



CENTER FOR
HOLY LANDS STUDIES

River Valley Old Testament Tour with Richards

PROGRAM ITINERARY | November 2-12, 2020

Day 1 – Monday, November 2nd

Our adventure begins today as we depart from the U.S for Tel Aviv Israel.

Day 2 – Tuesday, November 3rd

We Will arrive in Israel to be met at the airport by our teacher, host, bus driver and guide, all of whom will greet you weary travelers with a smile and comfy seat on the bus as we head south from the airport to the desert region of Israel known as the Negev where we will have a warm meal and spend the night.

Day 3 – Wednesday, November 4th

Today we will begin our day by following in the Footstep of the Patriarchs starting with Tel Beer Sheva. Beer Sheva served as the southern Border for the land of Israel and for a time the home of Abraham and his sons. We will next travel to Tel Arad, the site of an impressive Israelite fortress-city from the time of the divided monarchy period. In it we will see the remains of a “high place”, one of the many places of forbidden worship in the land of Israel during the time of the first Temple. From Tel Arad we will head to Ein Avdat, one of the places where Moses and the Israelites camped along their 40 years of sojourning in the desert. It is here we will take a deeper look into God’s great provisions for his people and the miracles which ensued to insure their survival. From here we will travel by bus to the southern border of the country and cross into the country of Jordan at about 5 p.m. immediately heading north to modern city of Jabal Musa, the location of Ancient Petra where we will stay overnight.

Day 4 – Thursday, November 5th

We will begin the day entering into Petra, one of the “7 Wonders of the New World”, the ancient Capital of the Nabateans, the site of many incredible stone cut structures that one might be familiar with from movies such as Indian Jones and the Last Crusade. After we our visit, in the afternoon, we will have a relaxing bus ride to the site of Ancient Dhiban, the capital of the Moabites. Finally, will finish our day in the modern city of Madaba.

Day 5 – Friday, November 6th

We will begin our 5th day together only a short walk from our hotel to the Church of St. George where we will see “the Madaba Map”, the oldest known cartograph of the Holy land from the 6th Century. After the visit we will head over to Mt. Nebo, the place of the Death of Moses following his view of the entirety of the Promised Land, a view that we will get to take in for ourselves. From Mt. Nebo we will next tour the site of Hisban (Heshbon), one of the cities that served as the border between the lands allotted to the Tribes of Gad and Ruban which also, for a time, served as the capital city for the Amorites. We will conclude our day in the Capital of Jordan, Amman, where we will visit the tel of the Ancient Capital of the Ammonites, the place of the death of Uriah the Hittite. We will spend the night in Amman.

Day 6 – Saturday, November 7th

Our Final day in Jordan will begin at the Jordan museum to see the Great Copper Scroll and the Mesha Stone. Following our visit to the Museum we will spend some time visiting Dier Alla (Succot), a site which not only connects the to the world of Bala’am son of Be’or (Numbers 22-24) but also gives us a commanding view of the much of the Jordan Valley and its many tels where we will unpack the importance of this geopolitical boundary in the world of Ancient Israel. Our next stop, though slightly unconventional, we will view the hills with the ancient towns of Machanayim and Penuel, the place where Jacob wrestled with God and received the name “Israel” on the eve of being reunited with his brother Esau. From here we will say goodbye to our Jordanian guide and cross back into Israel at the Allenby Border Crossing. After this we will conclude our day with our drive into Jerusalem where we will spend the night.

** Please note the itinerary is subject to local conditions at the time of the tour and may change at the discretion of the tour director(s) or land operators.*

Day 7 – Sunday, November 8th

Our 7th day will begin in the shepherd's fields of Bethlehem, the home of the shepherd, turned future king, David and his ancestors such as Ruth and Boaz. After some time in Bethlehem we will follow the life of David to the Elah Valley, the location of the Events of 1 Samuel 17, the battle between David and Goliath, as well as multiple other sites of importance to our Old Testament such as Sha'arym and the Cave of Adullam. We will then endeavor deep into the world of Philistines with a visit to the Ashkelon, one of the coastal cities of the 5 major cities of the philistine world known as the "pentapolis". We will end our day of touring at the city of ancient Lachish, the site of utter defeat of the Israelites during both the invasions of both the Assyrians and the Babylonians. We will then return to Jerusalem for another night.

Day 8 – Monday, November 9th

Out Next morning will begin with a visit to the city of Jericho, one of the oldest continually habituated cities in the world and the place where Joshua and the Israelites Marched around the city until the walls fell down before them by the hand of the Lord. Following our adventure in the Jericho we will travel to Nebi Samuel, the believed tomb of the Prophet Samuel, but more importantly a vantage point to see much of the surrounding area of the Bible and unpack stories such as "Joshua and the sun standing still" and "Solomon receiving his wisdom". From there we will go to the City of David, where we will see the remains of the earliest stages of Jerusalem and King David's capital. In this site we will also have the option of traveling through the tunnels beneath the city, one such being "Hezekiah's tunnel", a wet tunnel channeling the waters of the Gihon spring which saved Jerusalem during its times of siege. We will conclude our day with free time in the Old City and for those who desire a conversation with an orthodox Jewish shop keeper named Moshe, who allows our participants to ask any questions that have ever desired to ask an Orthodox Jew. Following our free time, we will return to the hotel.

Day 9 – Tuesday, November 10th

Day 9 will begin with a visit to the site of Ancient Shiloh, the first capital of the Israelite people and the place where the Ark of the Covenant rested for 369 years. Currently the Center for Holy Lands Studies is part of the excavation team that are unearthing Shiloh which means that our group will have an experience like none other with a walk through by one of the excavators gaining first hand knowledge of all the new exciting finds that have yet to be made fully public, an experience you will not get anywhere else! Following our exciting trip to Shiloh we will head to the Samaritan holy place of Mt, Gerizim. Here will meet with some of remaining 800 Samaritans and have a personal walk through of the Samaritan Museum as well as a tour of their place of Sacrifice, the place where the annual sacrifices of the Temple still take place annually to this day. We follow this stop up with our final stop of the day in the city of Shechem where we will see the ruins of the ancient biblical city of Shechem, known as Tel A-Balata, and see the traditional location of "Jacob's Well". Following this unique day we will return to Jerusalem for our farewell dinner.

Possible Day 10 – Wednesday, November 11th

Our 10th day will be a free day in Jerusalem for those who desire to explore the wonders of the city. After checking out of our hotel in the morning (yet leaving our luggage with guest services) we will allow people to choose their own day with unguided options include shopping in the old city, Yad Vashem (the national holocaust museum), the Israel Museum, or simply getting lost in the old city to discover, "who know what" adventures await. We will depart in the evening for our flights home.

Day 11 – Thursday, November 12th

After a life changing adventure, we arrive back in the U.S.A. excited to tell our story of the development of our faith along this journey, eagerly looking forward to our next encounter with God and His word in His lands!