

Samaria / Judea / Hebron Israel Pre-Tour Extension

6 Days Tour

May 5 - May 11, 2025

Day 1, Mon. May 5 – Tel Aviv: Departure from home for an overnight flight to Tel Aviv, Israel

Day 2, Tue. May 6 – Tel Aviv, Ariel: Tour members arrive in Tel Aviv at Ben Gurion Airport, then by motor coach or private transfer we drive to our hotel in the city of Ariel in Biblical Samaria. Ariel in Hebrew means “lion of God” and the city was founded in 1978. In the Bible, Ariel was another name for Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1-8).

Day 3, Wed. May 7 – Shiloh, Aphek, Mountain of Abraham, Mt. Gerizim, Mt. Ebal, Joshua’s Alters, Shechem, Samaria: We begin the day by driving south to the extensive ancient ruins of the Biblical city of Shiloh perched on a mountain. We see a film there and have a local guided tour of the excavated ruins where the Mosaic Tabernacle once stood for many years, with this structure being the center of Israelite worship. This was also where Samuel the prophet grew up as a child under Eli the High Priest. Near here was Biblical Aphek and Ebenezer where the Israelites were defeated by the Philistines who also captured the Ark of the Covenant. Later the Philistines destroyed Shiloh. Leaving Shiloh, we drive further to climb by bus another mountain which is called the Mountain of Abraham or Elon Moreh (oak of Moreh). This was where God made his first appearance to Abraham after he entered the promised Land. From here we have a fantastic view of all of Samaria. We then drive up the adjoining mountain to the National Park at the top of Mount Gerizim where Joshua promised the Israelites blessings from God for obedience. While up there we visit a modern day Samaritan temple where Samaritans still perform animal sacrifices. We then travel by bus part way up traditional Mt. Ebal which is the mountain where Joshua pronounced curses on Israel if they disobeyed God’s Word. The next drive is into Biblical Shechem where Jacob bought a piece of land to pitch his tent and there we visit Jacob’s Well. Nearby, the bones of his son Joseph were buried there when the Israelites entered the Land after the Exodus and we visit his tomb. This is also the place of Sychar where Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman. We visit Tel Balata where we see ancient Canaanite ruins and a small stone altar traditionally attributed to Joshua where just before he died he made a covenant with Israel for both to follow the Lord in the future. Our next stop is at the ancient ruins of the Biblical city of Samaria or Shomron, with the same name as the region it was located in and was its ancient capital. We see where King Ahab’s ivory palace once stood. We then visit the recently discovered huge altar of uncut stones on Mt. Ebal likely built by Joshua to remember the mountain of curses and the other mountain of blessings on Mt. Gerizim. Our final stop will be to see the traditional tombs of Joshua and his good friend Caleb, the only two spies who came back with a good report and were allowed to enter the Promised Land 40 years later. We have a short drive to our hotel.

Day 4, Thu. May 8 – Ai, Bethel, Michmash, Geba, Ramah, Anathoth, Bethany, Tekoa, Hebron, Solomon’s Pools: We depart our hotel and head south leaving Samaria as we enter Judea. Our first stop for the day is to visit the excavation site of Ai, one of three Canaanite cities Joshua burned. Next, we stop at Bethel (house of God) which was named by Jacob after he had a vision here of a stairway reaching to Heaven and saw angels and the Lord around it. Then the Lord spoke to him and reaffirmed His covenant promise of the Land and future generations. Later, God appeared again to him here and changed his name from Jacob to Israel. Next we make a picture stop at the Michmash Valley where King Saul’s son Jonathan defeated the Philistine garrison. Back on the bus we pass by Biblical Geba where Saul camped with his army, then we go by Ramah the hometown of Samuel the Prophet. We then pass Anathoth, a city of priests where Jeremiah lived. We arrive at the bus parking lot in the village of Bethany where Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived and to see the traditional tomb from which Lazarus was raised from the dead. We walk nearby to see the ruins where the house was located of Simon the leper who entertained Jesus at His last Shabbat evening meal when Mary anointed Him before His crucifixion. Back on the bus, we drive past Tekoa where the prophet Amos was a shepherd. We continue on to the city of Hebron to go inside the building Herod The Great built over the original cave tomb of the Patriarchs and their wives Abraham/Sarah, Isaac/Rebekah and Jacob/Leah. Next,

we do a voluntary visit to the top of Tel Hebron (Tel Rumeida) to see ancient ruins from the time of Abraham, King David, and King Herod, plus have a spectacular view of the city. We then drive to the traditional location of the Oaks of Mamre where Abraham pitched his tent and built an altar to the Lord. Back on the bus we make a stop to take pictures of the large ancient Solomon's Pools that Herod expanded to store the water to feed his aqueducts that ran to his palace at Herodium and to the Temple Mount at Jerusalem. The day ends with a relaxing stay at a lodge in the quiet picturesque countryside of the Judean hills.

Day 5, Fri. May 9 – Gezer, Kiritath Jearim, Har Adar: For our last day of touring we explore the extensive archaeological site of Biblical ancient Gezer. It was a Canaanite city stronghold and later became a stronghold for King Solomon where he built another one of his trademark six chamber city gates. We then ascend by bus to the location where the Ark Of The Covenant was kept for 20 years at the high place at Kiriath Jearim before it was taken to Jerusalem by King David. Our final stop is for a scenic distant view of Jerusalem and Samuel's tomb from Har Adar. We return to our country lodge hotel.

Day 6 – 7, Sat.– Sun, May 10 – May 11 – Jerusalem; We transfer to our Jerusalem hotel where we have free time to explore, shop, or rest in the nearby Old City until the start of the main tour.

Pricing

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Price Per Person (based on double occupancy):

(Rates based on minimum of 10 passengers)

Land Only	\$1,465.00
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Single Supplement	\$573.00
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Limited Space – Reserve Early!

For additional information, contact John Hodges

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by telephone: **708- 331- 4440** or

by cell: **708- 606- 4441**

Price Includes: 6 nights lodging in 4 star hotels (Ariel & Jerusalem), breakfast and dinner daily, full time English speaking Israeli tour guide, portorage (1 Bag), gratuities (guide, driver, hotel staff), ear whisper system, services of long distance deluxe motor coach, all guides, entrances and transportation as appear on itinerary.

Samaria Arrival Transfers: For airport arrivals at Ben Gurion Airport a complimentary private transfer is included if one is also doing the following main Israel tour. Your flight arrival should be no later than **4:30PM on Tuesday, May 6**. If another time is desired for airport/hotel transfer, a complimentary one time private transfer will be provided up to two days before the tour begins.

Not Included: All air flights and air taxes, lunches, optional travel insurance