

THE BOOK OF REVELATION PROPHECY TOUR

October 14–30, 2009

Day 1

Wednesday, October 14

Depart US

Tour personnel will be available to assist you upon your arrival at New York's JFK International Airport for departure on Turkish Airlines to Istanbul.

Day 2

Thursday, October 15

Arrive Istanbul

Hagia Sophia

We'll land at Istanbul's Atatürk International Airport (IST). Known in ancient times as Constantinople, Istanbul is the only city in the world that spans two continents. At the arrival hall, our tour guide and bus driver will meet us as we embark on the journey of a lifetime. We will begin with visits to Istanbul's main attractions, including the renowned St. Sophia Museum—a sixth-century structure that was once the world's largest church building (Hagia Sophia is derived from Greek and means "holy wisdom"). We'll check in at our hotel with time to unpack and settle into our rooms before dinner. (NOTE: Bible studies will be conducted on selected evenings after dinner, and will be announced by tour leaders on the bus.)

Day 3

Friday, October 16

Topkapi Palace • Hippodrome • Grand Bazaar • Izmir

Today we will discover Istanbul's Byzantine and Ottoman treasures, visiting the Royal Topkapi Palace (home of the Ottoman sultans), and the Hippodrome (ancient Constantinople's former center of sporting and political activities). Our Istanbul sightseeing will end at the Grand Bazaar, which has more than 4,000 tiny shops. This afternoon we transfer to Istanbul airport and take a one-hour flight to Izmir, Turkey's third largest city. Situated on the Aegean Sea, Izmir was known as Smyrna in ancient times (Rev. 2:8-11). We will meet our bus driver and proceed to the hotel.

Day 4

Saturday, October 17

Izmir • Pergamon • Thyatira

The day begins with an early morning departure for Bergama, known as Pergamum or Pergamos in biblical times. It sits atop a cone-shaped hill rising more than 300 meters (984 feet) above the surrounding valley's elevation, and was ancient Asia's capital city. Pergamum was one of the seven first-century congregations that John addressed in the Book of Revelation (2:12-17). He referred to the city as "Satan's throne," most likely because it was the official center for emperor worship in that part of the known world. The famous Altar of Zeus, Trajan's Temple, the Temple of Isis and Serapis, and the Temple of Athena were located there. We continue to Akhisar and visit where the ancient congregation at Thyatira was located (Rev. 2:18-29, Acts 16:14). Thyatira was a commercial and agricultural center on the highway between Troy and Sardes. Although ancient Thyatira's secular history was unexceptional in comparison to other western Anatolia cities, John's letter to the city's believers was the longest of his seven letters preserved in the Book of Revelation. As the day draws to a close, we return to our hotel in Izmir.

Day 5

Sunday, October 18

Izmir • Ephesus • Pamukkale

We make an early departure to visit the Church of St. Polycarpe, the oldest church in ancient Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11), which symbolized the community of the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse. Then it's on to the unforgettable remains of Ephesus (Rev. 1:11, 2:1-7; Acts 18:19-28:19). Ephesus, where the Apostle Paul preached for more than two years, is one of the world's best-preserved ancient cities, with a history dating back to 292 BC. We will visit an archaeological excavation site at Ephesus to see the great Theater, Celsus Library, and the fabulous Curetes Street. We will also visit the Basilica of St. John and the Archaeological Museum, and end our day at our hotel in Pamukkale. After dinner, those who wish to do so may explore the hotel, enjoy an optional spa treatment, or go for a swim in the indoor pool.

Day 6

Monday, October 19

Pamukkale • Hierapolis • Laodicea • Philadelphia • Sardes • Kusadasi

After breakfast, we will walk over the terraces to visit the ruins of Hierapolis—a fashionable spa center in Roman times. The springs' reputed curative effects attract people from all over this region. From here we will drive to Eskihisar, the ancient city of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22). Laodicea was a vast Roman colony, which prospered from trade and banking because it was located at the junction of two important main roads. We travel on to Alasehir, ancient Philadelphia, the sixth of the seven assemblies that John addresses in the Book of Revelation (Rev. 3:7-13). We proceed to Sardes (Rev. 3:1-6), ancient capital of the Lydians, and visit the Church of Sardes. Our day will end in Kusadasi.

Day 7

Tuesday, October 20

Kusadasi • Patmos • Kusadasi

We board our boat at Kusadasi's port for an early morning tour to the Greek island of Patmos. Patmos is best known as the place where John wrote the Book of Revelation during his exile there around AD 95. The island is only about nine miles long and two-and-one-half miles wide, and is located in the Aegean Sea southwest of Turkey's Port of Izmir. Upon arrival on Patmos, we will visit the Monastery of St. John and the Cave of the Apocalypse, the traditional sites where the elderly apostle penned the account of his vision of the glorified and exalted Messiah (Rev. 1:1-2). After lunch, a teaching time, and free time on the island, we will return to the mainland via boat and continue on to our hotel for an evening of well-deserved relaxation.

Day 8

Wednesday, October 21

Free Day in Kusadasi

After breakfast, enjoy a free day of leisure.

Day 9

Thursday, October 22

Kusadasi • Istanbul • Jerusalem

Today it's time to pack our bags for an early morning transfer to Izmir International Airport, a short flight back to Istanbul, and board our Turkish Airlines flight bound for Tel Aviv, Israel. Upon arrival at Ben Gurion International Airport, our Israeli staff will assist us through security and customs. After we have collected our luggage, the tour guide and driver will meet us in the arrival hall and direct us to the bus. There will be a brief devotional and orientation time on the bus as we ascend to the Holy city of Jerusalem. We will take a breathtaking overview from the Hass promenade before checking into the beautiful Sheraton Plaza Hotel, situated in the center of Jerusalem. There will be time to enjoy a free evening in Jerusalem, or just relax and take a leisurely stroll on Ben Yehuda Street.

Day 10

Friday, October 23

Jerusalem—Old City • Mount of Olives • Southern Steps • Jewish Quarter • Mount Zion • Kotel

We board our motor coach after breakfast and head to the top of the Mount of Olives for a breathtaking view of the Old City of Jerusalem. We will enter the Old City and begin a walking tour at the Western Wall and the Rabbis' Tunnel, which runs along the Western Wall's base. We continue to the Southern Steps, the archaeological reconstruction of the Temple steps. At the Archaeological Park and Davidson Center, we will see a 3-D presentation of the Temple and its environs during Yeshua's time (referred to as the Second Temple Period by Jewish historians). After lunch, we will walk through the Jewish Quarter to the Hurva Synagogue—the main synagogue in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City when Israel declared its independence in 1948. We continue to the Temple Institute, where a dedicated team of Orthodox rabbis and archaeologists diligently work to prepare for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple. They have prepared many of the furnishings, including altars, lavers, and more—all carefully based on descriptions found in the Torah and traditional Jewish sources, including the Talmud. Following the Institute's multimedia presentation, it's a short walk to the Burnt House excavation: the scorched remains of a priest's dwelling that was incinerated during the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 (the traditional date is August 4, or the 9th of Av in the Jewish year 3830). Then we continue to Mount Zion to see the traditional site of King David's Tomb and

the Upper Room—a reconstructed room situated where archaeologists believe the biblical Upper Room that our Lord Yeshua celebrated the Last Seder with His disciples (Matt. 26:26) may have been located. We conclude our day at the Kotel (the Western Wall) together with hundreds of people welcoming the entering of the Shabbat.

Day 11

Saturday, October 24 Shabbat in Jerusalem

After breakfast, enjoy a free Shabbat day of leisure.

Day 12

Sunday, October 25

Jerusalem—New City • Knesset • Israel Museum • Shrine of the Book • Yad Vashem • Garden Tomb

After breakfast, we will drive by the Supreme Court and Knesset (Israeli Parliament) buildings in Jerusalem. We'll stop at the Israel Museum to see the remarkable miniature model of Jerusalem as it appeared during the Second Temple Period. The model covers nearly a quarter of an acre and includes uncanny details of the city in AD 66. From there, we'll continue to the Shrine of the Book where the Dead Sea Scrolls are housed. Following lunch, we'll visit the newly expanded Yad Vashem Holocaust complex where we will be reminded of the Holocaust's tragic events. Appropriately, we will conclude our tour with a visit to the Garden Tomb where we will commemorate the Resurrection of our Lord, and the promise of His second coming with a Scripture reading and prayer time. There will be time to shop in the bookstore before returning to the hotel.

Day 13

Monday, October 26

Jerusalem • Galilee • Qumran • Dead Sea • Masada • Jordan Valley • Beit Shean • Sea of Galilee

We leave Jerusalem after breakfast and descend to the lowest place on earth—the Dead Sea, a remarkable 1,371 feet (418 meters) below sea level. We'll stop at Qumran, the site of the Dead Sea Scrolls' discovery, and the ancient Essene community. We continue past the shores of the Dead Sea and arrive at Masada, the spectacular mountaintop fortress built by Herod, famous for being the Jewish rebellion's last stronghold against the Romans in AD 74. Most of us will take the cable car to the summit, while others may accept the challenge of walking or jogging up the challenging snake trail (1,000-plus steps). From this vantage point, the Roman camps and siege ramps from the siege of AD 72-74 can still be seen below. We can also see across the Dead Sea into the hills of Moab, the region from which Ruth came (Ruth 1:4, 22). There will be time to take a dip in the Dead Sea and float in its salty sea water (it's impossible to sink!). We proceed through the Jordan River Valley, passing by Jericho, the first city Israelites conquered in the Promised Land. Our last stop today is Beit Shean, a remarkable archaeological site dating from the time of the Canaanites. After the Philistines' victory over Saul's army on Mount Gilboa, they hung the bodies of Saul and his sons on the wall of Beth Shean (1 Sam. 31:1-13). We'll continue to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee to check in at our lakefront hotel.

Day 14

Tuesday, October 27

Sea of Galilee • Mount of Beatitudes • Capernaum • Tabgha • Kursi • Yardenit

Today begins at the Mount of Beatitudes. From here, it's a short drive to the 2,000-year-old remains of Kfar Nachum (Capernaum), the center of our Lord Yeshua's Galilean ministry, and the site of many of His miracles (Mark 2:1-12; Matt. 8:5-17, 9:1-7). We will see the remains of an excavated first-century house that may have been the home of Shimon (Peter) because archaeologists have dated it to the time of the Apostles. We will also visit the site of the ancient synagogue where the Lord Jesus taught and worshiped (Mark 1:21; Luke 4:31). Then we continue to Tabgha, the site of the multiplication of the barley loaves and fish (John 6:1-14). From there the bus takes us to Kursi, where Yeshua cast the evil spirits into pigs that, in turn, ran violently into the sea and drowned (Matt. 8:28-30). We will be served a traditional fish lunch at Ein Gev (there are only two other places in the world where "St. Peter's Fish" can be found, so this is a special treat). Afterward, we'll enjoy a cruise and brief devotional time on the Sea of Galilee. The day will end with a visit to Yardenit, the Jordan River's traditional baptismal site. Those who wish to commemorate their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus by the symbolic act of *t'vilah* (baptism) may do so, and will receive a special certificate.

Day 15

Wednesday, October 28

Golan Heights • Banias • Mount Bental • Katzrim • Galilee Experience

Today we head toward the Golan Heights and the northernmost regions of Israel. The Golan plateau was captured from the Syrians in the 1967 Six-Day War, in a strategic move designed to put an end to the frequent shelling of Israeli villages and towns. Our bus will take us to the northern tip of the Golan, where you can see Lebanon to the west and Syria to the east. Our first stop is ancient Banias Philippi. It was near this spot where our Lord Yeshua told Shimon (Peter) that his confession “. . . *You are the [Messiah], the Son of the living God,*” (Matt. 16:16) would be “the rock” upon which He would build His *Kehilah* (“Church,” the Body of Messiah, v.18). Here the guide will explain the background of the term “gates of hell” as we gaze upon the ancient remains of the altar of Pan (Matt. 16:18). Then we continue to Mount Bental’s observation point. From there—only 50 km (30 miles) from Damascus—we will have a spectacular view of Israel’s neighbors and its northern borders. Our guide will tell us about the heroic defenders of the Golan. The outpost at Mount Bental overlooks the Valley of Tears (scene of a decisive battle during the 1973 Yom Kippur War), and the ruins of the Syrian city of Kuneitra. We continue to Katzrin and the Talmudic Village, an ancient Jewish town dating back to between the fourth and seventh centuries, which has been uncovered and partially restored. Following dinner at our hotel, we will enjoy a multimedia presentation about the region’s history at the Galilee Experience.

Day 16

Thursday, October 29

Galilee to Tel Aviv • Nazareth • Megiddo • Mt. Carmel • Caesarea • Tel Aviv

Our final day in Israel begins with a visit to the city of Nazareth, today an Arab village, where Yeshua spent the silent years of his life. We drive inland and proceed to Megiddo, one of King Solomon’s walled cities (1 Kings 9:15, 10:26), that is comprised of 26 layers of ruins from ancient cities. From here the Books of Daniel and Revelation will come alive, as we read about the final Battle of Armageddon, while viewing the Plains of Jezreel—where many of these prophesied events will come to pass. After exploring magnificent archaeological excavations at Megiddo, we go through the famous water tunnel through the mount to our bus awaiting us at the other side. We continue on to Mount Carmel and the site of Muchraka, where Elijah issued his challenge to the 400 false prophets of Baal. From this vantage point (on the roof of the Carmelite monastery) we have a breathtaking panoramic view of Haifa Bay, the Jezreel Valley, and western Galilee. Our next stop is Caesarea, ancient Judea’s seaport built by Herod the Great (22 BC). This is the city from which Rav Shaul (Apostle Paul) embarked on his journey to Tarsus (Acts 9:30). It’s also where Cornelius and his family (the first Gentile believers who became part of the Church) lived and were baptized by Simon Peter (Acts 10:1, 44-48). Here we will explore the restored Roman amphitheater, the hippodrome, aqueduct, and the harbor. We will arrive along the ancient Via Maris, the old coastal road that once linked Egypt and Babylon. Upon arrival in Tel Aviv, we will check into our seashore hotel. For the tour’s final evening, we will celebrate our long journey’s end with a great farewell dinner together at the hotel—a perfect opportunity to exchange email addresses with the many friends we’ve made! You’ll want to retire early this evening, because it will be a very early wake-up call the next morning for the flight home.

Day 17

Friday, October 30

Departure to North America

Your early morning flight will take you from Tel Aviv to Istanbul and onto our scheduled arrival at JFK International Airport, with many fond memories of your “Book of Revelation Prophecy Tour” led by Gideon and Irene Levytam and CJF Ministries.

Please note that all sites are subject to availability and scheduling limitations. You will find that on most days, we will actually see more than what is listed on the itinerary; however, we also want you to know it is possible that on rare occasions—particularly the very busy days—we won’t be able to fit in everything that’s listed. Occasionally, a site may be temporarily closed for renovations or maintenance, or we may arrive after closing time (usually 5 p.m.) because of weather or traffic problems beyond our control. If this happens, we are grateful for our guests’ patience and understanding.