggage in her car and headed for Jerusalem. Saw memorial vehicles from the attempts to supply Jerusalem during the 1948 War still beside the highway in a couple locations.

Arrived in Jerusalem at the UHL Graduate Apartment at about 4:15 a.m., which is located right next to the Dan Jerusalem Hotel (where Sharon and I stayed with the National Christian Choir on our visit in 2008!). Ginger fixed us an early breakfast! Scrambled eggs, toast, juice, and hot tea were very welcomed! We showered and cleaned up, took a few winks of sleep (probably a mistake, as I awoke a little dizzy, and feeling the jet lag more than ever!). She also got us on-line with the Wi-Fi at the Graduate Guest House where she is staying.

We then went with Ginger on the electric train to Christ Church Jerusalem for their morning worship. Walked through the 'New Gate' in the wall of Old Jerusalem, which was made in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (!), on our way to the church. They were celebrating Pentecost Sunday and all the Scripture reading references to Jerusalem and the surrounding local area was touching! One of the other students in the UHL course, Meshak a translation consultant from Zambia, met us at the church, as well. On the way back, Ginger took to a nice sandwich shop for lunch and then walked us by the recommended money changer and laundry facility for later in our trip. After the train ride back, we walked past her apartment to a local grocery store and picked up a few staples and snacks. It's over 100 degrees and just walking around seems to be a major exertion – and sweaty, too!

Dr. Ginger Caessens gave us a 20-minute orientation to the substantial workbook and materials for the Historical Geography of Israel course, and Caroline Pfann hosted us for cold drinks and snack food at their apartment (just around the corner from where Ginger is staying), along with their pet Iguana (40-inches long!). About 3:30 pm, Caroline loaded us and our luggage and took us to the Lutheran Guest House, located on the Mount of Olives. Tried to get access to the tall tower on the grounds, but it was shut due to being Sunday. Going to try and not go to bed too early this evening, even though dragging a little from jet lag.



# May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

---

## Monday

Still working on getting our internal clocks adjusted to local time. Both Chase and I were tossing and turning at about 3:30 a.m. our time this morning. Very hot here right now and we only had a fan in our room. I finally got back to sleep and was up for a nice shower around 6:00 a.m. Breakfast at the Lutheran Guest House (cold cereal, toasted pita bread and jam(!), cheese, tomatoes, and a couple types of spread) in their common eating area/kitchen. It was self serve and self clean-up. Met a lady who was just finishing up a 3-month stint as a volunteer at some local Christian organization. They were scheduled to leave on Tuesday to return to Oregon.

Walked the UHL check for 495 Shekels for our two rooms over to the Lutheran World Foundation business offices across the street from the Guest House and Hospital compound. The office was air conditioned! Purchased Mount of Olive olive oil made from olives harvested on LWF grounds.

Later on Monday, we were dropped off near the New Gate, [see photo below] and walked with our luggage to the Knights Palace Hotel. We checked in and went for a walk and some casual shopping in the Souk area of the Christian Quarter. It provided an interesting conversation with a 50-ish shop owner on the Christian Quarter Street. He has operated the same shop since 1987; and this was the shop operated by his father before him; and his grandfather before that. Right in front of his shop was a section of pavement with Roman pavement stones from the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. According to the marker in the pavement, they were discovered during a utilities project about 2 meters under the walking level in 1977, and restored to the street level as a historical project. They were amazing, because of the obvious wear and with their highly polished surfaces.



Had our first 'official' UHL event this evening – dinner at The Crusader Palace Hotel (very un-PC name!). Good food and plenty of good talk over dinner with the students coming in from Canada. Their flight was delayed on the ground in Canada by 4 hours; but they did have a non-stop to Tel Aviv. Several of us took an after-dinner walk and the Jerusalem walls are particularly beautiful and night when lit up as they were. Had some trouble getting on the hotel internet, but finally got through to it, so hope this gets out to you.

# May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Tuesday

*It's Day 3 in Israel, and it's absolutely spectacular here! We've been to David's tower, the Mount of Olives, Jericho, and the Mount of Temptation (where Jesus fasted and was tempted for 40 days). We saw where Jesus and Zacchaeus met, and we walked around Jerusalem. We also attended an Anglican Church in a beautiful cathedral. The worship songs to the Lord were written and sung in the minor key. The haunting melody reminded me of the consequences of my sin and of the extraordinary grace of Jesus' sacrifice. So far here in Israel, I have seen the impact of God's power in the lives of those in the past and in the lives of us in the present. As I continue this journey overseas, I can already feel God's love grow in me.*

**Hailey Roberts**

Today was our first day beyond jet-lag! It felt good! ☺ Chase got up early and went for a morning run through the streets of Old Jerusalem. (Just your normal Tuesday morning!) Breakfast in our very nice hotel was typical European fare – cheeses, yogurt, cereals, sliced tomatoes, sliced breads and pita bread – plus scrambled eggs, fried potatoes, juices, oranges, dates, coffee, tea. It was yummy!



Today was also a “Lecture Day.” It started off at 8:00 a.m. with Dr. Ginger Caessens providing an Introduction to the Historical Geography of Israel, to include objectives and strategy of the class. A second lecture was on Climate and Agriculture of the Region, and the instruction concluded with a sweeping Historical Overview of the Middle East – emphasizing Israel as “The Land Between.” This lecture highlighted the events of the **Middle Bronze Age** (Hebrew Patriarchs); **Late Bronze Age** (Return from Egypt); **Iron Age I and II** (with the Judges and Saul, and David and Solomon and the Babylonian Exile); **Persian Period** (Return from Exile and rebuilding the walls and temple); **Hellenistic Period** (the Roman Seleucid and Hebrew Hasmonian eras); **Roman Period** (including Herod the Great and

Jewish Revolts of 70 and 132 A.D.); **Byzantine Period** (Emperor Constantine’s construction of churches); and **Early and Late Arab Periods** surrounding the **Crusades**; and followed by the **Ottoman Turk Period**. The historical overview concluded with the events of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century leading up to the Israeli 1948 War of Independence, and the several wars in the modern era in Israel, including the 1967 6-Day War and 1973 Yom Kippur War. Maps emphasized the serial nature of Israel acquiring land claims during each of these conflicts and subsequent efforts to trade land for peace. The session ended with some portrayal of the different cultural norms and expectations between the Arab tribal culture and western expectations. So, the afternoon session finished at 5:45 p.m., and was quite a panorama of the history of the region!

Dinner in the hotel dining area was punctuated with further introductions and sharing of personal backgrounds by the approximately 20 students in the class. Students are from as far as Canada, Zambia, and Taiwan. After dinner our schedule was free, and many took advantage to explore further among the streets and shops of Old Jerusalem or to review materials for the course and field trip in Old Jerusalem, scheduled for tomorrow. A great first day of classes! Tomorrow we will be walking Old Jerusalem for most of the day, so that will be exciting, too!



# May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## Wednesday

Over the past few days we've had the opportunity to explore the ancient city of Jerusalem and see some of what it has to offer. Bartering with local merchants, and tasting Middle-Eastern cuisine has been the highlight of the first few nights. The group from Tyndale College has been very open and eager to hear about Patrick Henry College and its mission. We had our first in class lecture on Tuesday and tomorrow we head out into the field to do some hands on work. Yea!

### *Chase German*

*"Another fun day in Israel! We learned all about the different hills and valleys in Jerusalem and how the geographical areas affected people in history. As we walked about the Old Testament Jerusalem areas, I could directly see how what I've learned is true. When you read history books or listen to lectures, it is difficult to believe the reality of the past. However, when you tour the areas you're learning about, you can solidify what you've learned. As I walk through cities and feel the hot sun, I feel like I'm actually traveling through time. I believe the things of the past and know in my heart that the Bible is true."*



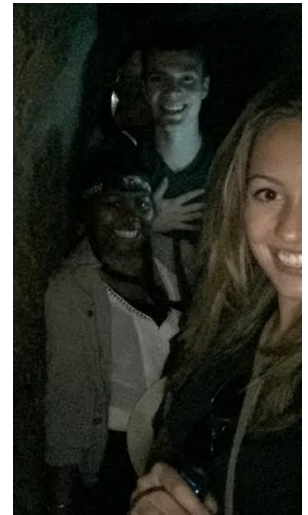
### *Hailey Roberts*

*"According to our instructor, Dr. Ginger Caessens, today was our most challenging day of walking, walking, and still more walking! But we got to see sites in Jerusalem associated with events in the Old Testament, and it was so worth it!"*

**Overview of Kidron Valley.** This included a view from the original Mount Zion from below the western end of the Temple Mount area across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives.

**Excavations in City of David.** We saw the locations where stella (wax seals on official documents) were recovered of officials who opposed Hezekiah's rebuilding of the Jerusalem walls during the Babylonian captivity, as well as from some officials identified in the Old Testament that supported him in the effort.

**Hezekiah's Tunnel.** After going to see the original Canaanite Spring of Gihon (where Saul was anointed king), we went underground through Warren's Shaft to access Hezekiah's Tunnel (2 Chronicles 32:1-5; 30)—see photo. We waded through the tunnel over 500 meters to the other end and saw paving stones from the Roman era and the area where the original Pool of Siloam has been discovered (but not restored), and where Jesus told the blind man to wash his eyes (John 9:1-11).



After lunch back at our hotel, we headed back out for the conclusion of our Old Testament day in Jerusalem. This included:

**Hinnom Valley/Gehenna.** This included views from the Western Hill and the areas of Jerusalem, expanded by Herod the Great, across to the Hinnom Valley.

**St. Peter in Gallicantu.** From a platform at this church on the Mount of Olives, we had a panorama of the Eastern Hill with the City of David and Solomon's Palace on the Western Hill of Jerusalem. The church marks a traditional location of the House of Caiaphus and Peter's Denial of the Lord.

**Cardo on the Western Hill.** This central road and open market area (Cardo) was constructed by the Romans after the destruction of the Temple as part of the Roman city built in its place, the Aelia Capitolina.

# May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Thursday

Over the past two days we have been studying the history of the Jewish Temple. This Temple was built on Mount Moriah, where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac and God intervened and provided the sacrifice. There have been two Temple structures built by the Jewish people on this site, but both were destroyed by invading armies. When looking over the ruins and the current Muslim Dome of the Rock structure that stands in its place, it's easy for Jewish people and Christians to feel disheartened. But, God's provision for Abraham should be the greatest inspiration to all believers.

Chase German

The archaeological site that impacted me the most throughout our travels today was the Pool of Bethesda. John 5:1-9 describes Jesus healing a paralyzed man. The paralyzed man had been trying to get healed in the Pool of Bethesda for 38 years, but he could not reach the waters in time when they were stirred. Jesus chose to heal the man without using the waters. In the 21st century, the Pool of Bethesda is dried up, but God can still heal those who seek Him. God does not require water or other objects to heal people. His omnipotent words are strong enough to heal all who come to Him in faith!

Hailey Roberts

This was our second full day doing field work in Jerusalem, and we covered a lot of ground – and part of it was via bus, so we didn't quite have the walking marathon like we did yesterday!

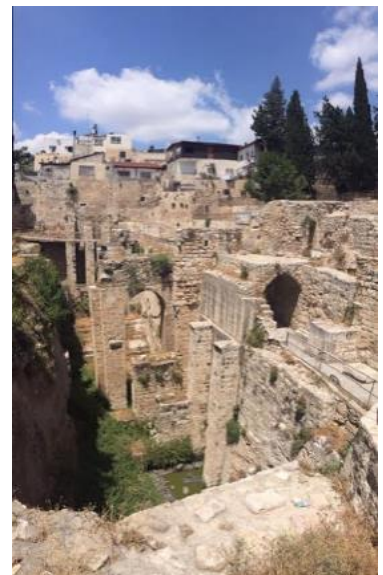
**Jerusalem Synoptic View from Mount of Olives.** We started off going to the Mount of Olives, tracing the pattern of Jesus often resorting there overnight, or to spend time with his disciples or to be alone.

**Gethsemane (Traditional Site).** We saw the very old grove of olive trees on the Mount of Olives, next to the Church of All Nations. The church has the Lord's Prayer on tiles in 80 different languages. Some of the olive trees may well be over 1000 years old.

**Pools of Bethesda and St. Anne's Church.** Dr. Caessens reviewed the archeology and New Testament history of the Pools of Bethesda, pointing out the surviving portions of these remaining from the time of Jesus (John 5:1-9) and the structures subsequently built around the area by Christian and Islamic owners of the site. We had an opportunity to sing some worship songs in the adjacent St. Anne's Church (completed in 1138 A.D.) and hear the amazing acoustics of this Catholic Church. A monk shared with us part of the tradition of St. Anne being the mother of Mary, and used as illustration the sculpture of her teaching Mary using Deut 6:4-5<sup>1</sup> (the Hebrew Sha-ma). He emphasized the importance of grandparents and parents in teaching their children.

**Tombs in the Kidron Valley.** We walked along the eastern wall and the Moslem cemetery located there and got to see the Eastern Gate/Golden Gate (sealed) up close (Ref Ezekiel 44:1-3). It was pretty awesome thinking about the prophecy of the Messiah coming back through it.

**Southern Wall Excavations.** We were able to walk through the museum at the Southern Wall Excavations. This included an excavated residence with its ritual bath (mitzvah), as well as the



---

<sup>1</sup> Deut 6:4-5. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.



restoration around the (fallen) Robinson's Arch, the Second Temple steps on the southern wall and Huldah gates dating from the era of Herod the Great.

**Mansions from First Century A.D.** The Wohl Museum has excavated mansions from the First Century A.D. and we were able to see them and hear about the features and dating techniques that place these during the events of the New Testament. These were upper class homes that may have belonged to priests, as they were located close to the Temple.

**Shrine of the Book.** We toured the 1:50 scale model of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus and Dr. Caessens pointed out locations we had visited and how the model interpreted points of uncertainty in the archaeological record. We also got a brief opportunity to see the displays in the Shrine of the Book, including a facsimile of the famous Isaiah scroll. Dr. Ian Scott (Tyndale Seminary) lectured on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the process of them being made publically available, and the impact his study of them has had upon him.



Our study group completed review questions for the Jerusalem field study. The favorite Scripture verses from today included:

- **Matthew 21:10-14.** This account of Jesus upsetting the money changers was amplified by today's discussion of exactly where this might have happened in the Temple area. Best estimates are this was either in the upper colonnade area or on the outer steps, both of which would have been outside the formal boundary of the Temple. Jesus exploded various moral and organizational boundaries with his teachings (e.g., on adultery) and was very aggressive in poking holes in man-made constructs.
- **Matthew 23:27-30.** Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees...whitewashed tombs. Dr. Caessens shared that the sense of what he was saying was about how unmarked tombs could defile unaware individuals; one of our group likened that to our lives potentially turning people off to Jesus and his Word.
- **Ephesians 2:11-22.** And broke down the inner wall... One of our group shared that he had never understood the context of this verse, before seeing the model of the Temple today and hearing Dr. Caessens' explanation of the various areas and barriers between them in the Temple.



# May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Friday

Touring today revolved around the possible sites where the crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ could have taken place. We went to both the Garden Tomb and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Standing over the spot where some 2000 years ago Jesus gave his life for an unworthy sinner like me made me feel truly loved. It was hard to put aside all of the gold, silver, icons, and the smell of incense that surrounded the church, but there was a moment where I was able to focus and lay all of those distractions aside. It was in this moment that I heard the tune of Amazing Grace playing in my head. The lines

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.

kept playing over and over in my head. It truly was amazing grace that Christ showed all of humanity when he sacrificed himself on Calvary. We must remember this and continue to live in this grace knowing that Jesus, ruler of heaven and earth, would do anything to see his children come home.

Chase German

In Psalm 22, the Bible records the thoughts of Jesus as He hung on the cross. Today, we saw the place where Jesus was crucified and the places where He was possibly buried. Pairing the historical records of the Bible with the archaeological findings of Israel shone a light on the reality of who Jesus was as a person. Yes, Jesus was God. But He was also a man. He had thoughts and a plan for His life, and He was afraid to die for us. Yet He did die for us, and He rose victorious from the grave! Because of His sacrifice, I can go to the places He walked and feel closer to Him. It almost seemed like His resurrected body was walking with me! Hailey Roberts.

Today was a hybrid day. The morning was lecture, and the afternoon we completed our walk of New Testament sites in Jerusalem, and it ended with us visiting sites commemorating Jesus' death and resurrection. Hallelujah, he isn't in a tomb! He is risen, indeed!

**Geology of Israel Lecture.** Dr. Caessens presented a lecture highlighting multiple aspects of how Israel is a "Land Between." It is a "land between" in its **Geology** (*origins* - part of the Gondwana land mass between Africa and Arabia; *tectonics* - between Africa and Arabian plates; and *Mediterranean weather circulation* - between Egypt and Lebanon/Syria/ Turkey; and *geology* - between the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Desert); in its **geopolitics** (between Asia, Africa, and Europe); and in **international commerce** (between trade facilitated by Phoenician ocean-going trade with Egypt, as well as the land-based trade flowing along the Via Maris international travel route along its coast). She concluded the morning with a discussion of the characteristics of major rock categories, including basalt (from the cooling of lava that cooled above the surface), marine origin (Cenomanian, Senonian, and Eocene), and granitic (from the cooling of magma deep below the surface). This included how the characteristics of these different types influence agriculture and travel in the areas in which they are found.



After lunch, we completed our walking field work focused on the New Testament events in Jerusalem.

**Blocks from Jerusalem's 3<sup>rd</sup> Wall.** We walked out the New Gate and over in front of the Damascus Gate to see exemplar stones from the final wall around Jerusalem built by Herod Antipas subsequent to the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. These large blocks were part of the reconstruction of Jerusalem as the Aelia Capitolina in the second century.

**Old Testament Tombs.** We saw Jewish tombs from the Old Testament (6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) at the Ecole Biblique. Characteristic elements included preparation areas/rooms to the side of the tomb proper, head rests, benches for the dead bodies, flat ceilings, and bone boxes under the benches (vs front/back arrangement for multiple rooms, and arched ceilings in the second Temple period).

**Garden Tomb.** We walked around the corner to visit Gordon's Calvary and the Garden Tomb. After walking inside the tomb, we had a time of meditation on the Word, celebrated the Lord's Supper, and worshiped in singing several songs. Several were interested in the fact that our guide at the Garden Tomb was a volunteer from Texas!



**Hadrian's Arch and Church of the Holy Sepulcher.** We saw the remnant of the triple arches built by the Emperor Hadrian at the Damascus Gate (now a level below the current gate) on our way to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. At this very large church built over the traditional site of Jesus' crucifixion and tomb, we got to hear a group of Franciscan monks singing their Friday service. It was an amazingly beautiful sound echoing through this very large cathedral, built in 335 A.D. by the Emperor Constantine. Dr. Caessens had one of our group read Psalm 22, and it was a very moving time of reflection for many in our group.

During our group study/review sessions that evening, we identified favorite Scripture verses from the day that included:

- **I Kings 9 and 15 and Joshua 7-8.** These tell the story of the Israelite conquest of Canaan and fighting between the northern tribes and the tribes aligned with Judah over the strategic Benjamin Plateau just north of Jerusalem. Understanding the geography, the travel routes and the relationships between the travel roads and security implications at the time, provides an entirely new level of insight into the dynamics and significance of this incidents.
- **Psalm 22.** We read this entire Psalm while in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. A number of students commented on the extent to which this amplified their understanding of "that it might be fulfilled as was spoken by the prophets" in the New Testament. Jesus was very conscious of his path and purpose, and at a level many had not previously recognized. Dr. Caessens emphasized that Jesus' statement that, "it is finished" was quoting from the end of Psalm 22 in the Hebrew. (It doesn't appear with exactly this wording in non-Hebrew translations.)



# May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Saturday

Today we had the opportunity to talk with a good family friend about the work being done to bring peace in the West Bank. After dinner we headed over to the Western Walling Wall. It was beautiful to see the Wall and the Dome of the Rock lit up at night.  
Chase German

One of the places we traveled today was Emmaus. In Luke 24, Jesus revealed Himself to two men on the road to Emmaus. He had just risen from the dead, and the two men did not recognize Him. Only after Jesus chose to open their eyes did the men recognize Him. God has perfect timing for everything. He will always answer our prayers even if it takes years to hear from Him.  
Hailey Roberts



This was our first full day doing field work beyond Jerusalem, and it nicely complemented yesterday morning's lecture on the geology and geography of Israel. We focused on the area associated with the Tribe of Benjamin – which is in the lower third of the country.

**Jericho and the Jordan Rift Valley.** We took a bus trip to the Jordan River and then Jericho. Our path to the Jordan River took us through a former military area, including minefields on each side of the road! This area was controlled by the state of Jordan up until the 1967

War. Dr. Caessens reviewed the role the Jordan River played in the lives of Moses, Elijah, and Elisha as well as John the Baptist and Jesus. But Jesus was set apart from all his predecessors by The Father's confirmation of him ("This is my Son") at his baptism at the Jordan. The Tel Jericho dates from the Early Bronze Age and is consistent with the narrative of Joshua's conquest of it in the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (Middle Bronze Age). The New Testament city of Jericho may be located under the modern city. We also visited the ruins of Herod the Great's Amphitheater and Hippodrome. We also visited his Palace in the surrounding area, which included swimming pools, a hanging garden, and guest accommodations for up to a hundred guests. His opulent construction now lies in dust and ruins.

**Lunch at a West Bank Settlement.** We had a very clear view from this elevated location. Looking east, we could see across the Jordan Valley to Amman, Jordan. Looking west, we saw the line of Mount of Olives from north of Jerusalem and to the south. While eating our box lunches, we could see the Israeli soldiers patrolling the settlement.

**Nobi Samuel.** We visited the traditional site of the grave of the prophet Samuel. From the elevated roof of the 18<sup>th</sup> century A.D. mosque, we were able to see a number of highlights of the Benjamin Plain. There were also excavations of early settlements on the site.

**Tel Gezer.** Dr. Caessens reviewed the strategic position this Early Bronze Age settlement and fortress played. It controlled the Aijalon Valley and was Jerusalem's first line of defense from the west as well as her link to her port of Joppa. The oldest Hebrew written artifact (a school boy annual farming calendar) was discovered at Gezer. The day was so clear we could see as far south as the outlines of Ashkelon and as far north as Tel Aviv.

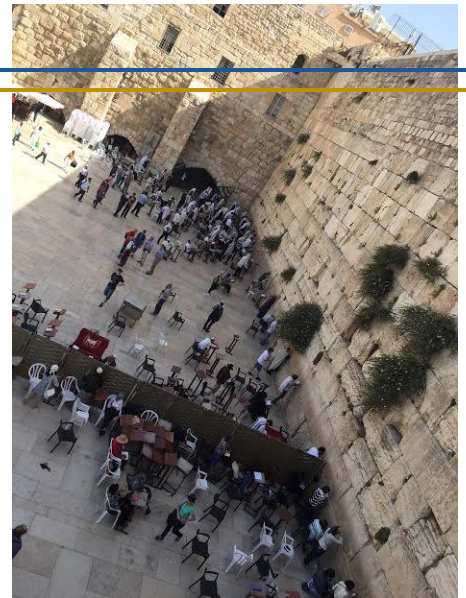


# May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Sunday

**Yad Vashem** is Israel's Official Memorial to the Victims of the Holocaust. It was established in 1953, as the world center for documentation, research, and education about the Holocaust. The memorial safeguards the memory of the past and imparts its meaning for future generations. One core goal of Yad Vashem's founders was to recognize people who, at personal risk and without a financial or evangelistic motive, chose to save the Jewish people from the ongoing genocide during the Holocaust. Yad Vashem is the second most visited tourist site in Israel. As I walked into entrance, I tried to prepare myself for the 6 million lives that were lost during the Holocaust, and I noticed a Bible verse that declares God's provision regardless of man's depravity. Ezekiel 37:14, "I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord."

Chase German



**Wailing Wall.** For our free day on Sunday, we toured several different places, one of which was the Wailing Wall. The scenery was beautiful with birds flying around and people praying. The sun shone down on those worshipping the Lord. The people's prayers written on paper notes were scattered about the crevices of the wall. I was filled with peace but also with slight hesitation. The men and women had to wear hats or head scarves and proceed in a solemn manner. God does not require us to wear certain clothes, do certain things, or live a solemn life. King David danced in the streets singing songs of worship to the Lord. Praying to the Lord can be both solemn and joyful!

Hailey Roberts.

This Sunday was a free day. We had breakfast in the hotel and then went out for some of the sights in Jerusalem.

**Temple Mount and Western Wall.** We walked to the check-in area for access to the Temple Mount. Hours for non-Muslims is very restricted. It was 7:30 am – 9:30 am; and 11:00 am - 1:00 pm on the day we visited. I was struck by the open proselytizing Islamic sects were doing to all visitors right in the middle of the Temple Mount. This is in contrast to the fact that Israel captured the Temple Mount in 1967; they are not permitted at all on it; and are only permitted to pray at the 'Wailing Wall', outside the Temple Mount area. These seemed strange contrasts! It was sobering to see the dedication and seriousness with which the Israelis engage in prayer at the Wailing Wall.

**Yad Vashem Memorial.** After going back to our hotel to change into cooler clothing (it was getting hot!), we took a taxi ride (5 of us in a 4-5 passenger vehicle—plus the driver!) to the Yad Vashem Memorial. The story of the WWII Holocaust, its precursors, and the creation of the state of Israel were a compelling story. Probably my highlight was the Children's Memorial, with its unique candle light reflected 1.5 million times, representing the Jewish children that died in WWII. We had lunch in the cafeteria at the museum.



**King of Kings Church.** Several of us walked about a dozen blocks to the King of Kings Church on Joffa Road in the new part of Jerusalem. It is in an area of up-scale shopping and is located in a theater type auditorium in a shopping building. The worship music was a unique blend of Hebrew lyrics and songs, along with English sub-titles on the projector screen.

**Burger Snack.** We stopped on our way back to the hotel and had burgers, Jerusalem style. They were pretty good. It was a beautiful evening, and we ate at a sidewalk table and people-watched while we ate. Then, back to the hotel and some additional study time for the first quiz in the morning.



# May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

Monday

The Temple Mount is the holiest site in Judaism, the third holiest site in Islam, and a revered site to Christians. The Jewish people know this site as Mount Moriah. The Place where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac and God intervened and provided the sacrifice. King Solomon built the temple on this site following the instructions that the Lord had given his father David. The Muslims know this site as the Sacred Noble Sanctuary. The Dome of the Rock is a shrine that sits on top of the Temple Mount. In the Bible, it is called Mount Zion (Psalm 48: 1 -2) Yeshua (Jesus) declared the temple as my Father's House. Because of its importance to Christians, Jews, and Muslims, its ownership has been contested for nearly two thousand years. As I stand on this Holy site, I think of God's response to King Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:14 "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Chase German

Herod the Great was a highly impactful leader but for the wrong reasons. He had immense power and all the possessions he could possibly hope for, yet he lived a life built upon jealousy. His jealousy drove him to build extravagant buildings (such as the Herodium Palace, his burial place) and to use his people for his own benefit. Herod even planned to murder all the male heads of families in the land upon his death so that the people would mourn him when he died. To be a highly impactful leader for the right reasons, a person must seek the Lord first and foremost. His foundation will be built upon the rock of Jesus Christ, not upon the sands of jealousy. Then, people will remember him for the strong leader he was and will not look down upon him for the jealous leader he could have been.

Hailey Roberts



**Judah Lecture.** Dr. Ginger Caessens gave us an extended lecture on the Judah Hill Country and the Shephelah of Judah and the Philistine Plain.

**Herodium, Instead.** After lunch, we went by bus to the Herodium. It was built in the first century B.C., and is in the West Bank about 7 miles from Jerusalem. It was closed to outside study or visit between 1948–1967. Although in ruins (and excavation is continuing), it is an amazing fortress (and palace, swimming pool, and theater, of course!) built by Herod the Great. It was also designed to be his tomb. My favorite part of the trip was getting to go through some of the underground tunnels built by the Romans and later by the Jewish fighters who revolted against Rome. (See my picture inside one of the large water cisterns underground.) The Herodium was Herod's 'close-in' escape location in the event of local unrest against Roman rule; and Messada was his deep escape in the event things got really bad. In the group photo, my two students are in the back row standing next to me (on the far left); and our primary instructor from the University of the Holy Land, Dr. Ginger Caessens, is in the front row, far left.





# May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Tuesday

Today we traveled to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. It was raining and cold outside and not at all what I expected. The church itself was beautifully decorated with paintings, mosaics, and gold and silver icons. Our group heard a different take on the story of Christ's birth that I would assume most people in the states haven't heard before. It brought a little more perspective and understanding to the biblical text.

Chase German

The Nativity Church in Bethlehem surprised me. You would think the place where Jesus was born would appear like a rugged stable. While there were aspects of that in the room where He was born, there were more aspects of idolatry in it. There were incense candles, mournful-sounding singing, and gold accents everywhere. People would push each other out of the way and lean down to kiss the star which marks where Jesus was supposedly born. I couldn't find the peace and quiet to pray and thank God for His gift of Jesus. However, I think God used that situation to train me to be in the world but not of it. I'm learning to see past the darkness of the world and pray continually so that I can see the light.

Hailey Roberts.

This was a travel day, as well as a learning day. After an early breakfast in the hotel, we walked to the bus pick-up point, loaded our luggage for the next 3 days, and were off for our day on the road! This day was most unusual, as it rained on us until late morning, but cleared in time for our lunch.

**Bethlehem and Church of the Nativity.** (Luke 2:4-7) This is another of the very large churches built by Emperor Constantine's mother. It reflects the location of Jesus' birth in a cave in Bethlehem. It was begun in 326 A.D., and was further expanded in 536 A.D. by the Emperor Justinian. When it came under the control of the Crusaders in 1099 A.D., they further added frescoes to the walls of the church. Currently, it is under renovation sponsored by the United Nations, and daily services are conducted by Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian Orthodox priests. I found it refreshing that the main entry is the "Door of Humility" which is designed to be so low, that everyone must bow low in order to enter! It was also interesting that St. Jerome was commissioned in 382 A.D., by Pope Damasus I to revise the previous biblical texts in Latin, specifically to translate the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew, rather than from the Greek texts. Once published, his work became known as the Vulgate translation. He had to learn Hebrew to do the translation and spent much of the several years to do the translation working in the basement of this church. That is what I call dedication! He is memorialized and buried in the basement of the church.



**Tel Azeka and David and Goliath.** (1 Samuel 17) At the Tel Azeka, we could observe the location where David fought Goliath in the valley below where we stood. The Philistines were coming into the area from north and west, originating from the Aegean. They conquered or established five major cities -- Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath, from Wadi Gaza in the south to the Yarkon River in the north. I was reminded in the Scriptural account of how David "ran to meet" the giant in their conflict. He had developed confidence in the Lord that seemed to go beyond simple trust that somehow things would 'work out.'

**Beth-Shemesh and Samson.** (Judges 14-16) From this elevated vantage point we were able to see the Elah valley where the primary events of Samson's life happened. The fertile agricultural area and that this area was a point of contention between the Israelites and the incoming Phillistines set up the background for these events in the Old Testament.

**Tel Maresha.** (2 Chron 14:2-15) These Sidonian burial caves were used by non-Semitic peoples and were extensively decorated and used as family plots for burial. The restored drawings of real and mythical creatures were quite impressive.

**Roman Road Marker.** The civil engineering technology brought by the Romans enabled travel. Enabling travel across natural barriers (mountains, rivers, etc.) was a principle means the Romans used to try and unite their far-flung empire and to encourage commerce.

**Tel Lehkish.** This major city held out against the invasions from the north by Assyria and later by Babylon longer than any other Jewish locations. The Israelites under Joshua captured and destroyed Lachish for joining the league against the Gibeonites (Joshua 10:31-33). The territory was later assigned to the tribe of Judah (15:39) because the tribe of Dan was not able to subdue the area.

Arrived at our very nice hotel in Ashkalon on the Mediterranean.

Had a beautiful view of the Mediterranean Sea while we enjoyed our dinner. Several got in the water, but with the wind we had today, the waves were aggressive and some rip tide. Power has just gone off, so I will conserve my laptop power and send this!



# May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Wednesday

Tonight we got to spend the night at the coastal city of Ashkelon. After dinner a group of us headed down to the Mediterranean to swim. I'll be honest and say the water was a lot more rough than I was suspecting. The waves whipped us around, but all things considered, it was a blast.

Chase German

The Mediterranean Sea was absolutely spectacular! An almost overwhelming feeling of thankfulness came over me as I jumped into the warm water and bounded into the waves. To think that Jesus walked here in Israel and was well acquainted with the Mediterranean Sea gave me great excitement. I could almost see Him laughing with me as I waded in the warm water! I haven't ever felt as physically close to the Lord as I had in the Mediterranean.

Hailey Roberts

On the road, again, right after breakfast in Ashkelon!

**Tel Ashkelon.** (II Samuel 1:19-20; Jer 47: 5-7) The ancient city of Ashkelon is on the coast (the only one of the Philistine Pentapolis) and is located near a break in the interior sand dunes (good for the caravans coming west) and an underground river. It was relatively close to the western branch of the north-south trade route often referred to as the "Via Maris", and was a large city (150 acres) even at the time of the earliest Canaanites in the Middle Bronze Period (at least 2000 B.C.). It later came under the influences of the Egyptians, Philistines, and Assyrians, and was destroyed by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar in 604 B.C. But because of its key location, it was repopulated by the Canaanites, now under the name of Phoenicians, who served as intermediaries for the Persian interests in trading with Egypt; continued to thrive as a center of Greek culture during the period of exploits by Alexander the Great; and was a "free and allied city" and center of culture under Roman rule well into the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. By 536 A.D., it had also become the seat of a Christian bishop, as two Byzantine churches have been excavated, along with a synagogue. It was captured by Caliph Omar in 636 A.D. and remained under Arab control until it fell into Crusader hands in 1191 AD, but before abandoning it to them, Salahedin destroyed it and threw debris (including old Roman columns) in the harbor to render it useless. It was part of Israel after the 1948 Armistice Line was drawn and has grown into a large city, today.

**Tel Gerar/Horor.** (Gen 10:19; 1 Chron 4:39; and 2 Chron 14:12-14) This city was near the southern end of the territory settled by the Canaanites and Abraham and Isaac were in this area. It seems to have reached its peak during the time of the Patriarchs and may have held its neighbor Beer-sheba under its hegemony. Ceramic finds at the site indicate that throughout its history it enjoyed trade relations at least indirectly with the Aegean world.

**Beer-Sheva.** (Gen 21: 26: 23-33; 46; I Samuel 8:23) This important city was at the southern limit of Judah's territory (e.g., the expression "from Dan to Beer-sheba"). Archeological evidence dates from the Iron Age I and shows it was built to incorporate large water cisterns (1.8 million gallons capacity). It benefited substantially by being on the trade route between the Arabah/Trans-Jordan areas and Gaza on the Mediterranean coast. Most of the structures date to the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC and include a cultic center with an altar with horns. Its houses are arranged in a geometric, circular fashion around a central courtyard indicating a central authority and was destroyed late in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC most likely by the Assyrians.

**Tel Arad.** (Judges 1:16; I Samuel 15:6) Located in the eastern Negev region, it also lies on the route connecting Hebron with Gaza on the coastal plain. It is probably not the Arad mentioned in Numbers 21:1-3 or Numbers 33:40. It dates from the Early Bronze Age (3200-2650 BC), occupied about 25 acres, with a strong outer wall over a mile long that featured semi-circular towers, and had a major well at its center. Its commerce included animal husbandry, agriculture, and long distance trade including ties with Sinai and Egypt and trade in copper. For reasons unknown, this large thriving city was abandoned at the end of the Early Bronze Age. When resettlement began over a thousand years later (Iron Age I, 12<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries BC), it may have been by the Kenites, related to Moses (Judges



I:16; I Samuel 15:6; 27:8-10). Construction dating to the 10<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC included a series of forts (each showing signs of destruction), large water cisterns, and a Jewish temple with altar and Holy of Holies. There is some archeological evidence that points to incorporation of Asherah worship, here. It was this syncretism that led to the reforms of King Asa I (I Kings 15:13; 2 Chron 15:16) in the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC; King Manasseh in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC (2 Kings 21:7); and King Josiah in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC (2 Kings 23:4, 6-7, 15).

**Favorite Moments:**

- Reading the account of David “running to meet” Goliath while we were overlooking the valley where they fought.
- Singing “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!” within the walls of a Hebrew temple at Tel Arad, where they worshipped Jehovah 3000 years ago, was a might experience. Recognizing that their worship eventually became polluted, it reminds us of God’s grace as well as his holiness and longsuffering toward us.

**Tomorrow.** After overnight in Arad, we will have the opportunity to swim in the Dead Sea, tomorrow! Hot, hot, hot! ☺

# May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## Travel Log – Thursday 26 May.

The Dead Sea is 1,388 feet below sea level, making it the lowest place on Earth, with the deepest part at 1,004 feet. Known as the Salt Sea, this body of water is 8.6 times saltier than the ocean. This harsh environment does not allow for animals to live. But one day, Scripture promises, the Dead Sea will live again. When Jesus rules the earth in the Millennial Kingdom, water will flow from Jerusalem's Temple Mount and fishermen will line the banks of the Dead Sea. (Ezekiel 47:8-11) That will be quite a change from today!

**Chase German**



Like the Mediterranean Sea, the Dead Sea was so beautiful! Taking a step back from the more hectic tourist sights and reveling in the beauty of God's sea renewed my mind in His love. The Bible records in Matthew 5:13, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot." Swimming in the Dead Sea reminded me to live a "salty" life. As I floated in the salt water, I turned my thoughts to the Lord. He revealed to me that I make an impact in other's lives for either good or bad. As the salt of the world, I will turn to Him to help me make a good impact on people's lives. With God's power, I will encourage them to turn to God and grow stronger in their faith. I hope to set the example of a child of God everywhere I go!

**Hailey Roberts.**

Today started with an early breakfast in the hotel in Arad (6:30 a.m.), and we travelled to the Dead Sea.

**Dead Sea.** Dr Caessens had made arrangements for us to swim in the Dead Sea at a private beach. (See photo, below) They gave us their sales pitch on Dead Sea cosmetics and soaps. We just mainly wanted to get in the water! Amazing pictures of us floating "like corks" in the water – most of our bodies on top of the water due to its high salt and



mineral content. Some even bought the 'mud treatment' and lathered up for the experience, too! Fun time! We travelled along the coast line of the Dead Sea and observed the significant industry working to exploit the many minerals found in its waters. We then ascended one of the 3 traditional caravan routes headed west from the below sea level waters of the Dead Sea. We went up a very steep incline of the Maaleh Aqrabbim (Ascent of the

Scorpion); and the two others were the Ascent of Zohar and the Ascent of Tomar (which was actually misnamed!).

**Mezad Hazeve (Ancient Tamar?).** (I Kings 9:15-19) This location would have been a natural stopping point for caravans coming from Bozrah, Petra, or the Red Sea en route to Gaza or Egypt. It was also on the route connecting the Red Sea with Hebron and Jerusalem, further north. Based on archaeological remains and its location, some scholars have identified it as the Biblical Tamar. It probably functioned as a customs point and a provisioning station for the caravans. Excavations have revealed a series of forts dating from the Iron Age through the Roman Period, a cultic shrine outside the fort and probably used by passing caravans for spiritual blessing and confirmation of business arrangements (no contracts existed back then!). During Roman times, it also had a bathhouse for the comfort of passing caravan travelers. It well may have been inhabited by Israelites in the forts built by Solomon in 10<sup>th</sup> century BC; Edomites during the 9<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. This later development likely led to this area being referred to in antiquity as Idumea as early as the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. By the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, Nabateans from northwest Arabia had occupied the area, including Moab (east of the Dead Sea), Edom (south of the Dead Sea), and the southern Negev. After being annexed by the Romans in 106 AD, the Nabateans ceased to exist as a distinct people.

**Kurnub (Ancient Mampsis).** (2 Cor 11:32) The site was situated along a trade route connecting the Arabah (south of the Dead Sea) via Maaleh Akrabbim with the Negev Basin – and hence to Gaza or to Hebron and Jerusalem. This settlement was established by the Nabateans to service the caravans, as it is located in an area without sufficient rainfall for agriculture and no springs are nearby. A Roman garrison was posted in the town sometime after Trajan annexed the Nabatean Kingdom in 106 AD, as there remains tombstones with Latin markings in a Roman style cemetery. This is a very hot and dusty spot in the Arabah, and it made the point by reaching 102 degrees during our visit, today!

**Horvat Haluqim (geologic crater) and broom bush-** aka “juniper tree”. (I Kings 19:1-8) This area is marked by significant uplift and breaking of marine-deposited limestone. Various minerals yield striking colors – sulfur (yellow), iron (red) and black deposits of basalt (granite congealed below the surface) thrust above the ground level. There were also several examples of the juniper tree (more accurately named the broom bush) referenced in the Old Testament in various incidents.



**Nahal Zin and Wilderness of Zin Overlook.** (Deut 8) On the final leg of our great loop, this day, we stopped for a marvelous overlook of these locations. Dr Caessens read to us from Moses' charge to the Israelites as they prepared to enter the Promised Land that they should not forget who sustained them in the wilderness journey was Jehovah, and that He would still have that role even when their physical circumstances changed for the better in the more pleasant surroundings in Canaan. It was a good reminder for us, too.

Arrived back at our nice hotel in Arad on the western edge of the Negev Plateau around 6:15 pm. We all ate like we were really hungry! And I think we were! It was a long day – but a very good one! We were very thankful for the consistent breeze we had today, that approached a strong wind late in the afternoon. One person lost their hat over the side of the overlook by the Wilderness of Zin! There was no safe way to go after it, as it went over a steep, high cliff!

After dinner, I worked on finalizing the approach to having our entire group of 20 share photos from the trip online.



# May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016

---

Friday

Today we traveled down into the western edge of the Rift Valley. We first stopped at Herod's fortress of Masada. It was a formidable structure built on top of a mountain. When the Jews revolted against Rome, this was their last hold out. You can still see the siege ramp and surrounding camps that were built by the Romans 2000 years ago. After climbing down the mountain we went to the oasis of Eni Gedi. This is where David hid from Saul and later cut off part of Saul's robe. It is now a beautiful nature reserve with wildlife and waterfalls.

Chase German

Our tour guide for the caves in Qumran encouraged each of us to sit down and meditate on God in silence. He told us to pick up one of the stones nearby and cast it down the hillside. This action symbolically represented leaving something of our past behind in the wilderness. What I left behind in that wilderness was what I chose to place in the Lord's mighty hands. I felt as if I was trading the dry, dead desert in my life for the beautiful, perfect paradise that is to come.

Hailey Roberts



On the road, again, right after breakfast for another full day!

**Masada.** The name Masada has come from Greek and Latin sources, as "the fortress." It is located on the west side of the Rift Valley connecting the Sea of Galilee with the Red Sea and overlooks the Lisan Peninsula where it projects into the Dead Sea. Its top is about 4.5 acres atop a summit rising 1300 ft on the side facing the Dead Sea and rising 330 ft above its western surrounding area. Earliest remains from the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC were limited to some pottery, cloth and mats. In the 10<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, some suggest that David may have used it in its natural state as a hideout during the period he was eluding Saul. (See I Samuel 22:3-4) Most of the construction on the summit, including a wall, two palaces, a large bathhouse, storehouse complexes, cisterns, and other buildings were commissioned by Herod the Great during 36-30 BC. His motivation was centered on his concerns over a local revolt against Roman imposed rule, and concern of Cleopatra of Egypt who longed for the cosmetic industry resources of the Dead Sea. He may have also fortified it as a means of controlling the east-west and north-south trade that ran through the area. Following the Jewish Revolt that was crushed by Rome in 70 AD (including the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem), the last pocket of Jewish resistance held out at Masada until 72 or 73 AD, when a combination of Roman war tactics finally overcame its defenses. However, the 960 men, women, and children decided to take their own lives rather than fall into the hands of the Romans. After the men killed their own families, they selected by lot the one who would slay them; and then he fell on his own sword taking his own life. Josephus relates in the only written account that two women and five children escaped and lived to tell the Romans the next morning what had happened to steal the Roman's victory. As a result, Masada has become a symbol of Jewish resistance to any who would attempt to take their freedom, and set a very different standard in the Jewish culture than what existed prior to the Holocaust.





**En Gedi.** (I Samuel 24; 2 Chron 20:1-27; Jer 17 5-8; Ezek 47:1; 8-12) We hiked in the nature preserve which is on the historical site of En Gedi. It is located north of Masada on the coast of the Dead Sea. Its wonderful springs coming out of the high mountains that rise sharply from the level of the Dead Sea, and its isolation made it an ideal location as a refuge for David when King Saul was trying to kill him. Located immediately across from the area of Moab also provided David an ally who was also an enemy of King Saul.

**Qumran.** (Gen 21; 26: 23-33; 46; I Samuel 8:23) This important community housed the Hebrew sect of the

Essenes during Jesus time. Its importance is that their emphasis on study of the Old Testament writings ended up with their library being preserved to modern times in caves where they lived which were up in the steep hillsides above their working areas. Together with scrolls that were attempted to be hidden in the same general area from the Romans during the destruction of Jerusalem, when these 900-1000 documents were discovered in the caves of Qumran, all the books of the Old Testament were represented with the exception of the book of Ester. Many of these were significantly older copies that what had been available prior to that time. After seeing the national park exhibits at Qumran, Dr. Stephen Pfann, President of the University of the Holy Land, took us on a guided nature walk outside the national park area, that included the Qumran Cave #11. Findings here included several copies of the Temple Scroll, the Ezekiel Scroll, the New Jerusalem Scroll, Psalms, the entire Pentateuch, and writings on the Sabbath Sacrifice. It was a fascinating glimpse into Biblical and archaeological history!



#### **Favorite Moments:**

- At En Gedi, reading the account of David lamenting over his rebellion against 'the Lord's anointed', after he had cut off part of King Saul's garment.
- Psalm 91:1 on the top of Masada and hearing the words of the Lord being our fortress and shade.



**Tomorrow.** We will have the day off tomorrow! ☺ Maybe time for laundry, study for Sunday morning's quiz; and we meet up with Erik Stakelbeck at 11:00 am to discuss our trip with him and his video crew from TBN.



# May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Saturday

Today the group from PHC were interviewed by the team that produces the Watchmen TV program on Christian television. Since I'd never been interviewed for anything like this before, it was nerve wracking. Despite my fears, the crew was great and made everything bearable and they even told us they would make us look like professionals! The producer asked questions that were fairly easy to answer, but who knows how it will all turn out.

**Chase German**



Today, Chase, Dr. Middleton and I were interviewed for the Trinity Broadcasting Network TV show, The Watchman. The producer might incorporate our responses in his show in July. We discussed aspects of what life in Israel is like from an American college student's point of view, and we discussed national security and cultural differences between Israel and the U.S. Talking with the crew from The Watchman about such topics helped broaden my perspective on international relations. Hearing other's support for the alliance between Israel and America made me further appreciate the experience I'm having here today!

**Hailey Roberts.**

Today started with a late breakfast and a run to a local laundry to help us recover some clean clothes!



**Erick Stakelbeck Interview.** As a result of contacts by our Director of Communications, Mr. Stephen Allen, we met with Erik Stakelback of TBN just outside the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem for an interview and use on his program which is focused on security and the Middle East (<http://www.erickstakelbeck.com/about/>). I shared about the vision and mission of Patrick Henry College and our summer study course, designed to provide students foreign travel experience and insight into the complex cultural, historical, and political affecting security in the Middle East. Hailey and Chase shared their experiences, thus far on our trip, and things they have learned. I share that I was impressed as we stood above the valley where David fought Goliath, how David 'ran

to meet Goliath' – because he knew who he served, had seen the Lord enable him in the past, and was confident of the Lord's leading in facing this new danger. And even though there are many 'Goliaths' in our land and in Israel, today, what a testimony of faith it would be, if we were to 'run to the battle' just as David did! Erik seemed to enjoy the interaction with us and graciously volunteered there are others he would like to put us in touch with for our trip this year.

**Study Time for Tomorrow's Quiz.** We went through the three sets of review questions from the past few days which cover the topics for the quiz tomorrow morning. The second quiz may be a little harder than the first one!

**Clean Clothes.** Not exciting, but washing clothes is a necessary part of any extended trip overseas! I retrieved laundry from a local vendor (about a dozen shirts!) and hand-washed shorts and socks in the bathroom sink. Hope they dry out by Monday morning when we leave for northern Israel!



# May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Sunday 29

Today was test day. It was the second out of the 4 tests we have to take. I don't believe we were nearly prepared enough due to the fact we have been sight seeing and enjoying the night life. One thing I have noticed was how well PHC has prepared us for graduate level classes. The materiel is extremely dense, but our group was able to prioritize what was most important.

Chase German

We visited King of Kings church in Jerusalem tonight. The congregation was alive and full of the joy of the Lord! We sang songs in both English and Hebrew, and we worshipped with people from around the world (people from Germany, Africa, Canada, the US and Israel to name a few). The pastor encouraged us to view God as our Savior who loves us no matter what. His love for us is unconditional!

Hailey Roberts



Got up for an early breakfast this morning, Squeezed in some additional study time before our second quiz at 8:00-9:00 am. It was a thorough test on our study and field trip through the Shepelah hill country, Negev, and Arabah areas to the west and south of Jerusalem. Worked on the Map Exercises for this upcoming week, up to lunch time.

**Lecture on Ephraim and Manassa/Samaria.** Dr. Caessens provided an overview for the areas where we will be doing field study this upcoming week. This included Ephraim, Samaria and Mount Carmel, Sharon Plain, the Galilee area and Sea of Galilee, Jordan Valley, and Golan area. It will be a full week!

**Evening.** Several of us returned to the King of Kings Church for their Sunday evening service. It is within a 20 minute walk from our hotel and is on Joffa Road which runs near to our location. Stopped for food at a small café on the way back and had shawarma (a Levantine Arab meat sandwich using pita bread, where lamb, chicken, turkey, beef, veal or other meats are placed on a spit, and may be grilled for as long as a day) – think of an Arab version of a burrito! It was very good! ☺ Came back to the hotel and worked on updating the daily posts.

### Favorite Moments:

- One of the songs we sang at King of Kings spoke of things we have been seeing in our field studies:

Let the ruins come to life

In the power of Your Name.

Rising up from ashes;

God forever you reign!

How exciting to know that He is greater than the ruins and ashes in our lives – and in our world!

- A grade-school age young boy who was dressed in the black, Jewish Orthodox attire (black hat, and long curls down each cheek) was playing and walking by us as we walked on the Joffa Road sidewalk with many others; as it was a beautiful evening. Because he was playing, his hat had tipped back on his head far enough to reveal that his head was shaved clean, with his long curls growing only from a line just above his ears! It was about external appearance...and personal comfort!

**Tomorrow.** We depart on the bus at 8:00 am for our field study of the northern areas of Israel.

# May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016

---

Monday

Today we left Jerusalem and headed north. Our team visited the ancient sights of Shiloh, Shechem, Mount Carmel, and Jacobs Well. When looking at the ruins I couldn't help but feel that we are just a speck of sand in the vastness of time. The greatest empire in the ancient world was the Romans. They spent immense amounts of gold and man power to create grand cities and temples. Nearly two thousand years later, nothing is left of these great societies, only crumbling stone.

Chase German

We are spending the night on Mt. Carmel tonight. It's absolutely beautiful here! To think that Elijah battled Baal here about two thousand years ago causes me to focus on the power of God and the beauty of His creation. God works everything out for the good of those who love Him. He planned the place where the battle was to ensue between Baal and Himself, and He knew I would be there learning about Him. He used Elijah to display His power and to help me trust Him more.

Hailey Roberts.

Today started with an early breakfast at 6:30 am, and a walk of a few blocks to the bus for an 8:00 am departure for the north of Israel

**Khirbet Sellun / Shiloh.** (Josh 18:1-6, 10; Judg 21:16-24; 1 Sam 1-4; Ps 78:54-69; Jer 7:1-15, 26; 4-6; 1 Kings 11:26-40, 14:1-8; and Jer 41:4-5). Interesting that Judges 21:19 provides a specific description of the location of Shiloh. Its remains are at a rounded tell about 18 miles north of Jerusalem in a natural amphitheater surrounded by mountains (which made it a good meeting place for the tribes) and with springs located nearby. A fortified site dating to the Middle Bronze Age (1650-1550 BC) of about 4 acres surrounded by a solid city wall and religious worship remnants has been excavated. Conservative Biblical scholars place the events of the book of Joshua within the Late Bronze Age, and it was at Shiloh that the Tabernacle had a fixed location (Josh 18:1) and remained until the Kingdom was unified under Saul. This is also where lots were cast to determine the allocation of the land to the Israelite tribes who had not yet received their own territory.

As we travelled north from Shiloh, we passed into Samaria region, which has periodically been closed to tourism due to security concerns. And we did have to make a detour around one town, that our shortest route would have taken us through. Dr. Caessens indicated the Israeli soldiers would not have let our tour bus go through that area.

**Jacob's Well. (John 4:1-42)** We visited the church built over the traditional location of one of the wells dug by Abraham, and redug by Jacob. It also marks the traditional location of Jesus' meeting with the Woman at the Well from Samaria. Some of our group even got to drink some of the water from the well, which was quite deep and aligns with some of the clues about it in the Gospel account.

**Tell Balatah / Shechem.** (Gen 12:6-7, 33:18-20, 34:1-31, 37:12-17; Josh 20:7, 24:1-29, 32; Judg 9:1-49; 1 Kings 12:1-25; 2 Chron 10:1-19)

The OT describes Shechem as being in the hill country of Ephraim and below Mount Gerizim. But it seems to have at times been considered part of the tribe of Ephraim and at other times part of the tribe of Manasseh. This also reflects the tribal culture that where you live is who you are! It is located between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. Remains that may be seen today are from the Middle and Late Bronze Age and Iron Age I periods. It is the first town that Abram visited in the land and built his first altar. It was also Jacob's first stop in the land when he returned from his exile, and he bought land there. It was also where Dinah was raped by the son of its leader and resulted in the killing of all the local men by Jacob's sons. It is notable for its sliding gate doors, and was the home of Gideon's concubine. After Solomon's death, it was at Shechem that the majority of the tribes rejected the rule of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, and gave allegiance to Jeroboam from Ephraim. It is thought it was destroyed by the Philistines, following their victory at Apeck in which they also captured the Ark of the Covenant. During the Roman

period, the population center shifted west to the city of Neapolis, which is preserved in the name of the local city, Nablus.

**Lunch in Samaria Restaurant in Sebastia** (the proprietor said he put up a group picture of us on his Facebook Page – Samaria Restaurant)

**Samaria / Sebaste / Sebastia.** (1 Kings 16:23-24, 28-32; 20:1-21; 22:1-39; 2 Kings 1:2, 6:24-7:20; 10:15-27; 17:5-6, 24-33; Amos 3:9-15, 6:1, 8:14; and Acts 8:4-25)

Like Shechem, the city of Samaria has a natural amphitheater feature. For example, Amos invited her enemies to take a ringside seat on the surrounding mountains to view the injustices occurring inside the city. It originally was comprises about 20 acres and during the Roman period expanded to the foot of the hill and included a 3-mile aqueduct to bring water. Originally it was established as a location for the production of olive oil and wine, but was selected by Israelite King Omri in 876 BC. Omri and his son, Ahab, expanded it significantly, and benefited from its proximity to regional trade routes and foreign alliances including Ahab's wife Jezebel. It was destroyed by the Assyrians as described in the OT and in other historical records. Alexander the Great installed a governor in the city, deported many residents, and replaced them with Macedonian colonists who brought their Greek culture with them. In the Roman Period, Herod the Great implemented large-scale building projects, including a temple honoring Caesar Augustus. Destroyed during the first Jewish Revolt, it was rebuilt and renamed Lucia Septimia Sebaste, which is reflected in the current local name of Sebastia.

**Mukhraka (traditional site of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel.** (1 Kings 17:1, 18:1-46; 2 Chron 6:18-21, 26-27; 7:1)

Christian and Moslem traditions place the confrontation of Elijah with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel at a site known as el-Mukhraka, and Arabic word meaning, "the burning" or "the sacrifice." A spring is located nearby and its name in Arabic is "the river of slaughter." By the side of the stream is a tell called Tell el-Kassis, "the mound of the priests."

**Drove to city of Haifa, where we spent overnight in a lovely Carmelite-run hotel, overlooking Haifa.**



#### **Favorite Moments:**

- Dr. Caessens told an interesting story about local perspectives on security. While traveling in the Samaria area during one of the intifadas, there was natural safety concerns. She was travelling in a vehicle with Palestinian plates and was very aware that almost all the other vehicles in evidence were also. Then she observed a relatively large truck displaying Israeli plates, but the driver seemed unconcerned or even unaware he might be in some danger. When she asked her traveling companion about it, he pointed out the large Coca-Cola logo on the side, and remarked that the Coca-Cola truck could 'go where it wants to'! Everyone wants their Coca-Cola!
- Watching the sun go down over the Mediterranean Sea from the lovely grounds of the Carmelite Hotel. ☺



# May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Tuesday

Today, we toured a site with a live action representation of a normal town in the time of Jesus. The tour presented us with an entirely different dynamic than what we've been used to the past couple weeks. I loved interacting with the people there and watching them make tools and weave fabrics. The site has rounded off our immersive education. We have listened to lectures and viewed archeological sites but now we have truly experienced the history in a firsthand account. These methods are fun ways to learn and help solidify the lessons in our memories!

**Hailey Roberts**



Today we went to Caesarea National Park and the Nazareth Village. It was amazing to see the ancient wonders that Herod the Great built during his time as ruler. The aqueducts were an amazing testament to the possibility of human achievement. We finished the night at the Sea of Galilee. It is a lot smaller than what I expected. Seeing the sun set behind the ridges that surround the sea brought about a peace that I have only felt a few times before.

**Chase German**

Again, an early breakfast led to an 8:00 am departure from our lovely hotel overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

**Caesarea / Qaisariya.** (Acts 10, 12:18-24, 25:13-32) Caesarea was located at important crossroads of sea and land routes. It is sometimes referred to in ancient texts as Caesarea near Sebastos (its harbor), Caesarea of Straton (after Strato's Tower, the city's precursor), Caesarea by the seaside, or Caesarea of Palestine. During the Persian Period, the Phoenicians developed a small port and an inner harbor. During the Roman Period, Herod the Great built a major harbor and support facility, an opulent palace with fresh water pool on the coastline, temple for Caesar, theatre, hippodrome, and market place, which were dedicated in about 10 BC. Pontius Pilate had his administrative center in Caesarea, and the only inscription mentioning his name was discovered in Caesarea. The incident related in Acts 12:

18-24 about Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, happened in Caesarea, as did Paul's initial defense before Antonius Felix. After Felix was replaced by Porcius Festus, Paul gave his final defense to Festus, Herod Agrippa II (great grandson of Herod the Great), and his sister Bernice at Caesarea, prior to departing for Rome to appeal his case to Caesar.

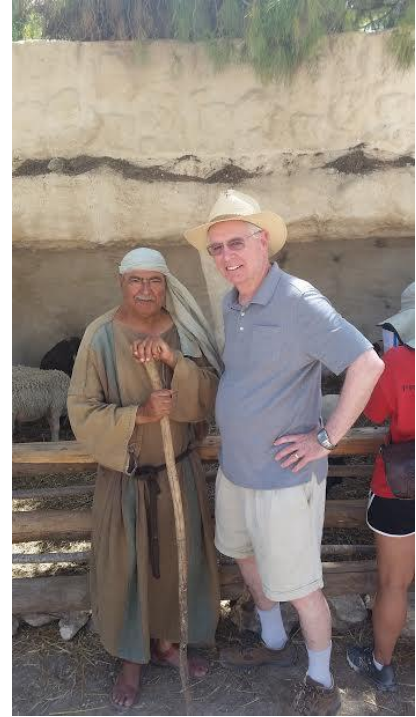


**Nazareth Village (reproduction).** Caire Pfann guided us through a most unusual recreation of a first-century Nazarene Village, located on the grounds of the YMCA in the modern city of Nazareth. It featured a unique mixture of authentic 1<sup>st</sup> century archaeology and farming along with well-researched recreations of an olive press and oil production facility, vineyards, wine press, and residences. It was made alive by local Christian Arabs who were dressed in 1<sup>st</sup> century attire and using farming, shepherding, and cloth making techniques from that period.

**Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth.** (Luke 1:26-38; 11:27-28; Matt 2:19-23; Luke 4:16-30; Is 61:1-2; and John 1:43-46) We got to visit the Catholic church built over the traditional site of Angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary of the coming birth of a son, by the Holy Spirit. The art work and splendor made for quite a contrast with the Nazareth Village!

**Favorite Moments:**

- One of the insights that Caire Pfann shared with us was that there were many miracles surrounding Jesus' birth. But one of them that we don't often consider is that Mary said, "Yes!" We should be people who have the faith to say, "Yes" to the Lord, too!
- Another moment she shared was the conversation between Jesus and his mother, Mary, after they found him still in the Temple, after they had departed for Nazareth two days earlier. Jesus replied to his mother, 'Didn't you know that I must be about my Father's business?' (Luke 2:49) Except in the original Greek it is, 'I must be about the \_\_\_ of the Father'...and there is no noun! The implication was that Jesus was saying he needed to be pursuing the calling of the Father on his life, now! And yet, even he had to learn obedience to his own parents, and thereby 'grew in favor and knowledge' with God and man! That is quite a combination for us to learn, too – God's calling, and in His timing!
- Arrived at hotel on Sea of Galilee just in time to see sun going down over the hills of Galilee!



# June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

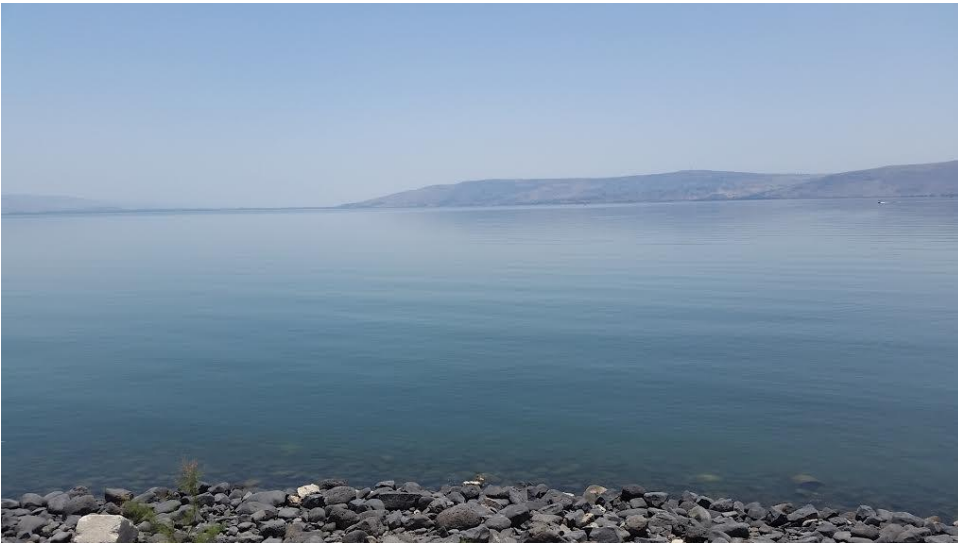
Wednesday

Today we enjoyed a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. The water was calm and looked like a giant sheet of glass. Our group then left and traveled to the ancient sea side town of Capernaum. This is where Jesus based his ministry during his adult life. We saw an ancient synagogue as well as the supposed home where Peter lived. The day was finished by taking pictures where the pigs jumped into the sea after Jesus cast a demon out of a man.

Chase German

Taking a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee reminded me of the Bible story where Jesus walked on water. Sometimes it's difficult to believe in the Lord with so many distractions around you. The wind and the waves beat against you like advertisements and movie trailers bombard your brain. In order to truly focus on the Lord and believe in Him above everything else you must choose to put Him first. Coming on this trip to Israel and devoting a full month of my time to walking where He walked, seeing what He saw, and feeling what He felt is just one step closer to putting Him first.

Hailey Roberts.



Sea of Galilee

Today started like yesterday, with an early breakfast at 6:30 am, and a walk of a few blocks to the bus for an 8:00 am departure for our field research around the Sea of Galilee. First stop was a boat ride across the Galilee on a very beautiful morning!

**First Century Boat.** Our second stop was at a museum with the actual timbers and construction of a first century Galilee fishing boat that was found buried in the mud along the shore of the Galilee. It was discovered during a very dry year when the waterline was at a very low level. The technology they used to make sure the 2000-year old wood didn't just crumble when it dried out was pretty innovative. More information is available on the boat and the recovery methods they used, at: <http://www.jesusboat.com/story-of-the-jesus-boat>





**Migdal.** (Luke 8:1-3; Mark 15:40-41, 47, Matthew 15; John 20:1-18). Sister Jennifer (from Chicago) related the story of how a vision was born to build a pilgrim's hostel in Magdela, similar to one the Catholic church has in Jerusalem. The idea was to commemorate women in the NT that supported and cared for Jesus and his disciples, including Mary of Magdela (Mary Magdeleen). When they started the construction process, they discovered a first century AD synagogue on the property they had purchased, as well as some unique liturgical furniture. Because of its location outside the walls of the town and because Jesus went through the Galilee teaching (Matt 4:23) in all of the area synagogues (Mark 1:39), there is reasonable evidence to suggest Jesus may have taught in this exact synagogue. It is particularly intact because it was undiscovered until just recently. Dr. Caessens worked on the archeology team that excavated the synagogue a number of years ago.

**Capernaum / Tell Hum.** (Matt 4:12, 24:41, 18:6; John 6:25-59) The synagogue standing in Capernaum dates from the 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century AD, but is built over the location of the synagogue in which Jesus described himself as "the Bread of Life." There is a very modern Catholic church very near to the ruins of the synagogue which is built over the top of what many believe was the house church Peter started in Capernaum in the NT. The church has incorporated a glass floor so you can see down into the excavated house area of 'Peter's hours.' Due to the chain of custody of the property going back to the first century AD, this may well be the Apostle Peter's house.

**Lunch in Chorazin.** We had box lunches on picnic tables prior to going into the excavations and ruins at Chorazin.

**Chorazin.** (Matt 11:20-24, 23:1-4)

This site is referenced in the NT, but is also referenced in the Talmud and in the writings of Eusebius. It's notoriety stems from two things. Jesus referenced it being a location that did not receive him well, and due to their unbelief in spite of miracles he had performed there, would be judged more harshly than Sodom; and a stone "Seat of Moses" was found during the excavation of its synagogue. Its use may have been by the person expounding upon the scripture reading. Such a chair was alluded to by Jesus in Matt 23:1-3.

**Overview of ancient Gergesaat Overlook by Golan.** (Mark 5:1-20)

We stopped at an overlook on the Golan Heights side of the Sea of Galilee. This was at a cliff face that was the scene of struggle between Israel and its Arab opponents in the 1967 war. It is also a candidate location where the swine may have jumped into the sea, after Jesus cast the demons out of the possessed man. It is in an area where there are still unrecovered land mines from that earlier conflict.



**Hippos / Tell Sussita.**

Our final stop of the day was a surprise. After the bus drove up some steep roads in the Golan area, we hiked about ¼ mile to the site of Hippos (Tell Sussita). This elevated Golan location provides a panoramic view of the entire Sea of Galilee. Roman and Byzantine churches and elaborate buildings and theater were built in the commanding location overlooking the Sea of Galilee, perhaps as a means of controlling the fish trade and routes headed north toward Damascus.

**Back to same hotel, located on southeast side of the Sea of Galilee. Dinner at 7:00 pm!**

# June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

---

Thursday

God gave me a special surprise today! Four Israeli soldiers pulled up in a military Humvee, and I got to talk with them for a little while. One of the soldiers spoke English very well. He told me he wanted to travel back to the States after his service commitment was up. He has family back in Boston, and he seemed quite amicable towards the US. I felt very safe around the soldiers because I knew they supported US-Israeli relations and would protect me as an American citizen!

**Hailey Roberts**

Traveling through the northern part of Israel today was great. Our group was able to search the ancient city of Dan. The water from the mountain was flowing throughout the site and you could see why ancient civilizations fought over this oasis. We finished the day overlooking the Golan-Heights and Syria. You could hear explosions off in the distance. It was a time of great reflection knowing that we are so blessed to live in a place where we don't have to worry about our neighbors getting entangled in a civil war.

**Chase German**

Again, an early breakfast led to an 8:00 am departure from our lovely hotel overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

**Tell Hazor.** (Josh 11:1-10; Judges 4:24; 1 Kings 9:15; 2 Kings 15:29) During the Middle Bronze period (2400-1550 BC; age of the patriarchs), Hazor had a population estimated at 30,000-40,000 people, which made it one of the largest cities in the Middle East at that time. Its richness afforded it the ability for two temples and reflected its role as a middleman in the extensive north-south trade between the Euphrates and Egypt, as well as east-west trade from Babylonia to Greece. The ruler of Hazor referred to himself as “king”, the only Canaanite ruler in the Amarna archives to do so when addressing the pharaoh. The stature of Hazor is reflected in the statement in Joshua 11:10, “for Hazor formerly was the head of all these kingdoms.” Joshua 11 describes Joshua capturing Hazor and burning it as part of the Israelite conquest on returning from Egypt. Later, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC, Solomon fortified its gate, using the same basic design he had used at Megiddo and Gezer. (1 Kings 9:15)

**Hula Nature Reserve.** We walked through this lush, almost tropical nature preserve just above the Sea of Galilee. None of us expected this in Israel! Nor did we expect the hundreds of grade-school children who were also there for a field trip! But, it demonstrated what a difference having water makes!





**Lunch** was at an overlook of the Jula Valley and Tel Abel Beth-maachah located in the Upper Galilee. It was a breath-taking view. Hailey was a definite hit with the IDF soldiers who were there ‘to keep an eye on things’(!) The officer we talked to has 8 more months in his military tour, and wants to visit family in the Boston area! From the overlook, we were able to see where we would be going the rest of the day – over toward Mt. Hermon and across the Golan Heights back toward the north end of the Sea of Galilee.

**Tel Dan at the Dan Nature Reserve.** (Gen 14:13-16; Judges 18; 1 Kings 12:25-31; 2 Kings 10:29, 15:29; Ps 1:1-3; Jer 18:14) The Tribe of Dan was unsuccessful in conquering the Canaanites and Philistines in their original territory in the Shephelah and coastal plain; so they thought the northern area would be better for them. Little did they know this put them directly in the path of invasions of Israel by the Aramaeans, Assyrians, and later the Babylonians! Their territory in the north, at the foot of Mt. Hermon, effectively defined the northern border of Israel – i.e., ‘from Dan to Beersheba.’ The city had previously been named Laish, and featured an arched gate, which was unusual and similar to that of

Ashkelon. During the Iron Age (1200-1000 BC, during the times of the Judges and King Saul), it also came under the influence of the Phoenicians; and David’s son Jeroboam set up golden calves in Bethel and in Dan to counter the religious influence of Jerusalem and the tribe of Judah, following David’s death. ((1 Kings 12:25-29) An important find was an Aramaic inscription that mentions the “House of David” and the “King of Israel”, because it provides solid archaeological proof of the Semitic, Davidic kingdom in Israel during this 8<sup>th</sup> century BC period.

**Caesarea Philippi / Banias.** (Matt 16:13-28; Isa 38:10-11; Matt 17:1-9) In 20 BC, the area was given by Augustus Caesar to Herod the Great. He expressed his gratitude by building a temple there in honor of Augustus, and to distinguish it from Caesaria on the sea, it became Caesarea Philippi. The local feature of a grotto dedicated to the god Pan from Greek mythology was incorporated by Herod the Great.

**Golan Heights and Overlook of Quneitra.** As we started our travel south, back toward the Sea of Galilee, we followed the Golan Heights. This provided interesting roadside sights of Israeli bases in the Golan, as well as trenches and other remnants of fighting with Syria who controlled this area from 1948 to 1967 (see photo). Some of the contention was stimulated over competition to exploit or re-route the headwaters of the Jordan River that originate in the Golan Heights areas. We had an excellent view of the border area, including a United Nations outpost near the Syrian-Israel border. We also heard what sounded like artillery being fired for a good part of the afternoon, from the direction of Damascus (some 40 miles to the north of where we were).

Around 5:30 pm, we arrived at a beautiful monastery on the Mt of Beatitudes for our overnight stay and enjoyed an excellent meal in their high-ceilinged dining area. We were blessed!

#### **Favorite Moments:**

- Walking through a tropical landscape in the middle of northern Israel, when all we’d seen for a couple weeks was wilderness and stone blocks! ☺





# June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

Friday

Today was our last day of field work. We walked through the ancient site of Gideon's Spring. There was a nice, peaceful park that was put in place to commemorate what happened there. We then left and visited a gentile city called Bet-She'an. It was built in the Greco-Roman style and was truly magnificent. This past three weeks has been a blessing to our entire group. I would recommend this kind of study abroad program to any PHC student that is interested in the Middle East.

Chase

German

Today was our last day of touring with the University of the Holy Land. It was bitter sweet. The ruins of Bet She'an were absolutely beautiful even though it was 100+ degrees Fahrenheit. Bet She'an was one of the most well-preserved sites we have seen. The columns were absolutely huge! To think of the thoughtfully placed stones and the carefully planned architecture amazes me. Even though people 2,000 years ago did not have the technology we have today, they were extremely advanced. God chose the perfect time to send Jesus on earth to die and save us from our sins. It was not a time where people lacked intelligence. In fact, they were quite smart and extremely blessed to have Jesus walk among them for 33 years.

Hailey Roberts.



Today started like yesterday, with an early breakfast at 6:30 am, and a walk of a few blocks to the bus for an 8:00 am departure for our field research around the Sea of Galilee. First stop was a boat ride across the Galilee on a very beautiful morning!

**Tel Megiddo.** (Judg 1:27-28; 1 Kings 9:15; 2 Kings 9:27, 23:29-30; 2 Chron 35:20-24) The city was located at a road junction. It guarded the central of the three branches of the "Via Maris" as it entered the Jezreel Valley from the Sharon Plain via the Megiddo Pass. It also lay along a route connecting the Mediterranean coastal area with the Jordan Valley via the Jezreel Valley system. During the Early Bronze period the city was surrounded by a strong wall about 8 meters wide and contained three temples arranged around a circular altar. It was one of the major urban centers in Palestine at this time. Later it came under King David's control and King Solomon fortified its gate as part of a strategic security plan for the northern areas. (1 Kings 9:15) A portion of the Gilgamesh Epic was found on a fragment of a tablet at Megiddo.

**Tel Yizre'el (Ahab and Jezebel).** (1 Kings 21; 2 Kings 4:8-37; 2 Kings 4 and 9). This is the location that Elisha the Prophet ran to in order to beat Ahab to his home and execute the judgment of the Lord on his wicked wife, Jezebel.

**En-harod / En-jalud (Gideon).** (Judges 6-7; 1 Sam 29:1, 28:4-25, 31:1-7) We had lunch by the spring where Gideon received direction from the Lord about a strategy to defeat their enemies with a smaller, rather than a larger, army. It was a very hot day today (over 100 degrees) and some of us stood in the water from the spring while Dr Caessens read us the story from the Bible.

**Tel Bet She'an / Tell el-Husn / Scythopolis.** (Judges 1:27; 1 Sam 31:8-13; 2 Sam 21:12-14) This city was at the crossroads of three routes – connecting the Mediterranean with Gilead; from Shechem in the north to the southwest of Beth-shean and eastern Samaria; and through the Jordan Valley connecting the Jericho/Dead Sea area with the Sea of Galilee region and points further north. This city experienced periods of control by Egypt, the Philistines, David and Solomon, and later control by the Persians, Romans, and Byzantine empires.



**Back to Jerusalem and the Knight's Palace hotel for our last night of the UHL course.** Final exam is tomorrow morning!

**Favorite Moments:**

- Dr Caessens commented on the date palms growing on top of the tel at Megiddo. They apparently resulted from some of the excavators eating dates and spitting them out on the site. She indicated that getting date palms to grow from seeds is not hard; but to get them to produce fruit (dates), they need (1) a lot of water; and (2) a lot of heat. Thought that might have spiritual application in our lives as well!
- Having delicious, juicy melon for desert with our evening meal! After a long, very hot day at the end of our 3 weeks of lectures and field work, it was just great!!
- Talking with new friends we made from Canada, Zambia, and Taiwan about our experiences these past weeks in the Holy Land!

# June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

---

## Travel Log – Saturday 4 June.

The final exam for UHL was difficult but rewarding. As a graduate program, UHL has presented us with material that is highly intensive. We have covered such a broad range of lessons and have learned so much! Looking back on all that I have learned throughout these past few weeks helps me appreciate Israel's past, present and future. I have a better understanding of Biblical history and geography and of the present situation in Israel today as a result of the UHL course.

Hailey Roberts

Was up early before breakfast, as various administrative tasks kept me from making as much progress preparing for the exam last night as I wanted (e.g., changing rooms because the A/C in our room wasn't working...and the 'open mic night' at the neighborhood disco was too loud to sleep through with the windows open!). Also found out that some of our schedule for Sunday was on-again/off-again, so attempting to get that back on track and doing some minimal studying kept me up past midnight. ☺ But, I got done what I had originally targeted for last night prior to a later breakfast, and was about on track by 9:00 am.

**Prep and Final Exam.** Spent most of the morning reviewing and organizing notes and Regional Study Summaries. The final was in two sections – a last quiz on the northern areas we studied this past week; and then, a comprehensive test on the entire three weeks, composed of an essay question (assigned as a 'Take Home' assignment), a matching section and a multiple choice section. Took the last quiz (the hardest and longest part) right before lunch; and then jumped on the final portion after lunch. Glad it's behind me! The UHL program certainly exposed us to a rich texture of history and geography of Israel, and I think we learned quite a bit of it, too! The materials will be excellent for future reference in teaching and personal Bible study.

**Evening Dinner.** Left to meet our transport at the New Gate to Dr. Steve and Clair Pfann's house at 5:30 pm. We were invited to dinner (tacos and burritos!) and meet their son, who is going to start in a research program this Fall in bio-technology at Hebrew University. From Jerusalem's Old City to bio-technology in a 20-minute ride! We were blessed on this trip! Dr. Pfann showed us his replica of the famous Copper Scrolls and images of the Hebrew Prayer Book Project he is analyzing. It was very interesting to hear him describe the context and meaning of the local Arab saying, "Better my enemy over me, than my neighbor." In such a tribal, patriarchal society, they can accept an outsider being in charge (British, Israeli's, etc.), but would not accept one of their 'tribe' being put in charge, because that would bring shame on them to be perceived as 'under' one of their peer group. That is why some think a 'two-state solution' will never work, because it would generate a civil war within the Palestinian entity, not to even speak of the platform it would provide for anti-Israel actions.

### Favorite Moments:

- Getting the final segment of the last tests completed! Yea!
- Being able to stay in the shade or A/C on another very hot day in Jerusalem – about 100 degrees – and very thankful we are not out hiking around in the heat, today!
- Receiving a helping hand that was extended to assist me in getting out of the hotel elevator when it stopped between floors, today! ☺
- Getting to meet some other students studying here in Israel on short-term courses.



# June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Sunday

Today, we visited the Temple Mount sifting project. This archaeological digging site helped me understand how archaeologists search for and discover their artifacts. First, they would take loads of dirt from the Temple Mount excavating area. Then they put the dirt in small buckets, soak the buckets in water to clear the dirt off, and finally sift by hand through the pebbles and small artifacts. We helped them find special stones, pieces of metal, shards of pottery, pieces of glass, ceramic tiles, and bones. Revealing bits and pieces of a person's life thousands of years ago helped me see how real the person actually was. That person actually built the pottery that I was discovering, and that person used those coins that others were finding. This link to the past was quiet thrilling to experience! **Chase German**

On Sunday, we met with Canon Andrew White, Vicar of Baghdad. We were blessed to meet him and hear some of his life story. He is such a strong man in Christ despite all the pain he has seen. He definitely has the joy of the Lord, and that joy comes from the unconditional love of God! Canon White told us of a young boy he had met. The boy had just lost his father to one of the militant groups, and he asked Canon White to be his "daddy." Canon White accepted the position whole heartedly and gave the boy a little wooden cross. The boy started to cry and said, "My father was supposed to give me a cross." Canon White lovingly gave the boy another cross and said it was for the boy's father. The boy replied, "I want others to feel loved. Please give them my father's cross." Now, Canon White travels around the world spreading the love of Christ to others by giving them little wooden crosses. He even gave one to me. I felt honored, and I felt so loved by God!

**Hailey Roberts.**



It was nice to be able to take a little slower start to the day! (Some of us even slept in late at the expense of breakfast! Not saying I did; and Chase never misses a meal!) The day started warm and got even hotter as it progressed. Breakfast time and the rest of the morning were largely taken up with:

- Saying our good-bye's to our fellow students and faculty with whom we'd spent the last three weeks.
- Preparing our luggage and rearranging for our last week's activities (including a little laundry and cataloging our PHC mementos and identifying to whom they would be presented during our last week).

**Temple Sifting Project.** We took a cab to the Mt. of Olives and met with Professor Gabriel Barkay, Director of the Temple Mount Sifting Project. (Note to Self: Palestinian Red Cross and Palestinian Red Crescent – where we needed to go – are NOT the same organization, nor located at the same place!) Our meeting was facilitated by Erick Stakelback and resulted from our interview with him, earlier on our trip. This is a largely volunteer operated project for sifting the earth debris that was removed from the Temple





Mount in the late 1990's. Professor Barkay indicated they are a little over half way through sifting through the over 300 truckloads of debris from the Temple Mount, and that it will likely take another 10 years to finish this level of the work. Their finds are quite impressive, including hundreds of coins from the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple (David and Solomon) and 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple (contemporary with Jesus) periods. Interestingly, the Arabs claim the Jews never had a presence there; while they assert Islam had structures there before Mohammed's time, who started Islam (!). So, the significance of this work and the careful analysis they

are doing is very impressive. I would recommend this be added to everyone's visit to Jerusalem, as getting your hands dirty with leftovers from one of the most historical spots on the earth is worth the trip! Their applied technology, detailed orientation of volunteers, and very business-like approach left quite an impression on us. Our desire to do 'just one more bucket' of dirt, almost made us late for our next appointment, and came as close to Chase missing a meal as happened the entire trip. So you know we all got elbow deep into the sifting project!

**Canon Andrew White.** After getting our luggage to our new lodgings at the Lutheran Guest House, we met up with our afternoon group at the Jaffa Gate. Tim King was our guide, and he had made the arrangements for us to meet Canon White ('Vicar of Baghdad'). Included in our group were Dr. Ginger Caessens, Sam from Ghana (from the Toronto Seminary and staying over for the Jordan trip starting today), Cynthia Lawson the UHL Registrar, and another UHL graduate student. Andrew also invited a British doctor of Economics and Health, who is on a volunteer stint in Jerusalem; and **Mr. Hannah** who has served as his personal assistant for over 30 years. For more background on White, see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew\\_White\\_\(priest\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_White_(priest)). For info on his organization focused on reconciliation see: <http://frme.org/canon-andrew-white/>

The discussion was as varied as the backgrounds of the group, but it was fascinating to hear him relate his calling into the church service. He was a practicing anesthetist and felt led to pray one day, "What is next, Lord?" After struggling with the answer for a while, he went to seminary. He also related how that all on the same day in 1998 he got his diagnosis of multiple sclerosis, his wife gave birth to their second child, and the Lord directed him to go to serve in the Middle East in Baghdad! One of his areas of emphasis is building schools for the children of Iraqi refugees in northern Iraq and Jordan and building medical clinics for them. An unexpected treat was him letting us see the personal Bible of Smith Wigglesworth, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pentecostal preacher and faith healer (see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smith\\_Wigglesworth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smith_Wigglesworth)). White's grandfather had been the long-time personal assistant to Wigglesworth and received his Bible upon Wigglesworth's death. Because his scheduled trip to speak in Bethlehem had been cancelled at the last minute, we got some extra time with him. It was a blessed time!

**Israel Independence Day.** Because Canon White invited us to dinner later that evening, we didn't have enough time to get to and from the King of Kings service. But it did give us time to observe the celebrations and 1000's of flag-carrying Israeli youth that were singing at the top of their voices! It was a fun celebration to watch. We were told that they were marching to the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) for a special observance named the Dance of the Flags that evening. The crowds were enormous so we didn't get to see that, but watching the parade gave us some idea of what that must have been like. It reminded me of movies of the celebrations in 1948 upon achieving their initial status as a modern nation. We watched from in front of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, and the large black limos and security detail indicated a dignitary was inside. Someone told us it was President Netanyahu. Unfortunately, we didn't get to see him when he came out, as we had to leave for dinner.

**King David Hotel for Dinner.** Canon White's apartment is just down the block from the King David Hotel and he likes to go there for dinner. He asked us if we might join him for dinner at "Dave's Caf" (short for café!) and really before we knew exactly what and where he had in mind, we signed up! Too many things happened to tell it all, but it was an amazing evening hearing more of his story and getting to meet one of his adopted daughters, Liddia. She lost both parents in the fighting in Ukraine (the 'other war' as Canon White termed it), and is doing volunteer work in Jerusalem for now. One of the interesting modern features of the hotel was its line of signatures of dignitaries in a ring in the floor around the entry area that have visited there. It included Putin, Churchill, and many others. It was the headquarters of the British during the British Mandate period in Palestine, so it is a location very rich in history. Our discussions included his interest in coming to speak at PHC on one of his upcoming visits to Truro Episcopal church in Fairfax, VA; as well as him going around the circle and asking for prayer needs and praying for each of us on the spot in the lobby of the King David Hotel. It was a very unusual experience to say the least, and certainly one of the highlights of our trip! And there have been many highlights!



#### **Favorite Moments:**

- Hearing Professor Barkay, by his own description in his late 70's, speak so passionately about the Temple Sifting Project and his desire to see it through to the end while he still has the strength to do so.
- Hearing Canon White relate the pathos of an Iraqi Christian father who denied Jesus to save his children from being slaughtered; and the story of children who did not deny their love for Jesus, but who lost both their parents as a direct result of their testimony.
- In response to a question on what the Lord is about in the Middle East today, hearing Canon White say that the Lord is very sad over the way the Church at large is uniformed and sometimes unresponsive to the suffering of their fellow Christians, particularly those suffering almost unspeakable things under ISIS, today.
- Hearing Canon White talk about The Name, Hashem, as the proper way in Israel and among Jewish people to refer to the Lord. In the Old Testament, the Hebrews were not permitted to say the name of God, because He was so holy. So, they just said, Hashem – The Name, out of respect.



# June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016

---

Monday

Today we met with Dr. Petra Hedlt and her husband. Our discussion centered around Christians in Israel and the contrasting dynamics of religious practices within Christian doctrines. Dr. Hedlt said one of the things that surprised her was the different ways Christians honor and worship God. While some Christians may believe and practice slightly contrasting views to other Christians, we all learn and read the same things in the Bible. We are one church under God regardless of whether or not we dance for joy in the church isle-ways or stand still in the Lord's presence.

**Hailey Roberts**

This morning was a 're-charge our batteries' time (our personal ones, not those in our cell phones or laptops!). Lovely breakfast overlooking the Temple Mount area, and on a clear and warm – not hot – morning! It was nice. Had a leisurely lunch of Falafal Salad (yummy!) at a local café between the Lutheran Guest House where we are now, and our previous hotel, nearer the New Gate.

**Shopping.** Spent some of the afternoon following lunch and our next appointment shopping in the Old City. I went to the Catholic Notre Dame de France, just outside the New Gate, to get one item I had seen at Magdala gift shop, but was sold out when I came back to get it, following our trip around its features. They told me I could get their same items here in Jerusalem. They were right, plus I was blessed with a bonus as it was on quite a sale at their Notre Dame location, today. :)

**Dr. Petra Heldt and Malcolm Lowe.** Tim King introduced us in the afternoon to this husband and wife team (she is from Germany; he from the UK) who have been working extensively with the Aramaic community as well as with an ecumenical movement in Jerusalem. We met in a local coffee shop in an upscale mall, just outside the Old City. They are on the staff of UHL as well as Hebrew University, and have been working to foster understandings of the unique value within each tradition within the Christian community and their parallels within the Hebrew traditions. It was interesting to hear Petra speak of her calling into ordained ministry and her doctoral work on the writings of the early Christian fathers and, for example, the similarities among teaching and writing on the topic of humility in Christendom and Hebrew writings.

**Favorite Moments:**

- Hearing Petra talk about analysis of the protestant church during pre-WWII Germany and some of the parallels to today with regard to what is happening to Christians in parts of the Middle East. Her prescription of, 1) Speak the truth, to include about ISIS and Islam; and 2) Act on the truth, were refreshing and challenging.
- Having a free evening to do a little catching up and re-charging, after a very busy 3 weeks of intensive lectures and strenuous field work!

# June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Tuesday

Yair and Anna Pinto: We met with two individuals who had come out of the Israeli Defense Force and had established themselves as key players in Israel's channel 7 news team. The two, Yair and Anna Pinto, were a young couple who have seen a lot and have developed a strong work ethic from their past experiences. As a tank commander, Yair had the lives of both his men and his enemies in his hands. It seemed like Yair and Anna value human life greatly as a result of their service in the IDF, and they push themselves to work hard and show others the value of life in their workplace. **Hailey Roberts.**

The morning was a catch-up time. I worked on doing some laundry (hopefully, to hold me through the end of the trip). Students worked on sending me any posts they missed as we went along. The day started bright and not quite as warm which was nice!

**Dr. Norman Bailey and Yitzhak Zahavy.** We walked just around the corner from our guest house to the historic Christ Church, located just inside the Jaffa Gate, where Tim King had arranged for us to use their conference room.

Norman surveyed the Israeli social and economic situation for us. Problems they don't have are in housing, education, and health – even though Israelis like to complain about all these areas! Social problems they are facing include: organized crime and corruption (somewhat stimulated by the magnitude of immigration from the former Soviet Union countries); ethnic and external religious problems with Arab muslims, which are about 16% of their population (but excluding Druze or Aramaens – Syrian Christians – which have integrated fairly well); and lastly, internal religious issues with the Ultra Orthodox Jews (who occupy a privileged position, due to exemptions from IDF service and subsidies from the government). His good news was that all of these areas seem to be headed in the right direction, even if not 'solved' just yet. He cited recent news that an Arab officer in the IDF had been promoted to the rank of Major (by comparison there have been numbers of Druze general officers as well as Druze serving in ambassador positions for Israel).

His summary of the economy was very positive. Israel has not experienced a recession during the global downturn since 2008, and has continued its basic approach of diversifying – diversifying their markets (expanding to China and India), manufacturing, services, and financial services. Israel remains 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> internationally in most advanced technology areas and are likewise expanding joint education efforts with China, and exploring this approach with others.

He also summarized the very positive outcome of Israel exploiting its gas fields in the Mediterranean, as well as oil discoveries in the Golan. Unlike the gas fields, the oil discoveries will have significant hurdles to achieve production anytime soon, due to: price viability given the lower prices for gasoline recently; uncertainties of the Israeli regulatory process; sorting through the likely international claims on the rights to the oil since Israel's annexing of the Golan is not recognized internationally; and environmental concerns over the fracking technologies that would be used which require significant amounts of water. Yitzhak reviewed the background and implications of the 300-page Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) legislation passed by the Obama Administration requiring international filing of financial reports on US corporate and individual overseas accounts. Compliance in Israel has been further complicated by continued delay in passing Israeli legislation to standardize these reports from Israel financial institutions.



**Yair and Anna Pinto.** We met these former IDF soldiers as a result of Anna being Tim King's daughter! She was a Humvee/Tank Simulator Trainer and Yair was a tank gunner and platoon commander. We met them at the TV7 studio in the new part of Jerusalem (see photo). They described their very earliest memories being of gas masks and gas protection tents during the first Gulf War, when Saddam Hussein was launching rocket attacks on Israeli population centers. Anna shared her experience of just being late and missing her school bus, and then as it was driving away seeing it burst into flames from an attack by terrorists targeting school buses. Yair's brother had a very similar experience, and they both lost classmates in school to terrorist attacks. Air raid drills and running to bomb shelters were just a 'normal' part of them growing up. They described their boot camp and training in the IDF army. Yair also shared what it was like growing up as the only Jewish believer in Jesus as the Messiah in his group of friends, and wondering where he was ever going to find a Messianic believer for a wife! Anna described her decision to enter the IDF out of high school, when she didn't have to because she was not Jewish and a Christian. It was also very interesting to hear them explain the difference in some of their Jewish friends now referring to Jesus as Jeshua (Redeemer), vs the much more common, 'Jeshu' (an acrostic constructed by a Rabbi a number of years ago for, May his name be erased and his memory forgotten!). Among their peer friends from school and the Army, they are the only ones who believe in Jeshua, as the Redeemer. In an Israeli population of about 8.5 million, there are about 20,000 followers of Jeshua.



**Favorite Moments:**

- Yair making a comment on why they try to keep up 'normal life' under abnormal, war-time conditions: We live our lives, so we don't let them win!



# June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Wednesday

Armenian Dinner: Jerusalem is divided up into four quarters: the Christian Quarter, the Jewish Quarter, the Arab Quarter, and the Armenian Quarter. One night, we went to a restaurant in the Armenian Quarter. It was a little hole-in-the-wall type restaurant, but the atmosphere was enjoyable and the food was delicious. The first thing you see when you walk down the steps into the restaurant were huge stone archways and intricate lamps and jewelry scattered about. The meat, sprinkled with curry and cinnamon, added to the interesting setting. Overall, dinner at the Armenian restaurant was quiet fun to experience!

Hailey Roberts

Early breakfast on another beautiful day in Jerusalem. Then we walked to the New Gate to get picked up for our morning at TAM-C Solutions, with Offer Einav.

**TAM-C Solutions.** A series of briefings from their management staff and discussions with their CEO described the business of this approximately 100-member company. About half of their staff are located in Jerusalem. They have international locations, including Los Angeles and Philadelphia, and are bidding on a major effort to support the security planning and operations center for the 2017 EXPLO in Kazakhstan. Their mainline services appear to be security risk management and monitoring on a 24-hour basis, and emergency response training and compliance. Offer referred to his experience in Israeli special operations (something between the US Green Berets and the Delta Force) and that former members of this elite force control the majority of high technology development in Israel. Of specific interest to us at the program level was their description of their Delegate Program, in which they bring in cohorts of students from such US locations as Embrey-Riddle University, ASU, and Philadelphia University for 1-2 week programs on homeland security and emergency response. They also have 6-10 interns per year and these positions are integrated into their 24-hour operations center which supports standing and special time-sensitive monitoring and operational support needs of their corporate customers.

**Lunch.** We stopped at a street-side café on Jaffa Road just inside the Jaffa Gate for a lunch of Swarma and Jerusalem cookies (provided free to Hailey, which she gladly shared with Chase and me! ☺).

**Afternoon.** Downtime in the gardens at the guest house, which overlook the Old City including the Temple Mount.

**Dinner.** We to an Armenian restaurant just inside the Jaffa Gate, The Tavern. It was in a basement type location, because you walked down a set of steps from the street level to enter. It was elaborately decorated with Eastern Europe pictures, sensor pots, necklaces and rings and other jewelry in display cases. Everywhere you looked, there was just more of the Armenian culture on display. It even had Armenian music videos playing and videos of traditional Armenian attire. We got salads and an entre composed of multiple appetizers, which was a great way to sample food that we'd never had before! It was an experience!

# June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Travel Log – Thursday 9 June.

**Kibbutz:** A Kibbutz is a solely socialist sector of Israel. Everyone shares clothes and fruits of their labor. They eat in a communal dining room and have similar housing situations (no one house is more grand than the other). It was interesting to see how people within the Kibbutz interacted with each other and lived out their daily lives. To them, life on a Kibbutz was normal. They didn't long for the outside world because the Kibbutz was their home. **Hailey Roberts.**

Today started with an early breakfast in the guest house (7:00 a.m.), and we took a taxi to visit the Knessett area.

**Kibbutz.** Sally Shiflet picked us up for a trip south to see a kibbutz. Although most kibbutz in Israel started with agriculture applications, many have now broadened into manufacturing and hotel or guest house operations. The Zikim kibbutz is located just north of Gaza. They have a dairy herd and make mattresses! Got to look and see the Gaza Strip from one section of the kibbutz property; and also got to see where some of the PLO rockets had landed a few years ago on their property. Sobering!

Everything was quiet today, following the shooting in Tel Aviv last night. We heard that one of the attackers was killed by the police during the attack; one was injured; and one escaped, but was later captured according to news reports. They had dressed up in Ultra Orthodox clothes (long black robes/coats and black hats).

**Kfar Sava.** Sally drove us north to within about 20 miles of Tel Aviv where she lives showed us around the area and we crashed at her apartment, while she took care of some things she needed to do in the afternoon. (I enjoyed reading her copy of Tass Sada's book, Once an Arafat Man.)

**Dinner and Walk by Mediterranean.** We all went out for a wonderful Chinese dinner and sat at an outside table. The temperature had cooled off and it was just your typical gorgeous, Mediterranean evening! The food was excellent and we had fun watching the people walk by. This was in a very affluent area near where many of the diplomats live, and so was quite a contrast with being at the kibbutz in the morning! After dinner, we went for a walk along the beach and watched the beautiful evening sky over the Mediterranean. We ended up at Max Brenner's Chocolate Factory in Hertzlia and overdosed on absolutely some of the best chocolate I've ever had, and prepared in ways I'd never even seen before. It was wonderful!



Plan is to do some sightseeing in the Tel Aviv area tomorrow morning while Chase and Hailey go to the beach; then back to Jerusalem for our final evening and dinner at the home of Tim King. It's almost hard to believe our month here is all but over.

### Favorite Moments:

- Seeing the beautiful, fully in-bloom Jacaranda trees at the kibbutz. They were a burst of red-orange color!
- Watching the sun set over the Mediterranean, and realize that our trip is likewise coming to a wonderful conclusion!

# June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## Travel Log – Friday 10 June.

Beach: The beach along the Mediterranean Sea in Tel Aviv was similar to a crowded one in California. There were palm trees and cabanas and clear, warm water crashing into the shoreline. Some parts of Israel were quiet modern and did in fact resemble coastal places and cities in the U.S. Other places were less modern and were built up with yellow Jerusalem stone. Both aspects of Israel were beautiful!

Hailey Roberts

When we got up, we walked out to the distinctive smell of bacon! Sally made us a wonderful breakfast of scrambled eggs, loads of bacon (!), and toasted bagels. It was wonderful!

**Mr. Song and Set up for Shavuot.** We met Song, a man from, South Korea, who is visiting the Pastor where Sally attends and is on staff. He arrived to assist their ministry for a month. He helped us set up and clean chairs for a special Shavuot service scheduled for Friday evening. He went with us to see some of the sights in Tel Aviv, after we dropped Chase and Hailey at the beach. We got to see Israel's Independence Hall, where Ben-Gurion read the proclamation of the creation of Israel as a state, in 1948. We also went to his residence to see his library and memorabilia, but it was closed due to the Shavuot holiday on Saturday.

**At the Beach.** Chase and Hailey spent part of the day on the Beach in Tel Aviv. It was a pretty hot day, and the sand was almost too hot to walk on it! They both got sun burned but had a good time!

**Trip Back to Jerusalem.** We rode back to Jerusalem on special shared-ride public transportation vans that run between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Riding on public transportation is always an educational experience! We also ran into some traffic in the Jerusalem area, but made it back in time to get cleaned up and somewhat packed for our departure the next morning, prior to having to leave for a farewell dinner at the home of Tim King.

**Visit to Tantur.** On the way to dinner, we got a tour of UHL offices at the Tantur compound. It is an ecumenical facility set up and operated by Notre Dame University on behalf of the Vatican to facilitate dialog across, especially high church denominations. It has one of the best theological libraries in the Middle East and has facilities for visiting academic and church staff. UHL rents space for administration and business purposes at Tantur at very affordable rates.

**Farewell Dinner at King's House.** We had been told that Tim King was a master chef, but that doesn't tell the half of it! He put on a combination Shavuot dinner and exquisite 5 course gourmet dinner for us our last night in Jerusalem, and it was amazing! It started with a fantastic artichoke dip as an appetizer, and was followed by one of the tastiest Caesar salads I've ever had. A raspberry sherbet (palate cleanser?) was followed by filet mignon (very tender!), a cold rice dish, green beans, stuffed mushrooms, and an olive tray with about 5 or 6 different types of olives! The piece de resistance, however, was the Pavlova desert (baked cherries and crispy meringue). As they say, it was 'to die for'!

### Favorite Moments:

- Hearing Dr. Stephan Pfann describe the meaning of the bread and wine in the Shavuot dinner.
- Hearing Claire Pfann pray over the lighting of the Shavuot candles and explain their meaning in a Christian context. No one seems to know why the custom is for the mother to cover her eyes with her hands while she prays the prayer over the lit candles.
- Hearing Dr. Shimone describe several on-going and planned UHL-sponsored archaeology excavation projects, including the use of 3-D imaging at the Church of the Nativity. The objective is to find definitive archaeological evidence of 1<sup>st</sup> century activity in that area. It was also fascinating to hear him describe his own archaeology exploits that began in the Middle East as a grade school student and as a very young teenager, because so much was available and there were few restrictions at that time.



# Funny or Embarrassing Moments on the Trip

(aka, “Hailey Moments”)

- Dr. Middleton getting ice cream on his nose, by the ice cream vendor in the Istanbul airport!
- Hailey trying to use a pepper mill rotation on the salt shaker at Sally’s house and spilling about a cup of salt all over her eggs and bacon on her plate.
- Hailey portraying her father as being very demanding on her knowledge and use of correct words, and describing him as a “grammar Nazi” – but doing so in front of Dr. Petra, a wonderful Aramaic scholar from Germany (who had just a few minutes earlier referenced the poor performance of the Christians in Germany under Hitler!)
- Hailey just about twisting herself into a veritable pretzel trying to give a plate of dessert to Dr. Middleton and to Dr. Pfann on opposite sides of the living room at the special dinner the last night at the King’s house.
- Dr. Middleton accidentally ‘going for a swim’ at En-gedi, when by accident he stepped off the side of the low bridge over the stream.
- While walking through the souk in the Old City with Hailey, Dr. Middleton being asked if he would take “a 100 camels for her?” His instant reply was that the offer wasn’t even close to what she was worth!
- Seeing Hailey and Chase nearly fall off their chairs at dinner at a beautiful guest house in Mt. Carmel, when they were asked by a charming Catholic nun on sabbatical from Indiana, if they were ‘husband and wife’!
- Watching Hailey surprise Chase by pouring almost an entire bottle of water on Chase’s head and back, on a very hot day in the Golan, while we were at an overlook on the Sea of Galilee.
- Watching Chase and Hailey walk around very gingerly the day after spending time on the beach near Tel Aviv, because of the bad sun burns they both got on their backs and legs.

**Final Act.** We were up before 4:00 a.m. to catch a shuttle to Ben-Gurion Airport on Saturday morning at 4:45 a.m. Likely due to the attack in Tel Aviv just two days prior, security was noticeably tighter for our departure than it was for our arrival, 4 weeks earlier. We arrived at the airport in plenty of time and things went smoothly for us. It was nice that we only had a 2-hour layover in Istanbul on our return, instead of the 6-hour layover on our trip going to Israel. The 2 flight segments back to Virginia went on time and as expected, and we were very thankful for a very productive and safe journey.