

# The Life & World of Jesus

*A Shoresh Study Tours Itinerary*

**Christ the King**

**Group Leader Rev. Michael Novotny**

**May 22 – June 1, 2025**

*We will trace the life of Jesus from his home in Galilee to Jerusalem, giving particular attention to the First Century Jewish context in which Jesus lived. Our goal is a better understanding of Jesus' ministry and a better application of His teachings for us today.*

**Day 1 Thursday, May 22, 2025**

## **ARRIVAL IN THE LAND OF PROMISE**

We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport near **Tel Aviv**, where we will be met by our guide and bus driver for the trip. Depending on flight arrival time, there are several options for this day:

Overnight: Jacob Hotel, Hadera, Mediterranean Coast

**Day 2 Friday, May 23, 2025**

## **LIGHT TO THE NATIONS – Jews, Gentiles, and the Messiah**

Today we travel north up the coast and then eastwards inland to the Galilee, visiting a number of Biblical sites that testify to God's faithfulness to His word, past, present, and future. We begin our day at the fabulous ruins of the Herodian city of **Caesarea Maritima**, the site of the conversion of Cornelius and the location from which Paul left the shores of Israel and set sail on his journey to Rome. We then travel up the coast to **Mount Carmel**, with a spectacular view over the North of Israel, near the spot where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. We continue along the route of the ancient **Via Maris** to **Megiddo**, one of King Solomon's cities, and according to the Book of Revelation possibly the assembly point for the armies marching to the battle of Armageddon. We conclude our day at ancient **Nazareth**, Jesus' boyhood home and place of His early ministry. Overnight: Ginosar Kibbutz Hotel, Sea of Galilee (New wing village DLX rooms)

**Day 3 Saturday, May 24, 2025**

## **AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE – Daily Life and Religion in the Time of Jesus**

Our day will be spent visiting various sites around the Sea of Galilee as we try to picture daily life and religion in the First Century, and seek to better understand the miracles and teachings of Jesus in His original Jewish context. Today we will visit the **Mount of Beatitudes**, traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, where we will consider the Kingdom of God in Jesus' teachings. After a short walk or drive down the hill we will arrive at **Capernaum**, the town where Jesus lived during the majority of His ministry. Other sites may include **Chorazin**, the well-preserved ruins of a typical Galilean village, where we study village life, Jewish religion, and the Pharisees. At the newly excavated **Magdala**, the home of Mary Magdala, we will visit the remains of an ancient synagogue from the time of Jesus or the lovely **Tabgha**, which commemorates the multiplication of loaves and fish, and where Jesus met the disciples after the resurrection. Later in the afternoon we will visit Kibbutz Ginosar to see the "**Jesus Boat**", a Galilean fishing boat from the First Century. From here we will set sail for a **boat ride on the Lake** to enjoy the views and some worship, prayer and reflective time.

Overnight: Ginosar Kibbutz Hotel, Sea of Galilee (New wing village DLX rooms)

#### **Day 4 Sunday, May 25, 2025**

##### **NORTHERN ISRAEL - "Who Do Men Say That I Am?"**

Today we explore Northern Israel, one of the most beautiful regions of the country. We will seek to understand what the Jewish people of 2,000 years ago expected of the Messiah, and how that was fulfilled in Jesus. We begin by climbing up to the magnificent **Golan Heights**. In the morning we will visit a reconstructed Talmudic village at **Katzrin**, where we will take another close look at life in New Testament times and the use of everyday imagery in Scripture. We will travel along the lower slopes of **Mount Hermon** - Israel's highest mountain, and the most likely site of the Transfiguration. Along the way we will pass **Druze Villages** before coming to a lookout spot near the border with Syria and the area of the **road to Damascus** where the Apostle Paul met the Lord. Our next stop is the **Dan Nature Reserve**, where we see the incredible archaeological remains of the **OT city of Dan**, including the city gate from the time of Abraham, and consider ancient Israel's apostasy. We will also enjoy a pleasant walk by a stream and discuss the meaning of "living water" in the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' teaching. Time permitting we will visit **Caesarea Philippi**, in the region where Peter made his famous confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Overnight: Ginosar Kibbutz Hotel, Sea of Galilee (New wing village DLX rooms)

#### **Day 5 Monday, May 26, 2025**

##### **THE JORDAN VALLEY - "In the World But Not of It"**

Today we leave the Galilee and journey south down the spectacular **Syrian African Rift Valley** to the Dead Sea in the arid Judean wilderness. We will study the cultural tensions that existed at the time of Jesus, both between Greco-Roman culture and Jewish culture (and later the early church), and also between the Jewish religious establishment of the day and various spiritual reformers. At the **Jordan River**, we will discuss the ministry of John the Baptist and his relationship with Jesus. *If the tour leader wants to do baptisms, the group can visit a baptismal site on the Jordan River.* Our next stop is the Biblical city of **Beit Shean** to examine the visually impressive excavations of its Roman-Byzantine period when it was one of the ten Hellenistic cities of the Decapolis. Conditions permitting, we will have dip in the beautiful spring fed pools at **Sachne**, near the base of **Mt. Gilboa**. From here we continue down the Jordan Valley to the arid Judean Wilderness, passing by the region of **Jericho** - the oldest and lowest city on earth. Our last visit of the day will be **Qumran**, likely the home of the Essenes, a First Century Jewish sect which may have influenced early Christianity, and the site of the most exciting archaeological discovery ever made in Israel - the Dead Sea Scrolls. At the end of the day we will make the ascent to **Jerusalem** - the City of the Great King.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse Jerusalem

#### **Day 6 Tuesday, May 27, 2025**

##### **THE JUDEAN DESERT - Seeking Refuge in the Wilderness**

Our theme today is the wilderness and what it signified to the ancient Israelites. We begin our day at **Masada**, Herod the Great's magnificent fortress palace in the desert, and the last stand of the Zealots, a Jewish revolutionary group at the time of Jesus. From Masada we drive north to the beautiful subtropical oasis of **Ein Gedi**, where David hid from Saul. Depending on conditions, we can walk into the nature reserve and possibly to the waterfalls. We may see some wildlife, including the furry rock badger and the graceful ibex. We will also discuss the temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness. We will finish our afternoon by enjoying a float in the therapeutic mineral rich waters of the **Dead Sea**.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse Jerusalem

### **Day 7 Wednesday, May 28, 2025**

#### **FREE DAY IN JERUSALEM**

Today is free for rest, reflection, shopping, or for the energetic, perhaps a walk on the walls of the Old City. *Shoresh will provide a list of interesting options for those who want to explore on their own.* Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse Jerusalem

### **Day 8 Thursday, May 29, 2025**

#### **JERUSALEM IN THE TIME OF JESUS - The Temple at the Center**

Today will be devoted to learning about Jerusalem in Jesus' day, when the Temple in Jerusalem was the center of Jewish life. We will study how worship was performed in the temple, the Sadducees and Jesus' attitude towards them, and generally enrich our insight into many important events in the gospels and book of Acts. An early start will take us up to the **Temple Mount** (conditions permitting), where we'll consider some of Jesus' activities there, as well as the claims of Islam. After a visit to the **Western Wall** place of prayer, Judaism's most holy site, we will take a trip to the subterranean **Western Wall Tunnels** to walk at what was street level in the time of Jesus. We then make our way through the **Jewish Quarter** of the Old City and time permitting will visit the **Herodian Villas**, the palatial mansions that were the home to the Sadducees, the ruling priesthood at the time of Jesus. We complete our day at the excavations near the base of the Temple Mount and discuss Pentecost on the **Southern Steps** where Jesus walked. Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse Jerusalem

### **Day 9 Friday, May 30, 2025**

#### **THE RESTORATION OF HOPE - A Garland Instead of Ashes**

Today we study both a great tragedy and the wonder of the Lord's redemptive power. We will examine the systematic annihilation of six million Jews in the Nazi genocide, God coming to earth in the form of a man to save His people from their sins, and the loving witness of Christians committed to the Biblically prophesied physical restoration and spiritual rebirth of the Jewish people. We travel to **Yad VaShem**, the Israel Memorial Museum to the Holocaust. Here we examine the spiritual and theological roots of the most notorious genocide in history and the connection between the Church, Jesus and the Jewish people. From here we take the short drive to **Bethlehem**, where we will visit the **Church of the Nativity**, which marks the probable site of the birth of Jesus, and the "**Shepherd's Fields**" where the angels heralded the advent of Messiah. **Shabbat dinner.** Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse Jerusalem

### **Day 10 Saturday, May 31, 2025**

#### **IN THE STEPS OF JESUS - Crucifixion, Death, Burial and Resurrection**

Today we focus on sites related to the Biblical passages concerning Jesus' last week in Jerusalem. Our goal is to understand why He was crucified, how He was buried, and what it meant to the Jewish people of the First Century that He was raised from the dead. We begin our day with a panoramic overlook of Jerusalem from the **Mount of Olives**, the site of Jesus' ascension to heaven and His future second coming. After viewing a **tomb from the time of Jesus**, we will walk down the Mount of Olives to **Gethsemane**. Next we cross the **Kidron Valley** and enter the Old City through **Stephen's Gate**, stopping to examine the remains of the **Pool of Bethesda**. From here we walk to the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, the most likely site

of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. We end our tour with a reflective time at a site that wonderfully illustrates Jesus' burial and resurrection, the peaceful **Garden Tomb**.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse Jerusalem

*(For those groups with a late night flight, rooms will be held until departure for the airport.)*

**Day 11 Sunday, June 1, 2025**

**TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH**

Depending on flight departure time, there are several options for this day.

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE:**

- *Most days on this itinerary involve a regular amount of walking and/or climbing. Therefore this trip cannot generally accommodate those who have significant difficulty with climbing stairs or walking a half a mile at a time. Please be in contact with the trip leaders if you have any concerns about this.*
- *Itinerary and accommodation subject to change if conditions necessitate.*
- *It is mandatory for each participant to have travel insurance to cover medical costs or trip cancellations.*