

BS 130 History and Geography of Bible Lands:
Israel and Jordan
Timelines and Site Descriptions

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Archaeological and Historical Periods:

Chalcolithic, 4000-3150 BC

Bronze, 3150-1200 BC

Iron, 1000-587 BC

Biblical Periods:

Antediluvian, 4100-2458 BC

Postdiluvian, 2459-2166 BC

Patriarchal, 2166-1859 BC

Egyptian Sojourn, 1876-1446 BC

Wilderness Wanderings, 1446-1406 BC

Conquest of Canaan, 1406-1367 BC

Judges, 1367-1050 BC

Monarchy, 1050-931 BC

Dyarchy, 931-586 BC

N. Kingdom fall to Assyria, 732 BC

Babylonian Captivity, 605-538 BC

Postexilic, 538-

Intertestamental Periods:

Persian, 522-332 BC

Hellenistic, 332-167 BC

Maccabean/Hasmonean, 167-63 BC

Herodian, 63-4 BC

Periods After the New Testament:

Roman, to AD 324

First Byzantine, 324 – 614

Pre-Moslem Persian, 614 – 629

Second Byzantine, 629 – 638

First Moslem Period, 638 – 1099

Umayyads, 638 – 750

Abbasids, 750 – 877

Fatimids, 877 – 1071

Seljuk Turks, 1071 – 1099

Crusader Period, 1099 – 1187

Second Moslem Period, 1187 – 1917

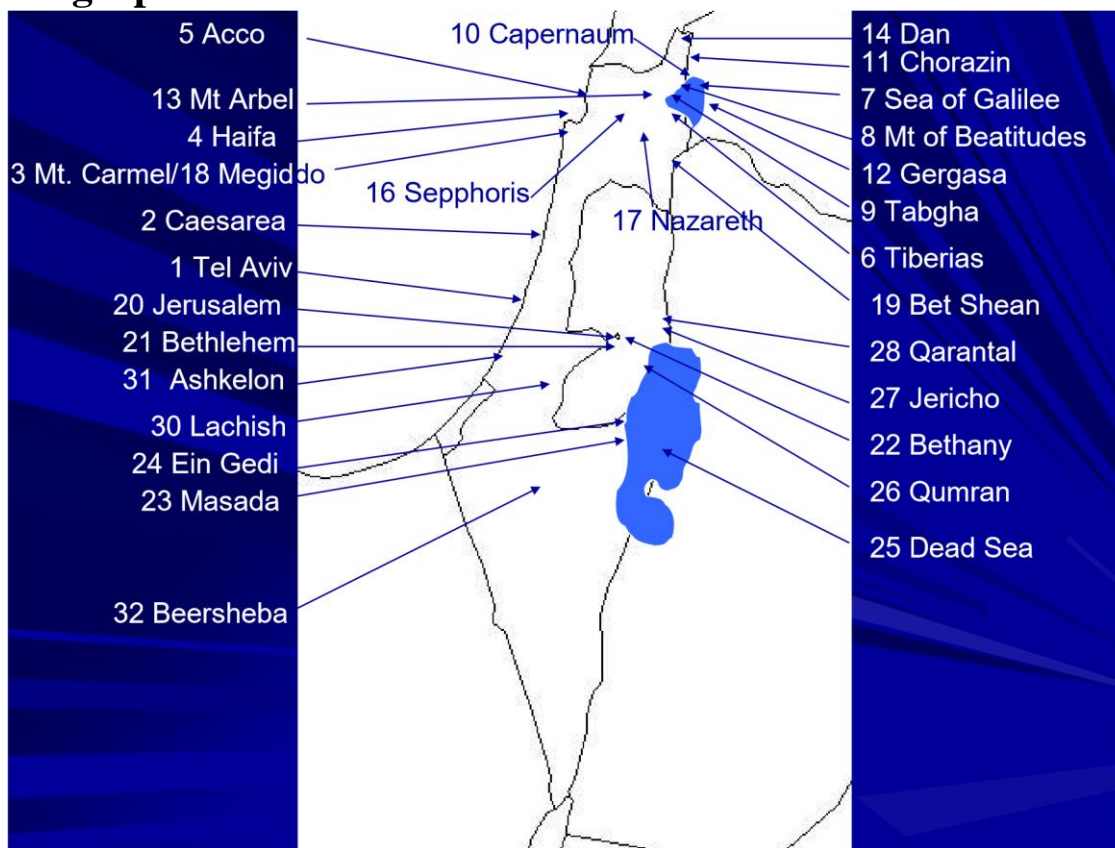
Ayyubids, 1187 – 1250

Mamluks, 1250 – 1514

Ottoman Turks, 1514 – 1917

British Mandate, 1917 – 1948

32 Geographical Locations in Israel



Jordan Tour Sites List

I. Petra

1. Located east of the Syrian-African Rift in the country of Jordan, and about halfway between the southern end of the Dead Sea and the northern tip of the Gulf of Eilat (Aqaba).
2. Known in the Dead Sea Scrolls as "*Rekem*," and possibly in the Bible as *Bozrah* (Jer 49:1314; Mic 2:12) or *Sela* (Jdg 1:36; Isa 16:1; 42:11; Obad 3).
3. Settled as early as the 18th Dynasty of Egypt (ca. 1550-1292 BC).
4. The Egyptian Amarna Letters refers to it as *Pel*, *Sela* or *Seir*.
5. According to Josephus, Aaron was buried there (Antiquities 4.82-84).
6. A major Nabatean settlement from the 6th century BC, the city became largely a burial site, with many elaborate tombs carved into the sandstone walls of the canyon.
7. Petra became the capital city of the Nabateans' commercial empire which controlled a vast section of Arabia.
8. The Nabateans constructed a sophisticated water system to support the inhabitants.
9. Petra fell under Roman control in about AD 100 and remained under Roman, then Byzantine control until its destruction in the 4th century.

10. A major earthquake in AD 363 destroyed the water system and many of the buildings.
 11. Archaeological excavations in 1990 revealed that around AD 450 a significant Byzantine church was built at Petra. Beautiful mosaic floors remain from this church. The church was built in three phases, the second phase beginning in about AD 500-550, and the third phase in about AD 600. The church was destroyed by fire in about 600, and later completely demolished by earthquakes.
 12. In the 12th century, the crusaders had a fort at Petra briefly.
- II. Madaba (Medaba)
1. Located in Moab (modern Jordan), just east of the northern tip of the Dead Sea.
 2. Seized by Israel from Sihon the Amonite (Nu 21:30), and given to the tribe of Reuben (Josh 13:16).
 3. In Hellenistic times (intertestamental) Madaba exchanged hands between the Arab Nabateans and Jewish Hasmonians (1 Macc 1:9,31; Josephus *Antiq.* XIII, 18).
 4. Sixth century Byzantine church was built at Madaba in which the mosaic floor contained a map of the Holy Land. The mosaic was discovered in 1896 and is known as the “Madaba Map.”

Israel Tour Sites List

- I. *Tel Aviv – Jaffa
1. Jaffa (Joppa)
 - a) On the west coast, along the Via Maris, due east of Apehek.
 - b) Given to the tribe of Dan, Joshua 19:46.
 - c) Solomon’s harbor for Cedar trees from Lebanon, 2 Chr 2:16.
 - d) Jonah tried to flee from the presence of the Lord, Jonah 1:3.
 - e) Ezra’s harbor for Cedar trees from Lebanon, Ezra 3:7.
 - f) Antiochus drowned 200 Jews.
 - g) Peter raised Tabitha, Ac 9:36-42.
 - h) Home of Simon the Tanner and Peter’s vision, Ac 9:43 – 10:23, 32; 11:5-13.
 - i) During the Byzantine period, the Jewish community suffered periodic massacres.
 - j) During the Moslem period, Jaffa became the port city of the provincial capital of Ramlah.
 - k) During the Crusader period, the Jewish community was destroyed.
 - l) 1799 Napoleon took the city and slaughtered 2,000 POW’s who were Arabs and Jews. The regiment that was responsible caught leprosy and all but seven died.

- m) 1820, a revival of the Jewish community with the building of a synagogue and hostel by Isaiah Ajiman of Constantinople.
- n) March 28, 1917, Turks expelled the Jews, but the Jews returned after the British conquest.
- o) Under the British mandate, it was an Arab city until 1948 when the majority fled, leaving an Arab minority that became citizens of the state of Israel.

2. Tel Aviv

- a) A new city established in 1909.
- b) Once the largest city in modern Israel, but now superseded by Jerusalem.

II. *Caesarea

1. Built by Herod the Great in honor of August Caesar. Named Caesarea Maritima.
2. Became the Roman and Byzantine capital of Judea and all Roman procurators made their headquarters in Caesarea.
3. Herodian aqueduct brought water from the Shuni Spring, Nahal Tanninim (Crocodile River) at Mt. Carmel, and Kabara Springs and marshland.
4. Hadrian had a second aqueduct alongside the Herodian to increase the water supply.
5. Home of Philip the Evangelist, Ac 8:40; 21:8.
6. Paul stopped in Caesarea on the way to Tarsus, Ac 9:30.
7. Cornelius and his household, the first Gentiles to receive the Gospel, Ac 10:1-48; 11:11.
8. Herod Agrippa I died in Caesarea, Ac 12:19-23.
9. Paul stopped on the way to Jerusalem, Ac 18:22.
10. Paul stayed in Philip's home, Ac 21:8-16.
11. Paul was imprisoned for 2 years (Ac 23:22-35) and appeared before: Felix (Ac 24:1-27); Festus (Ac 25:1-22); and Agrippa II (Ac 25:23 - 26:32).
12. AD 60, the killing of several Jews in Caesarea helped spark the Jewish revolt against Rome.
13. AD 66, 20,000 Jews killed in one day and the revolt begins in earnest.
14. AD 70, 2,500 Jewish POW's made to fight wild beasts in Caesarea.
15. Base for two early church fathers: Eusebius and Origen.
16. AD 639, conquered by Moslems.
17. AD 1101, conquered by crusader, King Baldwin.
18. AD 1187, conquered by Saladin.
19. AD 1191, re-conquered by crusaders.
20. AD 1291, conquered by Sultan Beibers and gradually declined.
21. Late 19th century, Jewish immigrants from Bosnia founded a village.

III. Mt. Carmel

1. "Kerem" ("vineyard") + "El" ("God"), "Vineyard of God."
2. Interrupts Israel's Mediterranean coast and creates the bay of Haifa.
3. Elev. 1,810 feet above sea level.
4. Taken by Joshua, Joshua 12:22.

5. Allotted to Asher, Josh 19:26.
6. Site of the contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal, 1Ki 18:18-46.
7. *Bir el-Muhraqa* nearby may have provided water for the sacrifice.
8. Elisha stayed at Mt. Carmel, 2Ki 2:25; 4:25.
9. Mentioned in the Song of Solomon, Song 7:5.
10. Mentioned in the Prophets: Is 33:9; 35:2; Jer 46:18; 50:19; Am 1:2; 9:3; Mic 7:14; Nah 1:4.
11. 107 BC, taken by the sons of John Hyrcanus.
12. Carmel Caves – Neanderthal remains excavated.

IV. Haifa

1. Only natural port on the Mediterranean coast of Israel.
2. No reference to this city in the Bible.
3. The present city began under Sheik Dahar al-Omar who built a castle in 1761.
4. Its reputation: “While Jerusalem prays and Tel Aviv plays, Haifa works.”
5. Primary center of Bahai worship, home of its major shrine.

V. Acco (Ptolemais, Acre)

1. Allotted to Asher, but Asher failed to conquer it, Jdg 1:31.
2. Given by Solomon to Hiram of Tyre, 1Ki 9:11-13.
3. Renamed “Ptolemais” during the Hellenistic Period, after Ptolemy.
4. Jonathan Maccabee was executed in Acco.
5. Paul spent one day at Acco, Ac 21:7.
6. AD 66, sacked by the Jews in reprisal for the slaughter of the Jews in Caesarea, thus beginning the Jewish revolt.
7. AD 636, conquered by Moslems.
8. AD 1104, conquered by Crusaders under Baldwin, by whom it is reputed to have been renamed “Saint Jean d’Acre” after Joan of Arc.
9. After the fall of Jerusalem to the Arabs, Acco became the capital of the Crusader kingdom.
10. AD 1187, conquered by Saladin.
11. AD 1191, reconquered by Crusaders under Richard the Lionhearted of England and Philip Augustus of France and reinstated as the capital of the Crusader kingdom.
12. AD 1291, fell to Sultan Khalil el-Ashraf (Mamluk). Out of 12,000 knights, only seven survived. The city lay in ruins for four and a half centuries.
13. AD 1749, rebuilt by Bedouin Sheikh Dahar el-Omar.
14. During the British Mandate, it was used as a prison for many Jewish freedom fighters.
15. AD 1947, Jewish commandos breached the walls of the fortress and freed the Jewish prisoners.
16. AD 1948, one of three strategic cities of Galilee that fell to Jewish forces.

VI. Tiberias

1. The town is mentioned only once in Scripture, John 6:23.
2. The Sea of Galilee was also known as the “Sea of Tiberias,” John 6:1; 21:1.
3. Built by Herod Antipas in AD 20 in honor of Caesar Tiberias.
4. In NT times it was a completely Gentile town.
5. The Sanhedrin moved to Tiberias after the failed Bar Kochba revolt and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 132.
6. It became the chief seat of Jewish learning, and both the Mishnah and the Palestinian Talmud were compiled at Tiberias, in the 3rd and 5th centuries respectively.
7. Destroyed in 748 by a series of earthquakes.
8. Rebuilt by the Crusaders and used as the capital of Galilee.
9. Destroyed by Arabs in the 12th century.
10. Rebuilt by Jews in 1740s and 1750s under Sephardic Rabbi Abulafia.
11. Chassids from Europe came in 1777.
12. Destroyed by earthquake in 1837, but rebuilt by Jews.
13. Burial place of many leading Rabbis.

VII. *Sea of Galilee (also known as “Sea [or “Lake”] Kinneret [or “Chinnereth”]” and “Sea [or “Lake”] of Tiberias”)

1. 13 miles long and up to 8 miles wide.
2. 692 feet below sea level – lowest fresh water lake on Earth.
3. Main water source is the Jordan River, also several underground springs.
4. Its fish, prominent in the NT narrative, were famous throughout the Roman Empire and produced a flourishing export trade. Popular at restaurants today: St. Peter’s Fish.
5. Its location in the depths of the Jordan Rift and surrounded by hills, renders it liable to atmospheric down-draughts and sudden storms.

VIII. Mt of Beatitudes

1. Traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7.
2. Located on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee between Capernaum and Tabgha.
3. Catholic chapel built in 1939 by the Franciscan Sisters, with the help of Italian ruler Mussolini.

IX. Tabgha

1. miles west of Capernaum on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.
2. Ancient Greek name was “*Heptapegon*” (= seven springs [today, only six have been discovered]) which has become corrupted into the modern name.
3. Traditional site of:
 - a. The calling of Peter, Andrew, James and John, Matthew 4:18-22.
 - b. The feeding of the 5,000, Mark 6:30-44.
 - c. Jesus’ post-resurrection breakfast with the disciples, John 21.
 - d. Church of the Miracles of the Loaves and Fishes

4. First church, Syrian style, built around 350.
 5. Replaced by a Byzantine church with many mosaics around 450.
 6. Destroyed in Persian invasion of 614.
 7. Byzantine ruins and mosaics discovered in 1932, and a provisional church constructed.
 8. Present church built in 1982, incorporating the ancient foundation and mosaics.
- X. *Capernaum
1. Possibly from the Hebrew for “Tomb of Nahum.”
 2. Located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.
 3. A viable city from the 2nd century BC until the Arab invasion of the 4th century AD.
 4. Both Jews and Jewish Christians co-existed in Capernaum as late as AD 400, according to Egeria, a nun who visited between 381-384.
 5. Biblical significance:
 - a. Home of Peter and Andrew, Mark 1:29.
 - b. Visited by Jesus after the wedding at Cana, John 2:12.
 - c. Home of the nobleman, John 4:46.
 - d. Headquarters of Christ’s Galilean ministry, Matthew 4:12-13; 9:1; Luke 4:23.
 - e. God-fearing Roman centurion built a synagogue, Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10.
 - f. Jesus ministered in the synagogue, Matthew 8:14-15; Mark 1:21-27; Luke 4:31-37.
 - g. Peter’s mother-in-law was healed, Mark 1:30-31; Luke 4:38-39
 - h. Matthew had his tax collector’s office, Matthew 9:9.
 - i. Discourse on the Bread of Life, John 6:16-59.
 - j. Various healings performed, Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12.
 - k. Story of the *shekel* and the fish, Matthew 17:24-27.
 - l. Dispute over who was greatest, Mark 9:33-37.
 - m. One of the three cities condemned by Christ, Matthew 11:23-24; Luke 10:15-16.
 6. Synagogue
 7. Original synagogue probably built in the first century AD.
 8. Present synagogue was built around AD 300 or later but sits on the foundation of the first century synagogue. Walls from the earlier synagogue were preserved up to 3 feet high, and the entire western wall still exists.
 9. 7. House of Peter
 - a. In excavations at Capernaum, one residence stood out from the others due to early 3rd century Christian graffiti and a 4th century house church built above it.
 - b. In 5th century a large octagonal Byzantine church was built above this, complete with a baptistery. The Byzantines used octagonal buildings as memorials to significant saints.
 - c. Pilgrims referred to the Byzantine church as the “house of the apostle Peter.”

XI. Chorazin/Korazim

1. Identified with Kerazeh, 2.5 miles north of Capernaum.
2. First established in the 1st century BC.
3. One of 3 cities condemned by Christ, Matthew 11:21-22; Luke 10:13-14.
4. Was in ruins by the 4th century.
5. Rebuilt late 5th – early 6th century.
6. Destroyed in the 8th century.
7. Renewed in the 13th century and occupied continuously until early 20th century.
8. 2nd Century Synagogue
 - a. Basilica shape – 3 hallways separated by 2 rows of pillars.
 - b. doorways, central one is largest.
 - c. Basalt “Seat of Moses” (Matt 23:1-3). Carved from a single block of basalt. The chair where the reader of the Torah sat. Aramaic inscription reads, “May Judah, Son of Ishmael, who made this hall and its staircase be remembered for good. As his reward, may he have a share with the righteous.”

XII. Gergasa (Gergesa, Kursi)

1. Located along the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, between Sussita (Hippos) and Bethsaida.
2. Site of the healing of the Gergasene demoniac and the drowning of the pigs, Mark 5:1-20.
3. The "Gadarenes" were the residents of Gadara, one of the cities of the Decapolis and the capital of the Roman province of Perea, controlled by Herod Antipas. Gadara (also called Gergasa or Gerasa in various manuscripts) was located on the summit of a mountain about 6 miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee. The miracle could not have taken place at Gadara itself, for between the lake and the town there is the deep, almost impassable ravine of the Jarmuk River (Hieromax). Gadara, which is mentioned in the Gospels only in connection with the healing of the demon possessed men (man), was dominant enough to give its name to the entire area (thus the term "region of the Gadarenes" in Matthew's account).
4. Remains of the largest known Byzantine monastery in the Holy Land measuring about 450 X 370 feet.
 - a) Discovered in 1970 (shortly after the Six Day War of 1967) during construction of a road when bulldozers uncovered pottery shards and the tops of the monastery's stone walls.
 - b) Contains a mosaic floor with pictures of animals (chickens, geese, doves, cormorants and fish) and plants (citrons, dates, pomegranates and grapes), parts of which were vandalized.
 - c) The mosaic floor in the baptism room has a Greek inscription which translates as: “In the time of the most God beloved Stephanos the priest and abbot was made the mosaic of the photisterion in the month of December, fourth indication, in the time of the pious and Christ-beloved our King Mauricius first Consulate.”

5. A chapel was excavated in 1980 on the hill overlooking the monastery.
 - a) Apse in a cave where traditionally Jesus met the demoniac.
 - b) Paved with three separate layers of mosaics marking the place where the demoniac lived among the tombs.

XIII. Mt. Arbel (Arbela)

1. Located northwest of Tiberias and west of Magdala.
2. An imposing mountain honeycombed with caves.
3. A battle was fought between the Hasmoneans and Bacchides (1 Macc. 9:2) .
4. Herod fought the Zealots who hid in the caves above the plain (Josephus, *Antiq* XIV, 445).
5. After the destruction of the Second Temple, it was the seat of the priestly family of Jeshua.

XIV. Dan and Caesarea Philippi (Banias, Laish)

1. Located far to the north, at the foot of Mt. Hermon and the Golan Heights and at the headwaters of the Jordan River.
2. As the northernmost city of Israel, the name of the city, together with Beersheba in the south, defined the borders of the land, "from Dan to Beersheba" (Judg 20:1).
3. Tel-Dan was the site of many important cities from Canaanite times, between 2700 and 2400 BC.
4. Springs in the area produces abundant amounts of water forming the primary source for the upper Jordan River. The springs are fed by the snow and rain which fall on Mount Hermon. The water seeps into the mountain, dividing into hundreds of springs by the time it reaches the foot. Together, these springs form the largest karstic spring in the Middle East. The powerful spring provides up to 62,872 million gallons [238 million cubic meters] of water annually. This is about 22.5 gallons [8.5 cubic centimeters] of water per second!
5. During the Canaanite period the city was known by the name Leshem (Joshua 19:47) or Laish (Judges 18:29).
6. Canaanite Laish was conquered and settled by the tribe of Dan during the 12th century BC. The tribe of Dan had previously occupied a small area west of the foothills of the Judean mountains. 600 members of the tribe migrated northward and after conquering Laish "called the name of the city Dan after the name of Dan their father" (Judges 18:29).
7. A cultic center at Dan existed in the time of the Judges: "And the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image" (Judges 18:30).
8. The High Place exposed at Dan was established by Jeroboam I, king of Israel at the end of the 10th century BC, after the division of the kingdom. Jeroboam I built altars bearing a golden calf in two cities: "He set one in Beth-el and the other he put in Dan... and the people went up to worship... even unto Dan" (1 Kings 12:29-30).

9. The High Place of Dan was destroyed when the city was captured by Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, in 732 BCE. Soon thereafter, it was restored but never regained its former importance.
10. One of the fascinating finds from Tel Dan (discovered 1993) is a piece of a fossilized tablet from the second half of the ninth century B.C.E. Carved onto it is an inscription of an Aramean king, believed to be either Hazael or Ben-Hadad, King of Damascus, boasting of his victory over the King of Israel of the House of David. This is the first time that the name "House of David" was discovered outside of the Bible.

XV. Hazor (s.w. of Dan, north of the Sea of Galilee)

1. Located on a ridge 9.5 mi. [15 km.] north of the Sea of Galilee overlooking the swampy Hulah Valley.
2. The largest tel in Israel, covering a total of 205 acres with 21 layers of cities.
 - a) Upper City – 30 acres, containing 21 strata of civilizations.
 - b) Lower City – 175 acres, containing 5 strata of civilizations.
3. City on the *Via Maris*.
4. A Canaanite royal city and leader of the northern confederacy against Joshua, Josh. 11:1-5.
5. Destroyed by Joshua, Josh. 11:10-13.
6. Canaanite city oppressed Israel after the judgeship of Ehud, Judges 4:2, 17.
7. Taken by Barak, Judges 4:23-24.
8. Army of Hazor led by Sisera, 1 Sam. 12:9.
9. One of three key chariot cities fortified by Solomon, 1 Kings 9:15.
10. Water tunnel 82 feet long, part of a water system built by King Ahaz.
11. Destroyed by Tiglath Pileser III, 732 BC, 2 Kings 15:29.
12. 144 BC taken by Jonathan Maccabee after defeating the army of Demetrius II.

XVI. Sepphoris (Heb. *Tzippori*, because it is perched on top of the mountains like a bird [*tzippor*])

1. Located in south-central Galilee, about 4 miles northwest of Nazareth.
2. Though not mentioned in the Bible, it was one of the chief cities of Galilee until near the end of the 4th century AD. Josephus refers to it as “the Ornament of all Galilee.”
3. 55 BC, Gabinus, Proconsul of Syria, made it the district capital of Galilee.
4. 37 BC, conquered by Herod the Great during a snow storm.
5. 4 BC, destroyed by Quintilius Verus, legate of Syria, and the people sold into slavery, in response to a riot upon the death of Herod the Great.
6. BC, rebuilt and fortified by Herod Antipas. Grew to a population of 30,000 (compare to Nazareth, 4 miles away, with a population likely less than 200).
7. Dating to the 1st century AD, the “Basilica Building” covered an entire city block, 130 x 200 feet. The floor plan is much like a basilica, hence the name. The walls on

the north and south are lined with small shops or rooms, but enter into the building, not to the exterior. The best description would be an indoor mall, but smaller in scale. The floor in the center held a large mosaic, and a pool at each end. The mosaic is of water scenes, fishes and the like.

8. After the Bar Kochba Revolt, it became a Gentile city and was renamed Diocæsarea.
9. Home and burial place of many great rabbis.
10. In the 4th century an attempt was made to build a church at Sepphoris but ran into difficulty as there were many famous Jewish scholars living there.
11. Tradition has it that Sepphoris is the birthplace of St. Anne, the mother of Mary. The Crusaders built a church over the site of a pre-existing Byzantine church in commemoration of St. Anne.
12. AD 363 destroyed by an earthquake.

XVII. *Nazareth

1. Located inside a bowl atop the Nazareth ridge north of the Jezreel valley, among the most southern limestone hills of the Lebanon range; it runs approximately from SSW to NNE. To the south there is a sharp drop down to the Jezreel valley (i.e., Plain of Esdraelon). The base of the valley is 1,214 feet above sea level. Steep hills rise up on the north and east sides, while on the west side they reach up to 1,640 feet and command an impressive view.
2. The mild climate in the valley causes wild flowers and fruit to flourish.
3. Although it has existed since the Canaanite Period, it is not mentioned in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, by Josephus, or in the Talmud.
4. At the time of Christ, it was a small village (probably fewer than 200 people).
5. To judge by the rock-tombs, the early town was higher up the west hill than the present Nazareth.
6. There are two possible water-supplies. The first, which is the larger, lies in the valley and has been called "Mary's Well" since AD 1100, but there is no trace of early dwellings nearby. The second is a very small fountain, called "the New Well," in an angle formed by a projection of the west hill; the Byzantine church and town lay closer to this.
7. Home of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, Luke 1:26-28; 2:4, 39; Matt 2:23; 4:13; etc.
8. A City of disrepute, John 1:45-46.
9. Christ returned on two occasions, Lk 4:16-30; Mt 13:54-48 (Mk 6:1-6).
10. The steep scarp of Jebel Qafsa, overlooking the plain, is traditionally called "the Mount of Precipitation," but this is unlikely to be authentic, since this was not the hill "on which their city was built" (Lk. 4:29).
11. Today Nazareth is home to more than 60,000 Israeli Arabs, and Upper Nazareth is home to thousands more Jewish residents.
12. The majority of Nazarenes are Palestinian Arabs, about 35-40% of which are Christians and the rest are Muslims.
13. The Israeli government built a new city since the 1950s called *Natzrat Illit* (נצרת עילית "Upper Nazareth") and populated it with a Jewish majority.
14. Home to many churches:
 - a. Basilica of the Annunciation.

- b. Byzantine church built in 427.
 - i. Rebuilt by Crusaders.
 - ii. Present church built in 1955 and 1969, now the largest church in the Middle East.
- c. b) Basilica of Jesus the Youth.
- d. Chapel of Our Lady of the Fright.
- e. Mary's Well (traditionally where Gabriel spoke to Mary).
- f. Saint Gabriel's Church of the Annunciation. Greek Orthodox. Rebuilt by the Crusaders. Rebuilt again in 1769.
- g. *Mensa Christi*: The Church of the Resurrection Supper, built in 1861.
- h. Saint Joseph's Church of the Carpenter Shop. Built in the 6th century by the Crusaders. Rebuilt in its present form 1914.
- i. Greek-Catholic Synagogue Church, built in the 6th century.
- j. The Ladies of Nazareth Convent.

XVIII. *Megiddo

1. Located on the lower (southeast) slope of Mt. Carmel, 18 miles SSE of Haifa, overlooking the Jezreel Valley.
2. The tel has approximately 30 strata of civilizations.
3. Water tunnel 210 feet long.
4. Mentioned in Egyptian records in the campaigns of Thutmose III, Amenhotep II, and in the Amarna Letters.
5. Biblical references:
 - a) King of Megiddo killed by Joshua, Josh 12:21.
 - b) Given to the Tribe of Manasseh, Josh 17:11; 1Chr 7:29.
 - c) Canaanites retained control, Josh 17:12; Jdg 1:27.
 - d) Involved in the defeat of Sisera, Jdg 5:19.
 - e) In the 5th Solomonic District, 1Ki 4:12.
 - f) One of 3 fortified chariot cities of Solomon, 1Ki 9:15.
 - g) Ahaziah died in the valley after being smitten by Jehu, 2Ki 9:27.
 - h) Josiah killed, 2Ki 23:29-30; 2Chr 35:22-24; Zech 12:11.
 - i) Associated with the final apocalyptic battle, Rev 16:12-16.

XIX. Bet Shean (Scythopolis)

1. Situated at the important junction of the Valley of Jezreel with the Jordan valley, about 15 miles south of the Sea of Galilee.
2. The fertility of the land and the abundance of water led the Jewish sages to say, "If the Garden of Eden is in the land of Israel, then its gate is Beth Shean."
3. The 80-meter high tel reveals 19 strata of civilization.

4. Has been almost continuously settled since the 4th millennium BC (pre-Bronze Age) up to modern times.
5. 15th century BC, Pharaoh Thutmose III made it an administrative center for control of the region.
6. 12th century BC, became a Canaanite city.
7. Biblical references:
 - a) Given to the tribe of Manasseh, Josh 17:11; 1Chron 7:29.
 - b) Not taken by Joshua, but retained by the Canaanites, Josh 17:12-16; Jdg 1:27-28.
 - c) Taken by the Philistines, 1Sam 31:7.
 - d) Saul's body was fastened on the walls of Beth Shean, 1Sam 31:8-12; 2Sam 21:12.
8. 143 BC, Jonathan Maccabee tried to halt the Syrians and agreed to negotiations, only to be tricked and captured.
9. 107 BC, city taken by the sons of John Hyrcanus and the inhabitants were given the choice to convert to Judaism or leave. The majority chose to leave and the city became Jewish again.
10. 64 BC, it became the only city of the 10 cities of the Decapolis to be situated west of the Jordan River. Renamed "Scythopolis."
11. AD 66, In the first Jewish revolt, Vespasian made the city the winter camp for the 5th and 10th Legions.
 - a) Many Jews of Scythopolis sided with the Romans against the Jewish revolt.
 - b) Later, 13,000 Jews of Scythopolis were slaughtered by the Greek residents of the city.
12. Jews lived in Beth Shean after the destruction of Jerusalem.
13. The city grew and prospered under the Byzantines and was made the capital of *Palestina Secunda*.
14. It declined with the Arab Conquest, which made Tiberias its capital. Beth Shean did, however, become a center of wine production, in spite of the Moslem prohibition.
15. AD 749, destroyed by earthquake.
16. Rebuilt by Crusaders.
17. 1322, the small Jewish community living in Beth Shean produced the first Hebrew book on the geography of Israel.
18. 19th century, became a small village of about 200 people.
19. Population statistics:
 - a. Roman Period, 15,000 – 20,000

- b. Byzantine Period, 30,000 – 40,000
- c. At the British Conquest, 1918:
 - i. 1,710 Moslems
 - ii. 250 Christians
 - iii. 40 Jews – immigrants from Kurdistan and other Arab Countries
- d. Today, 20,249

XX. *Jerusalem

1. Location:

Set high in the hills of Judea, about 31 miles from the Mediterranean, and over 18 miles west of the north end of the Dead Sea.

2. Geography (Biblical Jerusalem):

a. Three valleys

- i. Kidron Valley, on the east side of the city, running north to south, continuing far south and east of the city, eventually emptying into the Dead Sea.
- ii. Valley of Ben Hinnom (or simply “Hinnom Valley” or *Gehenna*), running along the east and south sides of the city, terminating where it joins the Kidron Valley at the south east corner of the city.
- iii. Tyropean Valley, running from north to south through the middle of the city and joining both the Kidron and Hinnom Valleys at their junction. Today, this valley is mostly filled in within the old city walls, but is visible where it exits just outside the Dung Gate.

b. Two hills

- i. Eastern Hill, between the Kidron Valley and the Tyropean Valley.
 - a) The Southern extension of this valley was the original “Jebus,” or “Mt. Zion,” also known as “The City of David.”
 - b) In Solomon’s time, the temple was built on the northern extension of this hill. At this time, this northern extension became known as “Mt. Zion.”
- ii. Western Hill, between the Valley of Ben Hinnom and the Tyropean Valley.

It is not certain when the City of Jerusalem first expanded to this hill, but certainly postexilic Jerusalem (second temple period) eventually extended its walls to take in this hill. By the first century the city walls extended all the way to the edge of the Valley of Ben Hinnom. This Western Hill eventually came to be known as “Mt. Zion” which is its name to this day.

Note: The Mount of Olives lies east of the Kidron Valley and was technically not a part of the City of Jerusalem.

c. Water source:

The only dependable natural water source for the ancient city of Jerusalem is Gihon Spring located on the eastern slope of the City of David, part way up the slope of the Kidron Valley.

d. “Old City” vs. Biblical City

i. “Old City”:

A wall constructed in AD 1538 during the reign of the Ottoman ruler Sülieman I contains the “Old City” of present-day Jerusalem. The area inside the wall is roughly divided into quadrants, named for their former dominant ethnic communities:

- Muslim Quarter
- Jewish Quarter
- Christian Quarter
- Armenian Quarter
- An Arab market, or suq, lines the main axis of the Old City.

ii. Biblical City: The Biblical City of Jerusalem lay largely outside, and to the south, of the “Old City” walls in Old Testament times.

1. At the time of Herod the Great, the city walls had expanded both north and west to encompass much of the area presently enclosed by the 16th century walls, *excluding the northwest section of the Christian quarter which contains the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the northeast section of the Moslem Quarter.*
2. The Temple Mount (Heb. *Har HaBayit* [“Mt. of the House”]; Arab. *Al-Haram As-Sharif* “Noble Sanctuary”) was included in the Biblical City during the time of Solomon and has always remained part of the City of Jerusalem at all subsequent stages.

3. History

a. Pre-Israelite

i. Salem (3rd Millennium BC)

At the time of Abraham (ca 2000 BC), the city went by the name of “Salem” (related to the Hebrew word for “peace”) and was ruled by the priest-king Melchizedek.

ii. Jebus (2nd Millennium BC)

At the time of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua (ca 1400 BC), the city went by the name “Jebus” and was inhabited by a Canaanite people called “Jebusites.”

b. Israelite, 1000 BC – AD 70

i. Davidic (ca 1000 BC)

David conquered the Jebusite city, making it the capital of the united Kingdom of Israel.

ii. First Temple, 970 BC – 586 BC

Solomon builds the first Israelite temple, expanding the city walls to the north to encompass Mt. Moriah as the site for the temple.

iii. Babylonian Captivity, 586 BC – 444 BC

Nebuchadnezzar destroys the city and the temple, carrying many Israelites from Jerusalem into captivity. As a city, Jerusalem lay in ruins until Persian rulers permitted the Jews to return and rebuild the temple and city.

iv. Second Temple, 444 BC – AD 70

1. A series of 4 edicts from 3 different Persian rulers allowed the Jews to return from captivity and begin rebuilding first the temple, then the city itself.
 - a. 539 BC, Cyrus allowed some Jews to return and begin rebuilding the temple, 2Chr 36:22-33; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:3-5.
 - b. 519 BC, following a suspension of building the temple, due to Tattenai's interference (Ezra 5:3-17), Darius restored the earlier edict of Cyrus, Ezra 6:1-12.
 - c. 457 BC, Artaxerxes issued a decree allowing a number of Jews to return with Ezra for further rebuilding and enhancement of the temple, Ezra 7:11-26
 - d. 444 BC, Artaxerxes issued a decree to Nehemiah directing him to oversee the rebuilding of the gates and walls of the city, Neh 2:1-8.

2. Jerusalem remained under authority of the Persians until the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great.

3. Hellenistic Period, 332 – 63 BC

- a. Alexander the Great, 332 – 312 BC
- b. Ptolemies, 312 – 198 BC
- c. Seleucids, 198 – 167 BC

This period comes to a close when the Maccabees defeat the armies of the anti-Semitic Antiochus Epiphanes and regain control of Jerusalem.

d. Hasmoneans, 167 – 63 BC

For just over 100 years, Israel is ruled by Priest-Kings descended from the "Hasmonean" family, known as "Maccabees." Under the Hasmoneans, Jerusalem expands to the Western Hill.

4. Roman Period, 63 BC – AD 70

- a. Herod the Great, an Idumean (Edomite), wrests control of Israel from the Hasmoneans, and in 40 BC succeeds in being named "King of the Jews" by the Roman Senate.
- b. Under Herod's rule Jerusalem expands northward.

c. Dispersion, AD 70 - 1948

i. Pagan Roman, AD 70 – 324

1. AD 70, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies led by General Titus.

2. AD 175, Jerusalem is renamed *Aelia Capitolina*. Judea is renamed *Palestine*. The Temple Mount has temples erected for the Roman gods Juno and Minerva and, in town, Jupiter (the *Capitoline* gods).
- ii. First Byzantine Period 324 – 614
 1. Many churches are built over holy Christian sites.
 2. The peak of Christian Byzantine development is reached during the reign of Emperor Justinian (527 – 565).
- iii. Persian Period, 614 – 629
 1. Christian churches are destroyed.
 2. Jews are allowed to return.
- iv. Second Byzantine Period, 629 – 638

Jews are once again banished from Jerusalem.
- v. First Moslem Period, 638 – 1099
 1. Umayyads, 638 – 750 (Dome of the Rock built, then *El-Aksa* mosque built)
 2. Abbasids, 750 – 877
 3. Fatimids, 877 – 1071
 4. Seljuk Turks, 1071 - 1099
- vi. Crusader Period, 1099 – 1187
- vii. Second Moslem Period, 1187 – 1917
 1. Ayyubids, 1187 – 1250
 2. Mamluks, 1250 – 1514
 3. Ottoman Turks, 1514 – 1917 (Suleiman the Magnificent builds the Old City walls of today)
- viii. British Mandate, 1917 – 1948
 1. At the conclusion of WWI the League of Nations divided control of most of the Middle Eastern lands between Britain and France. Britain was given a “mandate” for “Palestine.”
 2. Britain’s official position that the Jews should have a homeland in Palestine is contained in numerous documents, most notably the “Balfour Declaration.”
 3. Tensions developed between Jews and Arabs in Palestine during this time resulting in some important Arab leaders siding with Hitler during WWII.
- d. Modern Israel, 1948 – Present
 - i. U.N. Partition

On May 15, 1947 the UN appointed a committee (the UNSCOP) to resolve growing conflicts between Jews and Arabs in Palestine. On August 31, 1947 the UN adopted a plan proposed by this committee for the partition of Palestine east of the Jordan River into two states, one a Jewish state, the other an Arab state, November 29, 1947. Jerusalem and its environs would remain under international control.

- ii. 1948 Arab Israeli War

As soon as the new state of Israel was in place, it was attacked by the armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. The newly formed Israel Defense Forces (IDF) succeeded in forcing these armies to a ceasefire. Newly acquired territory held by Israel included the west half of modern Jerusalem, while eastern Jerusalem remained under Jordanian control.
- iii. 1967 Six Days War

In 1967 Israel facing a growing military threat by Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq, launched a preemptive military strike against Egypt in early June. The combined Arab armies immediately began to invade Israel. The short-lived war is sometimes referred to as the “Six Days War.” Territory gained by Israel included eastern Jerusalem.
- iv. Biblical References
 1. Jerusalem, 810 times
 2. Jebus, 5 times (Josh 18:28; 19:10, 11; 1Chron 11:4, 5)
 3. Salem, 4 times (Gen 14:18; Ps 76:2; Heb 7:1, 2)
 4. Zion, 163 times
- 4. Things to See
 - a. Modern City
 - i. Knesset – Israel’s Parliament building
 - ii. Yad Vashem – Israel’s Holocaust Memorial Museum
 - iii. Avenue of the Righteous Gentiles
 - iv. Scale model of the 1st century Jerusalem
 - v. Shrine of the Book, Dead Sea Scrolls Museum
 - vi. The Garden Tomb
 - vii. Gordon’s Calvary
 - viii. The Menorah
 - ix. Mount Scopus, site of the city of Nob
 - x. Mount of Olives
 - b. “Old City”
 - i. Western Wall
 - ii. Western Wall Tunnel
 - iii. Temple Mount
 - iv. Via Dolorosa
 - v. Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Primary custodians: Greek Orthodox Church, Armenian Apostolic Church, and Roman Catholic Church. Lesser responsibilities belong to: Coptic Orthodox Church, Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church).
 - vi. The Temple Institute
 - c. City of David (south of Temple Mt.)
 - i. Excavations of Jebusite city
 - ii. Excavations of David’s Jerusalem
 - iii. Gihon Spring and Hezekiah’s Tunnel
 - iv. Pool of Siloam

- d. "Mount Zion" (on the western hill – see "Geography" above)
 - i. Church of the Apostles
 - ii. David's tomb (not authentic)
 - iii. The Upper Room
 - iv. House of Caiaphas
- XXI. *Bethlehem (Hebrew for "House of Bread" known also as "Bethlehem of Judah" or "Bethlehem Ephrathah")
1. Located about 5.5 miles south of Jerusalem. (Note: A second town of Israel was also named "Bethlehem" in Zebulunite territory about 7 miles northwest of Nazareth).
 2. Earlier name was "Ephrath," Gen 35:19.
 3. Burial place of Rachel, Gen 35:16-20; 48:7.
 4. Given to the tribe of Judah, 1Chron 4:4.
 5. Home of:
 - a) Micah's Levite, Judges 17:1-13.
 - b) The Levite's concubine, Judges 19:1-9, 18.
 - c) Naomi, Ruth, Boaz.
 - d) David, 1Sam 17:18; 17:58; 20:6, 28.
 - e) Joab, Abishai and Asahel, 2Sam 2:32.
 - f) Elhanan, one of David's mighty men, 2Sam 23:24; 1Chr 11:26.
 6. Place of David's anointing as king by Samuel, 1Sam 16:1-13.
 7. David longed for water from its well, 2Sam 23:14-17; 1Chr 11:16-19.
 8. Fortified by king Rehoboam, 2Chr 11:6
 9. Rebuilt after return from Babylon, Ezra 2:21; Neh 7:26.
 10. Prophesied as the place of Messiah's birth, Micah 5:2; John 7:42.
 11. Birth of Christ, Matt 2:1-12; Lk 2:1-20.
 12. Slaughter of the babies by Herod the Great, Matt 2:16-18.
 13. All Jews were expelled in 2nd century AD by Hadrian.
 14. AD 405, Jerome finished his translation of the Latin Vulgate in Bethlehem after 20 years of toil.
 15. Today Bethlehem is controlled by the Palestinian Authority and has a population of about 22,000 not including the suburbs of Beit Jala and Beit Sahour.
 16. Things to see:
 - a) Church of the Nativity
 - i. Byzantine church built in 325.

- ii. Present church built by Justinian in the 6th century.
 - a Spared in the Persian invasion of 614 because of three magi pictured on the mosaic floor.
 - b 1101, Baldwin I was consecrated.
 - c 1121, Baldwin II was consecrated.
 - d Turkish period, the doorway was reduced to its present size.
 - e Place of Christ's birth is marked by a silver star which was placed in 1717.

b) The Shepherd's Field

c) Tomb of Rachel

XXII. Bethany

1. Located on the east side of the Mount of Olives, about 2 miles from Jerusalem on the road to Jericho.
2. First settled during the Persian period in the 6th century BC.
3. Home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus, Luke 10:38-42; Jn 11:1, 18.
4. Resurrection of Lazarus, Jn 11:35-44.
5. Mary anointed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair, Jn 12:1-8.
6. Jesus' home during the Passion Week, Mt 21:17; 26:6; Mk 11:11-12; 14:3; Lk 19:29; Jn 12:1
7. Close to the site of the Ascension, Lk 24:50-51.
8. In the 1950's Franciscan Fathers built an unusual church atop earlier foundations. They chose to build a church without windows, with the distinct look of a crypt. To recall the "I am the Resurrection and the Life," saying of Jesus.

XXIII. *Masada (Heb *M^etzada* "fortress")

1. Located near the southwest shore of the Dead Sea on top of an isolated rock cliff on the eastern edge of the Judean desert overlooking the Dead Sea.
2. Geographical Features:
 - a) The cliffs on the east edge of Masada are about 1,475 feet high (132' above sea level), dropping off to the Dead Sea, and the cliffs on the west are about 330 feet high; the natural approaches to the cliff top are very difficult.
 - b) The top of the plateau is flat and rhomboid shaped, approximately 1/3 mile by 1/6 mile (1,950' x 650').
 - c) A wall around the top of the plateau totaling 4,600 feet (about .9 mile) long and 13 feet thick with many towers, and the fortress included storehouses, cisterns that were refilled by rainwater, barracks, palaces and an armory.
 - d) Three narrow, winding paths led from below to fortified gates.

3. May have been the stronghold of David, 1Sa 22:4-5; 23:14; 24:22.
4. Jonathan Maccabee built a fortress on Masada.
5. Herod the Great built up Masada between 37 and 31 BC as a refuge for himself should his Jewish subjects rise against him.
6. AD 66, at the beginning of the Jewish uprising against the Romans, a group of Jewish rebels called the Sicarii (dagger men) took Masada from the Roman garrison stationed there.
7. AD 70 they were joined by additional Sicarii and their families who were expelled from Jerusalem by the other Jews living there shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, and for the next two years used Masada as their base for raiding and harassing Roman and Jewish settlements alike.
8. AD 73, Lucius Bossus the Roman governor of Judea died, and Flavius Silva marched against Masada with the Roman legion, laying siege to the fortress. They built a circumvallation wall and then a rampart against the western face of the plateau, using thousands of tons of stones and beaten earth.
9. Spring of AD 73, after approximately two to three months of siege, Roman forces breach the wall of the fortress with a battering ram. When the Romans entered the fortress, however, they discovered that its approximately one thousand defenders had set all the buildings but the food storerooms ablaze and committed mass suicide rather than face certain capture or defeat by their enemies.
10. 5th – 6th century inhabited by Byzantine monks.
11. The site of Masada was identified in 1842 and extensively excavated in 1963-1965. A pair of cable cars now carry those visitors who do not wish to climb the ancient Snake path, now restored on the east side of the mountain. The Roman ramp still stands on the west side and can be climbed on foot.
12. Things to see:
 - a) Snake path
 - b) Wall around the plateau
 - c) Roman siege ramp
 - d) Herodian 3-level palace (Northern Palace)
 - e) Storehouses
 - f) Bathhouse
 - g) Synagogue (a fragment of Ezek 37 was discovered there)
 - h) The scroll Room
 - i) The Breach Point (where the Romans breached the wall)
 - j) The Western Palace (mosaic floors)
 - k) Byzantine church

- l) The Columbarium for raising pigeons
- m) The Great Cistern
- n) The Southern Citadel

XXIV. Ein Gedi (“Spring of the Goat Kid”)

1. Located west of the Dead Sea, up a narrow canyon in the Judean Mountains.
2. Earliest evidence of settlement from the Chalcolithic Period (ca. 3,000 BC) with a temple from that period.
3. Allotted to Judah at the time of the conquest, Josh 15:62.
4. David hid at Ein Gedi, 1Sa 23:29; 24:1.
5. Known as a fruitful oasis containing grapes and henna blossoms, Song 1:14.
6. In Roman times, it became famous for its wine.
7. Became an administrative center for Bar Kochba in AD 132-135. In a nearby cave letters were discovered.
8. Continuously settled during the Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Early Moslem periods.
9. One of the last areas taken by Israel during the War of Independence.
10. Kibbutz established in 1956.
11. Will be an important source of fish during the millennial kingdom, Ezk 47:10.

XXV. *Dead Sea (“Salt Sea” [Gen 14:3], “Eastern Sea” [Ezk 47:18]; “Sea of the Arabah” [Dt 4:49]; “*Asphalates*”)

1. Located east of the Judean wilderness in the Jordan rift valley.
2. The lowest point in the Jordan rift valley. In fact, it is the lowest point on the surface of the earth.
3. Surface of the water is on average about 1,400 feet below sea level. 4. Lowest point of the sea bed is another 1,400 feet below the surface.
5. 48 miles long x 8 miles wide.
6. About 1/3 up from the southern end, a peninsula extends into the sea from the east shore. Because it is shaped somewhat like a tongue, the peninsula goes by the name *Lashon*, Heb. for “tongue” (or Aram. *Lishan*). Until recently, this peninsula extended about 2/3 to ¾ of the way across the sea. In recent years, so much of the sea has dried up due to evaporation, that the *Lashon* now extends all the way across the sea, effectively dividing it up into two separate bodies of water.
7. The north end is quite deep (about 1,400 feet), while the south end is quite shallow.
8. The Dead Sea has the highest concentration of minerals (25%) of any natural body of water on the earth, including salt, potash, magnesium, calcium chlorides and bromide).

This mineral concentration makes the Dead Sea highly buoyant, and also fatal to marine life.

9. Bitumen (asphalt) occurs naturally and can be seen floating on the surface.
10. A hill of salt at the southwest corner has eroded into strange forms, including pillars which are known as “Lot’s Wife” by local Arabs.
11. In OT times the sea formed a natural barrier between Judah on the west and Moab and Edom on the east.
12. During the Millennial kingdom, the Dead Sea will be transformed into a fresh water lake, fed by a stream that will flow from Jerusalem, and will a rich source of fish (Ezk 47:1-12; Zech 14:8).

XXVI. Qumran

1. Located at the northwest corner of the Dead Sea.
2. Possibly the “City of Salt” in Joshua 15:62.
3. In the 1st century, it was a major site for the Essene Community.
 - a) First arrived in the second century BC.
 - b) 31 BC, destroyed by an earthquake and abandoned.
 - c) 4 BC – AD 6, rebuilt, during the reign of Herod Archelaus.
4. AD 68, Essene community destroyed by the Romans.
5. Encampment of a Roman Garrison during the Bar Kochba revolt.
6. Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in caves in the cliffs above Qumran.
7. Current archaeological excavations are searching for underground caverns in the plain above the Qumran settlement.

XXVII. Jericho

1. Located about 10 miles northwest of the mouth of the Jordan at the Dead Sea at about 825 feet below sea level.
2. The tel (OT Jericho) is located about 1.25 miles northwest of the modern city.
3. NT Jericho is represented by another tel, slightly to the south of OT Jericho.
4. Known as the “City of Palm Trees,” Dt 34:3; Jdg 1:16; 3:13; 2Chr 28:15.
5. Joshua sent two spies to spy out the city, Josh 2:1-24.
6. The fall of Jericho, Josh 6:1-25; Heb 11:30.
7. King killed by Joshua, Josh 10:1, 28, 30; 12:9.
8. Cursed by Joshua, Josh 6:26; fulfilled, 1Ki 16:34.
9. Border between Ephraim (to the north) and Benjamin (to the south), Josh 16:1, 7; 18:12.

10. David's ambassadors remained there while their beards grew back, 2Sa 10:5; 1Chr 19:5.
11. One of the locations of the Schools of the Prophets, 2Ki 2:5, 15.
12. Elisha healed the bitter waters at Jericho, 2Ki 2:19-22.
13. Rebuilt after the return from Babylon, Ezra 2:34; Neh 2:35; 7:36.
14. During the Hellenistic (Greek) period the city began to spread beyond the tel and became famous for dates and balsam.
15. NT Jericho was built by Herod the Great.
16. The healing of Bartimaeus occurred in Jericho, Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:35-43.
17. The story of Zacchaeus, Lk 19:1-10.
18. Fell to the Romans in AD 70 in a fierce battle in which the Jews tried to destroy the valuable balsam trees.
19. Byzantine period, several churches and monasteries were built.

XXVIII. Qarantal ("the forty," Mount of Temptation)

1. Located west of Jericho amid many high cliffs.
2. The traditional site of the temptation of Christ.
3. A fortress was built on the location by the Hasmoneans. This fortress was named "Dok" or "Dagon."
4. Byzantine monks founded a monastery at the site of the former Hasmonean fortress.
5. The present monastery was built in 1887 and is inhabited by six Greek Orthodox monks.

XXIX. Valley of Elah

1. Generally identified with the modern Wadi es-Sant ("valley of the acacia," 11 miles southwest of Jerusalem).
2. A valley used by the Philistines to gain access to the central hill country.
3. The scene of David's victory over Goliath (1 Sa. 17:2; 21:9).
4. On the west side of the valley, near Socoh, there is a very large and ancient tree of this kind known as the 'terebinth of Wady Sur,' 55 feet in height, its trunk 17 feet in circumference, and the breadth of its shade no less than 75 feet. It marks the upper end of the Elah valley, and forms a noted object, being one of the largest terebinths in Israel.
5. At the east end of the valley is the site of Adullam, where David hid in his initial flight from Saul, 1Sa 22.

XXX. Lachish

1. A 31-acre tell in the Shephelah some 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem, surrounded on three sides by Nahal Lachish.

2. Excavated by Starkey (1932–38), Aharoni (1966–68), Ussishkin (1973–87).
3. First settled about 3,000 BC.
4. From 1500 BC an unfortified Canaanite city that was destroyed in 1200 BC.
5. Rebuilt as an Amorite city under the control of Egypt.
 - a) Joshua conquered this city, Josh 10.
 - b) Eventually it was destroyed, perhaps by Israelites, ca. 1130 BC
6. 9th century BC, a new walled city was built, probably by king Rehoboam, 2Chr 11:5-10.
 - a) Amaziah took refuge in this city and was killed there when fleeing from rebels in Jerusalem, 2Ki 14:19; 2Chr 25:27.
 - b) Early 8th century BC, the city was damaged by earthquake (Amos 1:1; Zech 14:5) and subsequently rebuilt.
 - c) 701 BC, Sennacherib laid siege to the city and captured it. The siege was depicted on a relief sculpture in his palace (now on display in the British Museum). Eventually the Assyrians razed the city.
 - d) Rebuilt on a much smaller scale by Judeans.
 - e) 586 BC, destroyed by the Babylonians (see Jer 34:7).
7. Post-Exilic era, resettled by returning Israelites, Neh 11:30.
 - a) Persian and Hellenistic periods, walls built.
 - b) Later, the site was abandoned.

XXXI. Ashkelon

1. Located on the southern Mediterranean coast between Jaffa and Gaza.
2. 19th – 15th centuries, known in Egyptian texts.
3. 12th century, became a Philistine city.
4. Samson killed 30 men to repay his part of the vow of the riddle, Jdg 14:19.
5. 598 BC, destroyed by Babylon, Jer 47:5-7; Zeph 2:4-7.
6. Hellenistic period, an important seaport.
7. Birthplace of Herod the Great, who later rebuilt the city.
8. Byzantine period, Jews were the only minority group allowed freedom to practice their religion.
9. 1153, Crusaders built a strong stone wall.
10. 1270, destroyed by Arabs and abandoned until 1948.

XXXII. Beersheba (“well of the oath”)

1. Located about 50 miles southwest of Jerusalem, roughly half-way between the Mediterranean and the southern part of the Dead Sea.

2. Situated about 900 feet above sea level at a point where four wadis (river beds) come together: Besor, Gerar, Hevron (Hebron) and Beersheba.
3. Evidence of settlement during the Chalcolithic period.
4. Biblical significance:
 - a) Site of Abraham's well, Gen 21:22-32.
 - b) Possible site of Isaac's birth, Gen 21:1-5.
 - c) Hagar and Ishmael went out into the wilderness from Beersheba, Gen 21:14-19.
 - d) Site of Isaac's well and altar, Gen 26:23-33; 32:33.
 - e) Home of Jacob, Gen 28:10.
 - f) Initially given to the tribe of Judah, Josh 15:28; 1Chr 4:28. Later given to Simeon, Josh 19:2; 1Chr 4:28.
 - g) Samuel's two sons served as judges at Beersheba, 1Sam 8:2.
 - h) Frequently mentioned as the southern extent of inhabited Israel in the expression "from Dan to Beersheba," Jdg 20:1; 1Sam 3:20; 2Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1Ki 4:24-25; 1Chr 21:2; 2Chr 30:5.
5. The modern town
 - a) Located several miles from the tel.
 - b) Built in 1900 as Turkish Army regional headquarters by the Jews as Bet Eshel.
 - c) In Israel's War for Independence, initially captured by Egypt, but later recaptured by the Israelis.
 - d) Today, it is the capital of the Negev with a population of 120,000.
 - e) Every Thursday it hosts the weekly Bedouin market and camel auction.