

Preparation Class Two

Sunday, March 13, 2011

Holy Land Countdown: 105 Days to Go

Welcome to our second group session; I hope that your times of anticipation and study for our journey to the Land of the Book have already blessed you as much as we have been blessed.

We as a family have been having Monday evening study classes: looking up cities we are visiting, reading about them in the guidebooks, looking up Biblical passages, and marking in our Bibles.

This class is all about talking through as much as we can, so that you can prepare as much as possible, ahead of time. There are so many elements of our trip that are little extensions of normal life, that we will just flow with: eating out for all our meals, riding the bus, staying in the hotels, etc. But it is those very unique events for which we wish to be ready.

Here are three to prayerfully get ready for:

- **Jordan River Baptism Option:** we will all be able to participate in a special Jordan River Pilgrim's Baptism. This is at a special site built out into the Jordan for those on tour to actually feel what it was like to have been baptized like Jesus was in this very same river, by John the Baptist. This is the ultimate experience of "following Jesus in Baptism" by being in the very same place and water. The cost is \$8 per person for a white robe, towel, and changing room. We gather, sing, and one-by-one go through the waters of baptism facilitated by Pastor John. Please think and pray about this and let me know personally by email at

jb@dtbm.org if you want to join this time so that we can plan enough time for the number that will be baptized.

- **Cana Wedding Renewal Option:** Jesus attended the wedding at Cana in Galilee in John 2 and forever put His stamp of approval on marriage by His coming and blessing that wedding with His first of seven sign miracles in the Gospel by John. We will be performing a “vow renewal service” in the courtyard of a church built over the site of ancient NT Cana in Galilee. Pastor John will lead the couples in reading a vow that he has prepared to perform this ceremony, and then offer a prayer of blessing for all of the couples. If you would like to have a space reserved for this special renewal ceremony please email me so that we can plan enough time for this special service. If you email me at jb@dtbm.org I will send a copy of the vows that you will read to each other so that you can have them taped in your Bible for that special day, and be all ready when we get there.
- **Hezekiah’s Tunnel Walk Option:** we will be walking as a group through the 1700 foot long tunnel under the city of David from the Gihon Springs to the Pool of Siloam (yes, the exact spots so often mentioned in the Bible). To go on this walk you need to either have with you, or be wearing on the trip waterproof shoes, and have your own flashlight. It takes about 25 minutes, it is one way (you enter Gihon and exit Siloam), and you have to carry your things in a back pack as you walk through ankle deep to calf-high water about the temperature of Lake Michigan in June. A ball cap clip-on flashlight is another great option so your hands are free to take a picture or just feel the hand cut rock walls. We will come to the entrance in our tour, those ready to go set off to the right, turn on their flash lights and walk through three thousand year old Bible-proving history. The rest walk to the left and wait on the other end with the guide, dry and having missed the time of their life (can you tell I love this event?). If you want any further details just ask me and I will help you get ready!

Bible Marking, Journal Preparation, and the Top 20 Sites for our Journey

The single greatest way to prepare, for this very costly investment we are all making, is to do the spadework ahead of time in our Bibles.

Every hour you spend here will be worth 10 hours over there in the Holy land. As we travel from one site to another, if you are familiar to any extent with the passages I teach from and you read at the sites, you maximize the impact.

What I suggest is that you invest some time each week for the next 105 days (that makes just 15 weeks from today, Sunday, March 13 that we gather in Israel). So there are 15 weeks to work through all of these top 20 sites. If you would really wanting to be ready, also do the second list and be ready for ALL of the main sites.

The method is called the “Devotional Method of Bible Study” and follows these steps: 1). read the chapter, 2). summarize the chapter, note any lesson you find, and 3). try to make a personal application from that passage.

Here is a typical way I would do that below. You don’t have to do this method, but I have been using and teaching this to students of the Word for 25 plus years and I can vouch for the immense response they give that the Word comes alive, sticks to their hearts and they have grown deeply through this devotional pattern!

From your other handout for this class, the “**Top 20 Sites List**” look at number 5 that says:

Qumran: think of the preservation of Scriptures, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Isaiah 40.

In your journal you write (or print out, clip, and tape in those words) on a single page. If your journal is small then you need both sides of a page for each site; if it is larger, then you may not. You decide.

The idea is to follow this process for each site in your journal now; and

then return to that page AT THE SITE IN ISRAEL! See what I mean?

Your journal has a prepared page for these **Top 20 Sites'**, you have already meditated over the passage as well as noted in your Bible the place where this event took place. That triple cord (pre-study, journal and Bible marking, and then an actual visit), ties the Word better than any other way I know for those who go to the Land of the Book.

So here is my journal page for site number 6:

Qumran/Isaiah 40

Qumran: think of the preservation of Scriptures, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Isaiah 40.

I have those three points written on my page in my journal, I will show it to you and pass it around as an example of one way to get ready for the sites.

1. Summary: This chapter covers the prediction of John the Baptist's preparing the way for Christ (v. 3-5); the promise of God's Word (v. 6-8); many descriptions of the power of God (v.12-26); and the famous wait upon the Lord passage in v. 31.

2. Lessons: Wow, Jesus when He came revealed in human form what the Glory of God looks like v. 5; we are reminded that we humans are as passingly transient as mowed grass, but the Word of God will last forever v.6-8; God knew that the earth is round (God said that 2700 years ago though science had not yet discovered that truth) v. 22 so He wants me to trust Him about things He knows and I don't know; God wants me to meditate on His power v. 26; and He knows that life is hard, I get tired, weak, and fainting at times, but He wants me to rest in His strength to pass through and even rise above my struggles by following Him.

3. Application: Today I will pause and reflect upon your Majesty, trust that Your plan is so much better than mine that I ask for You dear Lord to control and lead me; finally, I want to wait on you right now and by faith go forth with Your strength.

Well, that is enough, just doing this one assignment, for any or all of those sites, will bless your life more than you could ever realize until it happens.

Happy hunting, as you search for those precious gems of the Word. Be sure to email me on the options above. Any questions, just ask away and I'll answer as best I can!

Just a Few Final Reminders

Pack intentionally, enjoy every part of getting ready. Have your study tools easily accessible for the flexibility needed for the study elements of our trip. If they are hard to reach on the bus as we travel, then you will not be able to glide on and off the bus. If you are tangled up and hampered with details of your gear, you won't be able to get down to business at each of the 50-60 sites from the Land of the Book we will visit.

Try your set up while you are still here at home. Go somewhere, buy a cup of coffee and read and mark your Bible. See if you can get your Bible, notebook, pens, camera, etc. all out and use them without getting tangled up.

Again, remember the trip starts at your departure airport. From when your plane takes off, and onward you should do that final read through the daily site list, do any final markings, and start journaling your experiences.

After you land and clear customs at the TLV airport, we will all start to check into the Tel Aviv Renaissance Hotel on Tuesday June 28. You can arrange a transfer by the hotel. We did as a family and it cost us \$100 for 6 of us, they met us at the gate and took us straight to the hotel. Or you can just get your own taxi, which last year was \$35 for 1, 2, or 3 people to the hotel. We each have to get to the hotel on our own, after that all transfer and needs are taken care of until the end of the trip when we are deposited back at the airport Friday evening July 8th.

Renaissance Tel Aviv Hotel

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/tlvbr-renaissance-tel-aviv-hotel/>

**121 Hayarkon street
Tel Aviv 63453, Israel
03-5215555**

Check into your room at the hotel, if you have any troubles contact me by calling/leaving a message for me at the hotel. We are all staying in the same hotel and **we will all meet in the lobby for dinner at 630PM**. After dinner, we will go out to the shore for our first session in the Word and prayer on the Mediterranean.

We are praying with you for great insights into the Word, strength, health, and safety until we all depart for the trip—and a safe and blessed journey across the ocean , through the airport, on the taxi, and into the hotel at last to start this journey together!

Blessed to be Journeying Together,

John & Bonnie Barnett
Land of the Book Tours
Hebrews 13:20-21