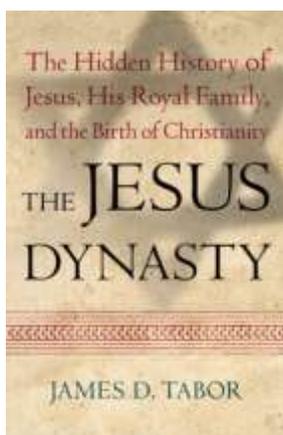


# ***“Experiencing the Jesus Dynasty” A Special Tenth Anniversary Israel Tour***

***Tour Host - Dr. James D. Tabor  
Tour Coordinator - Dr. DeWayne A. Coxon***

**March 4-13, 2016**



To celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of Dr. Tabor’s internationally bestselling book *The Jesus Dynasty* (Simon & Schuster 2006 now translated into over 20 languages) we have put together a completely unique tour of Israel. “Experiencing the Jesus Dynasty” is a tour like no other tour. There are places and sites that are included on nearly every other Holy Land tour that we will not visit. On the other hand we will see and experience the ancient Land of Israel in ways no other tour includes. Our emphasis will be on newly discovered *archaeological* sites that shed light on our understanding of the historical Jesus and allow us to read our gospels sources in refreshing new ways.

The emphasis of this tour is historical rather than theological and like Dr. Tabor’s book, *The Jesus Dynasty*, it will appeal to Christians, Jews, and those of no particular religious persuasion who simply want to have a better understanding of the historical figure of Jesus in his own time and place.

This tour is limited to only 45 participants in order to allow a maximum of personal interaction with Dr. Tabor. Each person will receive a copy of *The Jesus Dynasty* personally inscribed by Dr. Tabor with a dedication noting the special occasion of this tour.

Participants will also take part in a rare private evening “Conversation” with Simcha Jacobovici, Emmy-award winning Israeli filmmaker, hearing firsthand the latest updates on the Talpiot tombs in Jerusalem and the James ossuary.

## **Tour Host: Dr. James D. Tabor**



Dr. James Tabor was Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte for a decade and is now professor of Christian origins and ancient Judaism. He has traveled to the Holy Land over 50 times. 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. Over the past decade he has teamed up with Shimon Gibson to excavate the “John the Baptist” cave at Suba, the “Tomb of the Shroud” discovered in 2000, and ongoing work at their excavation site on Mt Zion. Most recently he has been involved in the re-exploration of two tombs in East Talpiot that he argues are connected to Jesus and his first followers. Among his most recent books are *Restoring Abrahamic Faith* (2008), *The Jesus Dynasty* (Simon & Schuster, 2006), *The Jesus Discovery* (with Simcha Jacobovici, Simon & Schuster, 2012), and *Paul and Jesus: How the Apostle Transformed Christianity* (Simon & Schuster, 2012).

## **Tour Coordinator: Dr. DeWayne Coxon**



*DeWayne A. Coxon* is the founder and President of Blossoming Rose. He received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University and served as a public school teacher, a minister, a college instructor and administrator from 1960 – 1984. Shortly thereafter he started Blossoming Rose, an organization whose mission is to bless Israel through various programs, including the maintenance and restoration of the 55 acre Biblical Tamar Park. He has visited Israel over 150 times in the last 50 years. His knowledge of Jewish, Christian and Muslim history gives him a unique perspective on contemporary events taking place in the Middle East. He is the author of the book, *Living Prophecies: A Crumbling Wall between Christians and Jews* as well as three books on renewable energy systems.

# Tour Itinerary

## Day One

**Friday – March 4: *USA to Israel***

Our flights will depart Friday evening and arrive in Israel Saturday. **(Participants must be at the airport three hours prior to the flight.)** Meals will be served during our flights.

## Day Two

**Saturday – March 5: *Arrive in Israel, Netanya***



Dr. Coxon will meet us at the airport and lead us to our charter bus. Our bus driver will take us to our hotel on the Mediterranean Sea where we can rest from our long flight. We will be served a delicious buffet dinner and we'll have time to enjoy the evening and get to know one another a bit before turning in.

## Day Three

**Sunday – March 6: *Mediterranean Sea, Church of the Nativity, Sepphoris, Sea of Galilee, and Tiberius***



The day will begin with some time to enjoy the beautiful Mediterranean Sea beach by our hotel. Dr. Tabor will talk about the often-overlooked significance of the Mediterranean Sea in the life of Jesus. From there, we will go to Nazareth and to the Church of the Nativity where we will see the latest excavations where 1<sup>st</sup> century remains have been recently found. We will then explore the archaeological remains of Sepphoris, the ancient capital of Herod Antipas, just four miles northwest of Nazareth where Dr. Tabor excavated for three seasons. We will focus on the important but overlooked role of Sepphoris in the life of Jesus growing up. By late afternoon, we will walk on the shores of the Sea of Galilee where Dr. Tabor believes the “resurrection faith” was born. Our evening will end at our hotel, The Leonardo Plaza in downtown Tiberius on the Sea of Galilee, where we can rest, shop, and enjoy their hospitality and good food.

## Day Four

**Monday – March 7: *Magdala, Nazareth Village, Baniyas, and Bethsaida***



After leaving the hotel on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, we will visit the excavations at Migdal (Magdala) which was Mary Magdalene's home town, including a recently discovered first century synagogue likely frequented by Jesus and his followers. We will then head north, looking down the striking Sea of Galilee from the northern heights where Jesus spent many hours in prayer. We'll

continue on to Nazareth Village, an authentic reconstruction of the town Jesus grew up in in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. There we will experience a special lunch prepared to reflect a meal in the time of Jesus. We will pass to the north of the Sea and visit Baniyas (near Caesarea Philippi), the headwaters of the Jordan, where Jesus first revealed his identity as the Messiah to his disciples at the foot of Mount Herman where the Transfiguration took place. We will close out the day by visiting the ancient ruins of Bethsaida, currently being excavated by Dr. Tabor's associate, Prof. Rami Arav, home of four of Jesus' disciples and return to our hotel on the Sea of Galilee.

## Day Five

**Tuesday – March 8: *Tel Salim, Jericho, Qumran, and Jerusalem***



Today we will experience the stark change from the lush greens of the Galilee to the brown hues of the Judean desert. During our drive, we will stop at the Anon-Salim area, where John the Baptizer most likely baptized Jesus, just across the Jordan River from the "Jesus Hideout" in Wadi el-Yabis, the biblical Brook Cherith. We will make one "pilgrim stop" along the desert route where Jesus and his Galilean countrymen would have camped out on their way to Jericho. We will end our

day at Qumran, the site of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls where Dr. Tabor has also excavated. We will explore the significance of the Scrolls and address the question as to whether or not John the Baptist or Jesus would have ever visited this desert spiritual headquarters of these people of the "Way." We will also visit the newly discovered tomb of the Teacher or leader of the community and talk about his possible identity. We will then take the steep road up to Jerusalem and catch a glimpse of the Holy City at the end of the day before checking into the King Solomon hotel for the evening. After dinner filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici and Dr. Tabor will hold a private gathering with our tour participants to explore our latest information on the Talpiot tombs and the controversial James ossuary.

## Day Six

**Wednesday – March 9: *Mt. of Olives, Bethphage, Gethsemane, Kidron Valley, Pool of Siloam, Temple Mount, Mt. Zion, Cenacle, Pilate’s Judgment Seat, and the Talpiot Tombs***



Our day will begin on the summit of the Mount of Olives with a spectacular view of the Old City spread before us. We will then visit the area of Bethphage near Bethany, explore some 1<sup>st</sup> century tombs, and walk down the northern path of the Mount of Olives where Dr. Tabor will show us the place he believes to be “Golgotha,” the authentic site of the crucifixion of Jesus. We will then visit Gethsemane, cross the Kidron Valley and see the site where James,

the brother of Jesus, was murdered. We will visit the newly excavated Pool of Siloam and then enter the Old City through the Jewish quarter to the Mt Zion excavation that Dr. Tabor directs. There we will see the remains of the priestly mansions that are being uncovered and discuss the pivotal significance of the area in the life of Jesus. Following that, we will go to the area of the Upper Room where Jesus had his meal with his disciples and James the brother of Jesus, along with Jesus’ mother Mary, lived and guided the Nazarene movement and learn about the most recent excavations in that area, including what has been identified as the Essene Quarter of ancient Jerusalem. We will then see the area of the Praetorium outside Herod’s Palace including the newly discovered authentic site of Pilate’s judgment seat on the pavement (*Gabbatha*) mentioned in the gospels where Jesus was condemned outside the city walls. We will end our day with a visit to the site of all three of the Talpiot tombs, exploring the area of the ancient estate that possibly belonged to Joseph of Arimathea.



## Day Seven

**Thursday – March 10: *Kibbutz Suba, and Jerusalem***



We will begin the day visiting Dr. Tabor’s excavation at the “Cave of John the Baptist” located on Kibbutz Suba near Ein Kerem, the town of John the Baptist, where Mary fled when pregnant with Jesus. We will view the oldest artistic depiction of John as well as uncover the mystery of the baptism rituals carried out in the mikvah/cave including the possibility that Jesus began his baptizing ministry in the area. We will also see a newly discovered first century wine press installation,

taste some of the wine produced at Suba, and have lunch at the Kibbutz. We will then return to the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem where we will have time to relax and shop. Our hotel is within walking distance to the Old City and so you can shop as long as you wish either in the Souk or modern Mamilla Mall.

## Day Eight

**Friday – March 11: *Jaffa, Coastal Route, and Biblical Tamar Park***

Today we will experience both the climate changes and the elevation changes as we descend from the mountains of Judea at 2,700 feet, to the sea coast and then 1,500 feet below sea level near the Dead Sea. We'll stop at Jaffa, a historic and quaint seacoast city of shops and museums. We will have time to enjoy a lunch overlooking the water before returning to the bus, on which we can view the coastal waters of Israel. Arrival at Biblical Tamar Park will be in the late afternoon where we will be met by the Park Supervisor and other

volunteers who are helping Blossoming Rose to restore this ancient city. We will move into our rooms, eat dinner and then meet under the Sukkah in a large circle around the fire to “debrief” one another about Israel and our various “Jesus Dynasty” related insights as a result of our tour.



## Day Nine

**Saturday – March 12: *Sabbath Experience at Tamar***



When we rise in the morning it will be the Sabbath and we will feel the stillness of the desert as the sun rises over the Jordanian mountains. We will have breakfast, and spend the day in a flexible way with some Bible study, hiking around the beautiful Tamar area, and a tour around the ancient excavations of biblical Tamar, of which Blossoming Rose is Curator, with its remains from the Iron

Age through modern times. The day will include several hours of free time with lunch and dinner being served. There will be time in the evening to rest and pack for the trip north.

## Day Ten

Sunday – March 13: *Israel to USA*



We will leave Biblical Tamar Park early in the morning for the airport where we will fly back to the United States and catch our connecting flights home with life-long lasting memories of our rediscovery of “The Jesus Dynasty” with Dr. Tabor. The bus will arrive at Ben Gurion around 3:00am on March 13. Biblical Tamar Park is over two hours from the airport so if you schedule your flight prior to 5:00am, you will

need to make your own arrangements to get to the airport. If you are planning on staying in Israel longer, you can take a taxi or sharout to Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.

## Tour Package:

### Included in Tour

- Four Star Hotels – Breakfast and Dinner meals
- National Park passes
- All tips
- All meals at Tamar
- All list sites we visit
- Bus transfer to and from Ben Gurion Airport
- Two specialty lunches
- Wine tasting at Suba

### Not Included

- Flight Insurance
- Four Lunches

**Cost: \$2,495 for land only**

You will be notified by email when there are enough participants to hold this tour so at that point the tickets can be purchased. If you would like to use the travel agent that we use, her information is listed below. Blossoming Rose will provide 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 Biblical Tamar Park or hotel. Airfare is subject to change and tickets are presently priced from \$550-\$1200, depending on where you live and how soon the tickets can be purchased. If you decide to go with our ticketing agent it will be coordinated with the times of the bus leaving and dropping off. You can also go on-line to get your own ticket or use your frequent flyer miles.

You may reserve a place immediately on this special tour by paying your deposit on-line at [www.blossomingrose.org/tours/2016.html](http://www.blossomingrose.org/tours/2016.html), send it with the Registration Form to Blossoming Rose, P.O. Box X, Cedar Springs, MI 49319, or scan and email it to [Info@blossomingrose.org](mailto:Info@blossomingrose.org).

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