



Jews and the Bible Itineraries

A 7-Day Tour

Day 1

Jerusalem: Start the day with a visit to the [Tower of David Museum](#) dedicated to the history of Jerusalem from its founding to modern times with remains said to go back to Hasmonean times.

Continue to the [Jewish Quarter](#) to visit the Broad Wall, a 2,700-year-old fortification built by King Hezekiah to save Jerusalem from the Assyrians. You can also visit the [Ariel](#) - First Temple period museum and the nearby [Israelite Tower](#), Herodian Mansions and [Burnt House](#), the latter two sites tell the story of this area at the time of the Second Temple.



The Jewish Quarter was home to European and Sephardic Jews during the centuries under Ottoman rule, a story told by the quarter's [Four Sephardic Synagogues](#) and the Menahem Zion Synagogue.

Descend from the Jewish Quarter to the [Western Wall](#), the last remnant of the Herodian Temple Mount. While at the Western Wall, arrange your schedule to join a public tour of the [Western Wall Tunnels](#) by enquiring at the Western Wall Heritage Foundation (www.english.thekotel.org).



In the Southern Wall Archaeological Park, you can walk the original two thousand-year-old street and climb the ancient steps. At the [Davidson Visitors Center](#), in the basement of an eighth-century-CE palace, make arrangements to see its virtual-reconstruction, high-definition interactive model.

End the day exploring the [City of David](#), with remains going back to the days of the biblical king who made Jerusalem the capital of the Tribes of Israel. See the new visitors' center; walk through Warren's Shaft, the Water Fortress where King Solomon was crowned, and through the waters of Hezekiah's Tunnel or the adjacent "dry route."

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 2

Start the day with a visit to [Yad Vashem](#) the Holocaust memorial, with its astounding new historical museum, Hall of Remembrance, Children's' Memorial and other moving sites.

At the nearby [Israel Museum](#), among many other fascinating exhibits discover the mysteries of the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#), the oldest copies of the Hebrew Bible, at the [Shrine of the Book](#). The original Aleppo Codex of the Masoretic Text is also on display. You can also see the famous 1:50 [Model of ancient Jerusalem](#) in its new home here

Continue to the [Bible Lands Museum](#), next door, with its priceless exhibits of artifacts that bring the biblical cultures of the region alive.

In the afternoon, drive out to the outskirts of Jerusalem and Nebi Samuel, traditional site of the tomb of the prophet Samuel, with a mosque, a synagogue and extensive Crusader ruins. Climb to the

rooftop for a spectacular view of the hills of Samaria, the heartland of the Northern Kingdom in Bible days, as well as of Jerusalem and the [coastal plain](#).

Enjoy a stroll around downtown Jerusalem - walk in the pedestrian malls of Ben Yehuda Street, Nahalat Shiva, a restored quarter of shops, galleries and cafes, and the Mahane Yehuda open-air fruit and vegetable market..

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 3

Driving out of Jerusalem past Jericho, recalling the entry of the Israelites into Canaan under Joshua. Stop at [Qumran](#) where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered and scholars believe a community devoted to the study and teaching of the Bible may have lived in Second Temple times.

Travel along the [Dead Sea](#) shore to [Ein Gedi](#) and walk through the oasis to the desert waterfall near the cave where David hid from Saul.

Continue to [Massada](#), taking the cable-car to view the ruins of King Herod's mountaintop fortress and the last stronghold of the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 73 CE, which has been declared a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#). Archaeologists say one of the most moving moments for them here was the discovery of a scroll inscribed with Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of the Dry Bones, found in the remains of the ancient synagogue.

Visit the new museum in the Visitor Center, which reveals the secrets of the daily life of the rebels, the story of the excavations, and how the site became one of Israel's most important symbols.

After descending from Massada, continue past the impressive Mount Sodom, rising from the Dead Sea, with its unusual rock formations including one called "Lot's Wife," after the biblical story. Spend the rest of the day at leisure at a bed and breakfast near the Dead Sea or in one of the beautiful spa hotels, enjoying a dip in the healthful waters of the lowest, saltiest body of water on earth.

Overnight in the Dead Sea area

Day 4

Get an early start this morning, driving northward along the Jordan Valley, viewing the mountains of Moab and Ammon, where Moses and the Children of Israel spent their last months before crossing into the promised land.

Your next stop is [Beit She'an](#), where you can climb the biblical mound where the Philistines hung Saul's body to be rescued by the men of Jabesh Gilead. Below, you can see the magnificent remains of the Talmudic and Byzantine cities of which the sages said "if the Garden of Eden is in the Land of Israel, its gateway is at Beit She'an."

Continue to the top of Mt. Gilboa, where Saul and his three sons died in battle with the Philistines and take the Bible Route, with its view of the Jordan and Jezreel valleys, the ancient sites of Shunem, home of the Shunemite woman who encountered Elijah

and where the Philistines camped before the battle, and Endor, where Saul had a sorceress called up the ghost of the prophet Samuel to learn his bitter fate.

Next is a visit to the remains of the Talmudic-era synagogue at Beit Alpha, to view the mosaic that combines biblical and pagan themes and teaches about the Jewish religious thought at that time.

Then, it's on [Tiberias](#), the lakeside resort on the [Sea of Galilee](#)

Overnight in the Tiberias area

Day 5

Begin the day with a visit to the tombs of [Rabbi Akiva](#), his wife [Rachel](#), [Maimonides](#), and [Rabbi Meir the Miracle Worker](#) to steep yourself in the ancient tradition of prayer at the tombs of the righteous.

Then drive along the lake and up to the [Golan Heights](#), the biblical land of Bashan. Stop at Mitzpeh Gadot for a view over the [Hula Valley](#) to understand the history of the conflicts between Israel and Syria.

Continue to the Talmudic village of [Katsrin](#), to learn about Jewish life on the Golan during the Mishnaic and Talmudic period. Stop for an overview of [Gamla](#), "Massada of the Galilee" in its beautiful natural surroundings, and continue to the synagogue of Umm el Kanatir, ("Mother of Arches"), now being renovated by a unique application of high-tech methodology.

Drive to [Safed \(Tsefat\)](#), to visit the Synagogue of the great Jewish mystic and Kabbalist, Rabbi Isaac Luria, known as the Ari. Many of the symbols associated with him appear in the paintings of the local artists.

Then, it's on to [Mount Meron](#), to the tomb of Shimon Bar Yohai traditional author of the seminal mystical work, the Zohar. Learn the [Lag Ba'Omer](#) traditions connected to his life and death.

Overnight in a Galilee Mountains or Hula Valley bed and breakfast or hotel

Day 6

Spend the morning at [Tel Dan](#), a beautiful nature reserve and one of the sources of the Jordan River, as well as an Israelite city, built to compete with Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. You'll see one of the oldest arches in the world, said to date back to the time when Abraham came to Dan the Israelite Gate and the High Place of Jeroboam.

Continue to [Tel Hazor National Park](#) (one of the cities fortified by King Solomon, with archaeological remains of such importance that it has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO). One of the principal cities on the Fertile Crescent, Hazor engaged in trade with cities in Babylon and Syria. The Bible refers to Hazor as "the head of all those kingdoms" (Joshua 11:10).

Ask at the national park office to arrange a visit at the [museum](#) at the entrance to Kibbutz Ayelet Hashahar, where antiquities from Tel Hazor are on display.

Then, it's back to central Israel via the Galilee Mountains and the Sharon Plain.

Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 7

Begin your day exploring the alleyways of restored Old Jaffa, the ancient port from which the prophet Jonah sailed on his way to be swallowed by the Leviathan, and where Solomon imported the cedar logs from Lebanon to use in the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Don't miss the Visitor Center in Kedumim Square, with its historical exhibit and archaeological remains.

Continue to the Eretz Israel Museum with its exhibits on daily life in various periods of the land of Israel. Visit a Philistine temple at Tel Qasile, right on the grounds of the museum.

At the [Diaspora Museum](#), learn how and where the Jewish people dispersed after the destruction of the First and Second Temple, and delve into Jewish history outside the Land of Israel. Enjoy the evening in the big city – dining, strolling and people-watching on Rothschild Boulevard, Sheinken Street, or at the [Tel Aviv Port](#), among many other possibilities.