

Tabor & Nichols

Israel Tour 2021

Walking the Ancient Paths

See the Sites, Go Behind the Scenes
Experience the Holy Land on a Level that Most Tours Miss

October 1 - 12, 2021



Tour Highlights

Prof. James D. Tabor and Biblical teacher Ross Nichols are teaming up again for an exclusive tour of the Holy Land October 1 - 12, 2021. Even if you have traveled to Israel before, or specifically traveled with Tabor or Nichols, this is the tour for you.

We will take you *behind the scenes*, exploring new archaeological and textual discoveries as they are related to the key Biblical sites we will visit. No tour can cover everything, but we will take you, quite literally, from Dan to Beersheba – and even 60 miles south, deep into the Arava, locating one of the biblical “camps” of the ancient Israelites in the time of Moses.

Anyone interested in biblical history and literature will find this tour refreshing and educational from beginning to end. We have no expectations regarding belief systems, politics, or faith orientations. All that is required to go on this tour is a strong orientation toward learning more about the Bible and its history and archaeology.

The tour will transform the way you read and understand the Bible. Throughout the tour, we will share the stories that you know well from the texts, in the very places where the events actually took place. We are limiting the number of registrants to 40—one busload—because we want each person to have time to interact directly with Dr. Tabor and Ross Nichols.

Tour Leaders – *Dr. James D. Tabor and Ross K. Nichols*



Dr. James Tabor is professor of Christian origins and ancient Judaism in the [Department of Religious Studies](#) at the University North Carolina at Charlotte. Since 1990 Tabor has made 72 trips to Israel pursuing research, doing archaeology, and leading students and other adult groups who want a unique Holy Land Experience. His Ph.D. is from the University of Chicago in Christian Origins and Ancient Judaism. Tabor has combined his work on ancient texts with extensive field work in archaeology in Israel and Jordan, including work at Qumran, Sepphoris, Masada, and Wadi el-Yabis in Jordan, the Suba “John the Baptist” cave, the “Tomb of the Shroud,” and the Talpiot “Jesus” tombs. Among his publications are *Things Unutterable* (1985); *A Noble Death* (1992); *Why*

Waco: Cults and the Battle for Religious Freedom in America (1995); [Restoring Abrahamic Faith](#) (2008); and the New York Times bestselling [The Jesus Dynasty: A New Historical Investigation of Jesus, His Royal Family, and the Birth of Christianity](#) (2006). His two latest books are [The Jesus Discovery: The New Archaeological Find that Reveals the Birth of Christianity](#) (Simon & Schuster) and [Paul and Jesus: How the Apostle Transformed Christianity](#) (Simon & Schuster). Tabor’s latest book, *The Lost Mary: How the Jewish Mother of Jesus Became the Virgin Mother of God* (Knopf) will be published in 2021. You can visit his blog at: <https://jamestabor.com>.



Ross K. Nichols is a Vice-President and an ordained minister and teacher for [United Israel World Union](#). He directs the United Israel Center South in St. Francisville, Louisiana. Each Sabbath, people from around the world join in for a live stream of his teachings via [United Israel's YouTube channel](#), or the [United Israel Facebook Page](#). Ross has toured Israel extensively – leading and co-leading tours for both Jews and Christians. He has participated in archaeological digs at Dig Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and at Biblical Tamar. Ross is a student and teacher of biblical Hebrew, is knowledgeable about the historical Jesus and late 2nd Temple Judaism and has spent many years seeking to understand and interpret earliest Christianity from its original and thoroughly Hebraic perspective. He has

studied and taught the Bible for more than 25 years. His interests cover: the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), the Christian Scriptures (New Testament), and the world which produced them. He respectfully approaches the texts and tenets of Judaism and Christianity, and his personal faith reflects a long spiritual quest inspired by contact with Judeo-Christian texts and teachings. His teachings, therefore, exhibit what he calls, “an informed view from Old to New.” His teachings are available on this blog, iTunes, YouTube, and various Social Media platforms. You can visit his blog at <https://rossknichols.com/>, or his Academia Page - <https://independent.academia.edu/RossKNichols>.

Travel Arrangements provided by Blossoming Rose

Blossoming Rose was founded by *Dr. DeWayne Coxon* in 1984 with a mission to bless Israel through various programs, including the maintenance and restoration of the 55-acre Biblical Tamar Park. Dr. Coxon, currently President Emeritus, has visited Israel over 150 times and his knowledge of Jewish, Christian and Muslim history gives him a unique perspective on contemporary events taking place in the Middle East. Blossoming Rose is the curator of the archaeology site at the Park. *Rob Coxon* serves as the President and oversees the operations of the Park and tours. He has been involved with Blossoming Rose since 1984 and has travelled to Israel over 60 times.

Tour Itinerary

Day One

Friday – October 1 – *USA to Israel*

We will depart on Friday, October 1, flying overnight and arriving in Israel on Saturday, October 2. (**We must be at the airport three hours prior to international flight departures.**) Flights should be arranged to arrive in Tel Aviv before 5 pm on October 2. Our charter bus will leave the airport at 6 pm. If your flight arrives after this time, you will need to take a private taxi or Neshet van to our Netanya hotel.

Day Two

Saturday – October 2 – *Mediterranean, and Shabbat*

We arrive at Ben Gurion airport, and at 6 pm, we will drive north on our chartered bus, along the Mediterranean coastal plain. We will check into our hotel and settle into our rooms in Netanya. We will spend our first night in Israel at the luxurious [Netanya Leonardo Plaza](#), located along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. After dinner we will take a leisurely stroll to the Sea just as Netanya comes to life as the Sabbath ends.

Day Three

Sunday – October 3 – *Caesarea Maritima, Sepphoris, Mount Tabor, Sea of Galilee and Tiberias*



Today we head north to the Galilee to Caesarea Maritima, the city built by Herod the Great (25-13 BCE). Named to flatter Caesar, this site is situated on the Mediterranean Coast between Tel Aviv and Haifa. We will discuss Paul's imprisonment here before moving on to Rome to make his 'appeal to Caesar.'

We will then visit the ancient city of Sepphoris, the urban capital of Herod Antipas, where Dr. Tabor has excavated. There we will learn about the latest unpublished discoveries at that site.

Next we will take in a view of the Galilee from Mount Tabor, the site of the battle between Barak and Sisera (Judges 4), and the traditional site of the transfiguration of Jesus. We will continue towards Tiberias, founded sometime around 20 CE by Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, who made it the capital of his realm in Galilee.

We will make our way to our hotel, the [Caesar Premier Tiberias](#), where we will spend two nights. This hotel is situated in the heart of the city's promenade, surrounded by shopping, and is only a short walk from the Sea of Galilee.

Day Four

Monday – October 4 – *Caesarea Philippi, Tel Dan, Golan Heights, Lunch in Druze Village, Mt Hermon, Wine Tasting and Chocolate at Ein Zivan, Gennesaret and Ancient Fishing Boat, Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee*



We begin our tour of the Galilee with a stop at Caesarea Philippi, mentioned in the synoptic gospels as the place where Jesus ask his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" Next we will visit the site of Tel Dan, where according to II Kings 10:29 and II Chronicles 13:8, Jeroboam led the northern kingdom of Israel away from the true faith and even Abraham visited! We then travel to up into the Golan to the borders of Syria

and Lebanon, where we have lunch at a Druze Village. From there we will see the foot of Mount Hermon and we will discuss the prophetic significance of this holy place (Psalm 133). On our way back to Tiberias we will make a delightful stop at Kubbutz Ein Zivan, for wine tasting as well as visit a chocolate factory.

We will go to Gennesaret, where the first century fishing boat was found in 1986 and then finish the day with our own boat ride on the Sea of Galilee where we will watch the sun set. We will spend the night in Tiberias at the [Caesar Premier Tiberias](#).

Day Five

Tuesday – October 5 – *Magdala, Arbel Cliffs, Horns of Hattin, Capernaum, Jordan River, Bet Shean, Old City Night Walk (optional)*



We begin our day with a stop at Magdala on the shores of the Sea, the home of Mary Magdalene, visting the recent archaeological discoveries that are transforming our understanding of 1st century Galilee. We then take in a breathtaking view of the Sea of Galilee from the Arbel cliffs, we will see the ruins of an ancient synagogue, and drive past the historic Horns of Hattin—believed by some to be the authentic site of the “Sermon on the Mount.”

Next we will travel to Capernaum where Jesus made his HQ and moved his family. Here we will tour a third Century synagogue, built upon the visible remains of a first century synagogue and see the recently uncovered remains of the first century port.

We will make a stop at the Jordan River, at a popular baptismal site. Those who choose to immerse themselves in the waters of the Jordan may do so.

We will then travel towards Jerusalem, stopping at the spectacular ancient ruins of the Roman city of Bet Shean. Finally we will check into the [King Solomon Hotel](#) in Jerusalem, where we will spend three nights. This luxury hotel is surrounded by local attractions and within walking distance of the Old City.

On our first night in Jerusalem there will be an optional evening walk to the Old City. We will enter the famed Jaffa Gate, making our way through the winding streets from the Christian Quarter, through the Armenian Quarter, finally reaching the Jewish Quarter to visit among other things, the Western Wall.

Day Six

Wednesday – October 6 – *Garden Tomb, Mount of Olives, Dominus Flevit, Garden of Gethsemane, Church of all Nations, Kidron Valley, Zion Gate, Upper Room, Pilate’s judgment seat, Tower of David Museum, Mamilla Mall and Jaffa Gate.*



We will begin our day with a visit to the Garden Tomb, considered by many Protestant Christians to be the site of Jesus’ burial and resurrection, but dated by Israeli archeologist Gabriel Barkay to the 8-7 centuries BCE.

We will then take a bus ride to the top of the Mount of Olives. From this vantage point will look towards the west and view the Temple Mount. We will walk down the Mount of Olives visiting several places of interest along the way including Dominus Flevit, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the Church of All Nations. Our walk will take us deep into the Kidron Valley, and then up to Mount Zion. Along the way we will visit the traditional sites of the Upper Room and King David’s Tomb, where recent archaeological excavations have reshaped our understanding of these places. We will also visit the newly discovered authentic site of Pontius Pilate’s Judgement Seat with the

Gabbatha Pavement and the Praetorium that is rewriting the entire history of our understanding of 1st century Jerusalem.

We will end our day with a tour of the Tower of David Museum where we will review the history of the city of Jerusalem and of the citadel itself, parts of which date back 2,000 years.

Day Seven

Thursday – October 7 – *Temple Mount, Subterranean Jewish Quarter, and Jerusalem Archaeological Park – Davidson Center, Shopping, Tower of David Light Show*



We will begin our day with a tour of the Temple Mount discussing its history, past, present and future and why it is the most contested real estate on the planet.

We will eat a nice lunch in the Jewish Quarter, and then we will visit the Wohl Museum, descending 20 feet below the present city level to visit the Wohl Museum, which contains the best preserved ruins of 1st Century Jerusalem. Finally, we will make our way to the Jerusalem Archaeological Park – Davidson Center where we will view all the most recent archaeological discoveries that are transforming our understanding of ancient Jerusalem.

We will allow for shopping on this day in the Old City. Tour participants will have plenty of time to walk the narrow corridors of Jerusalem's Old City, going from shop to shop to find the perfect souvenirs from their time in the Holy City.

After dinner, we will return to the Old City's Tower of David for what is called, the Night Spectacular, a sound and light show displayed against the ancient stone walls of the citadel.

Day Eight

Friday– October 8 – *Qumran, En Gedi, and Biblical Tamar Park Sabbath dinner followed by relaxing and visiting in the Sukkah*



On this day we will leave Jerusalem and begin our journey south stopping at Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. There Dr. Tabor will tell us about his own excavations and discoveries and we will visit the ruins of the settlement and see the famous caves where nearly 800 ancient scrolls were discovered. Next, we will visit the beautiful En Gedi where among things, David hid from Saul. We will take a hike and enjoy the wildlife as we make our way to the caves and waterfalls. We will then continue on to the southern Biblical border of Israel, to Tamar (Ez. 47-48) and move into our rooms at Biblical Tamar Park.

[Biblical Tamar Park](#) is located along the ancient spice route, in the Aravah, in the midst of the Biblical wilderness region. On this 55-acre park, there is a lovely dining facility, an active archaeology site, and a peaceful sukkah, perfect for morning and evening gatherings around a campfire. The park is also home to an ancient tree, and is surrounded on all sides by large date palm trees, a mango orchard, and rolling, sand covered hills. Here, during our three nights under the stars, participants will connect with each other, and experience a taste of life in the desert reminiscent of the patriarchal narratives. We will share insights into this special place about its ancient importance as well as its prophetic significance. This portion of the tour provides us with a rare opportunity to get back to the feeling of life in Biblical times, but with a touch of modernity. At Biblical Tamar Park we will stay in clean, comfortable, caravans situated around the centrally located dining facility and sukkah. It has become a favorite part of our tours, and we are most pleased to include it in this tour. Our wilderness stay is a great way to spend our final days in Israel.

Day Nine

Saturday – October 9 – *Sabbath Experience at Tamar, Prayer Mountain, Torah Study, Scorpion’s Ascent, Ancient Roman Tax Station, and Hazeva Research Center*



We awaken to a peaceful Sabbath, feeling the stillness of the desert as the sun rises over the Jordanian mountains. Those who want to rise early, can climb “Prayer Mountain” and watch the sun rise.

We will have a Sabbath morning Bible study after breakfast, talking about the historic area where we are staying and the role it played in the lives of Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Jesus, and even Paul. Some may want to take a short bus ride to Scorpion’s Pass, mentioned in the Bible as the Akkrabim Ascent. We will visit an ancient Roman tax station, and then ride to the

Hazeva Research Center to learn of various efforts to green the desert.

After dinner, Dr. Tabor will lead us on a walk into the desert to the gravesite of Simcha Pearlmutter, and share stories of this desert rabbi who founded Kibbutz Ir Ovot, now renamed Biblical Tamar Park. Everyone will be welcome to sit around the sukkah fire before going to our rooms.

Day Ten

Sunday – October 10 – *Biblical Tamar Tour, Masada, and the Dead Sea*



We will begin our day with a special tour of the archaeological site at Biblical Tamar, learning of the ongoing work at this site to uncover evidence of occupation from the 10th Century B.C.E. through the modern era. Next we will board our bus and go to visit the ancient fortress of Masada, known today as the site where 960 revolutionary Jewish holdouts died rather than surrender to the Romans. Some will choose to hike the famed “snake path” up the side of Masada, while others will take the cable car to the top. We will learn that Masada was originally built by the Maccabees, and fortified by Herod the Great between 37-31 BCE as a

refuge for himself in the event of a revolt. From the top of Masada you will be able to look down upon the ruins of Roman encampments. We will visit an ancient “synagogue without walls” atop Masada. We will then stop at a public beach along the Dead Sea where we will be able to shop and float in waters of the Dead Sea, after which we will go back to Tamar for dinner and then pack for our return home the following day.

Day Eleven

Monday – October 11 – *Beer Sheva, Valley of Elah, Talpiot Tombs, Promenade, Israel Museum, and Airport*



We will depart Biblical Tamar Park on our journey back to Jerusalem through the heart of southern Israel, passing Beer Sheva and stopping along the way in the Valley of Elah where David encountered Goliath. We will walk the stone filled brook marking the location just below the ancient ruins of Khirbet Qeiyafa, dating to the time of David and Solomon.

Just south of Jerusalem, Dr. Tabor will lead us on a rare and special visit to the sites of the “Talpiot Jesus Family tombs” that some think belonged to Joseph of Arimathea and he will reveal the very latest regarding their discovery and research, as well as future plans at the site. We will

also have a spectacular view of the city of Jerusalem from the south, along the historic Promenade, experiencing the vantage point Abraham would have had in coming up to Mount Moriah. We will then visit the Israel Museum. Here we will see a large model of Herodian Jerusalem, visit the Shrine of the Book, and walk through the Museum's exhibits for the Biblical period. After our visit to the Israel Museum we will depart for Ben Gurion Airport for our flights home.

Day Twelve

Tuesday – October 12 – *Flight home*

Catch connecting flights back home.

Tour Package

\$3,295 for land only
Add \$895 for Single Supplement

Included in Tour Cost

- Hotels
- Breakfasts
- Dinners (except dinner on October 11)
- National Park passes
- All tips (except housekeeping)
- All meals at Biblical Tamar Park
- All listed sites with entrance fees
- Masada Lift
- Galilee Boat trip
- Bus transfer to and from Ben Gurion Airport

Not Included

- Flight and/or trip Insurance
- Lunches
- Airline Ticket

You will be notified by email when there are sufficient registrations to buy your airline ticket. If you would like to use the travel agent that Blossoming Rose uses, the information is below. Blossoming Rose will provide group transportation to and from Ben Gurion Airport **at the designated times**. If you arrive or depart outside of these times you will be responsible for your own transportation to and from Jerusalem and Biblical Tamar Park. This itinerary is subject to change.

The cancellation fee is based on the total tour price, and is: 181 days or more = \$100; 180 - 151 days = \$250; 150 - 121 days = \$500; 120 - 61 days = 50% of total tour price; 60 - 31 days = 75% of total tour price; 30 days or less = 100% of total tour price. Refund may take up to 4 weeks. Trip insurance is recommended.

Reserve your place immediately by paying the \$500 deposit on-line at www.blossomingrose.org. Balance is due 120 days prior to departure.

For additional information contact:

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