

# ENCOUNTERING ISRAEL

with Dr. Dan and Dinah Sered  
Pastor Doug and Jen Thuen and Sparta Church

January 12 - 21, 2025



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## A Message from Your Hosts

### Pastor Doug and Jen Thuen, Sparta Church

Doug and Jen have been faithfully serving Sparta Church since 1995. After graduating from Nyack College in 1990 and Alliance Theological Seminary in 1995, Doug was the first pastor called to lead SEFC. Over the past 27 years, Doug and Jen have led the congregation in being the hands and feet of Jesus by serving the needs of our community, nation, and world. They are passionate about making disciples and are eager to experience the Holy Land with their church family, getting to grow more in awe of the Lord together.

### Dr. Dan and Dinah Sered, Jews for Jesus

Dan was born and raised in Israel to a secular Jewish family and later relocated to the United States while he was in his teens. While attending Stony Brook University in New York, he met Dinah, a Jewish believer in Jesus who showed him how Yeshua (Jesus) fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah. Dan's eyes were opened, and he committed his life to the Lord. In 1999, Dan & Dinah were married and, soon after, began serving as missionaries in Israel, joining Jews for Jesus. In 2006, Dan became the Israel Director of Jews for Jesus, which quickly became the largest branch of the ministry worldwide. In 2019, Dan was appointed as a Chief Operating Officer for the organization and specifically supervises the day-to-day efforts of the branches in Europe, South Africa, Israel, and Australia. Dan & Dinah have served as Gospel ministers in Israel for over 20 years, pastoring a local church, teaching at a local Bible College, and discipling Israelis.



# ITINERARY

## January 12 - USA to the Holy Land

Your pilgrimage begins as you depart the USA. Meals are served on the flight.

## January 13- Arrive in Israel

You will be welcomed at the Tel Aviv airport by our representative and transferred to your hotel to enjoy dinner before retiring for the night.

## January 14 - The Galilee

Visit Capernaum, the center of Jesus' ministry in Galilee, and see the synagogue built on the site where Jesus taught (Matthew 4:13, 23). On the Mount of Beatitudes, contemplate the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5-7). Explore the Church of the Loaves and Fish at Tabgha, the traditional site of the feeding of the 5,000 (Luke 9:10-17). See the Chapel of the Primacy, where Peter professed his devotion three times to the risen Christ (John 21). After enjoying a delicious St. Peter's Fish Lunch, have a time of worship as you take a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Recall Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist at the Yardenit baptismal site on the Jordan River.

## January 15 - Caesarea Maritima, Tel Megiddo, Nazareth, Cana

Visit Caesarea Maritima, a center of the early Christians where an angel visited Cornelius, the first Gentile believer (Acts 10), and where Paul was imprisoned for two years before appealing to Caesar. Continue on to Nazareth, Jesus' boyhood home (Matthew 2:23), and view the site where tradition says the local community attempted to throw Jesus off a cliff after preaching in their synagogue. Look out over Tel Megiddo (Armageddon) to view one of the most important archaeological sites in Israel. Drive through Cana, where the water was turned into wine before returning to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

## January 16 - Gideon's Spring, Bet Shean, Jordan Valley, Jerusalem

We leave Galilee and begin our journey south. Stop at Gideon's Spring, where God showed Gideon how to select his 300 men to fight the Midianites. Then, it is on to Bet Shean, a city continuously inhabited for over 5,000 years. The uncovered ruins date back to the Greek / Roman city that was part of the Decapolis of Jesus' day. See colonnaded streets with marble sidewalks, Roman public baths, and a theater. We will journey south through the Jordan Valley, passing by Jericho, which was the first city conquered by Joshua and the nation of Israel. In the distance, you can also see the traditional site of the Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11). Turn west and drive through the Judean Wilderness on our way to the capital city of Jerusalem where we take some time to view the city before arriving at our hotel for check-in, dinner, and a good night's sleep.

## January 17 - Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Caiaphas' House, Upper Room, Bethlehem

Begin your day with a group picture taken from the Mount of Olives, where Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-12). Walk the Palm Sunday Road, pray in the Garden of Gethsemane and envision the scenes of the night before Jesus' crucifixion (Matthew 26:36 - 44). Continue to Mount Zion to visit the House of the High Priest Caiaphas, where Jesus was questioned on the night of His betrayal (Matthew 26:57). Meditate on the events of the Last Supper as you visit the traditional location of the Upper Room (Mark 14:12-26). This afternoon, visit Bethlehem and the cave revered as

Jesus' birthplace and see the Church of the Nativity constructed over the site (Matthew 1:18-25). Gaze out over Shepherds' Field before returning to Jerusalem.

### January 18 - Cardo, Southern Steps, Western Wall, Pool of Bethesda, Antonia Fortress, Via Dolorosa

Walk the Cardo, the ancient main street of Jerusalem at the time of the Roman occupation. Enter the Davidson's Center and stand on the Southern Steps, which was one of the entrances into the Temple complex 2,000 years ago. Pray at the Western Wall, then take the short walk to the Pool of Bethesda where the lame man was healed. The Antonia Fortress offers us an opportunity to reflect on what the Lord endured for us as preparation for His crucifixion for our sins. Walk the Via Dolorosa, the way of the cross, through the city of Jerusalem.

### January 19 - Masada, Qumran, Dead Sea

Ascend by cable car to Masada, Herod's legendary mountaintop fortress, which became the last desperate stronghold of the Jewish Zealots against the Romans. You can still look down on the remains of the Roman camps and the siege ramp below. Continue to Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947. End your day with a dip in the salt and mineral-laden waters of the Dead Sea before returning to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

### January 20 – Ein Karem , Yad Vashem, Garden Tomb, Gordon's Calvary

Visit Ein Karem where John the Baptist was born. Explore the poignant exhibits of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial with the idea of never allowing something like this to happen again. Visit the Garden Tomb for a time of reflection and communion.

### January 21 – Return to the USA

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