

# Tabor & Nichols Israel Tour, March 2017

*A Tour Like No other Tour  
See the Sites, Go Behind the Scenes  
Experience the Holy Land on a Level that Most Tours Miss*

**Israel – March 3 – March 14, 2017 / Extension – March 14 – March 17, 2017**

## **Tour Highlights**

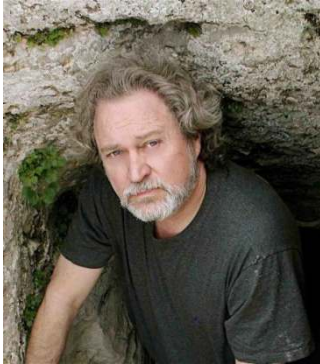


Prof. James D. Tabor and Biblical teacher Ross Nichols are teaming up again for an exclusive tour of the Holy Land the first week of March, 2017. Even if you have traveled to Israel before, or specifically traveled with Tabor or Nichols, this is the tour for you. We have carefully chosen the sites we will visit and have included new experiences and information related to each—including actual “hands on” experience at the Mt Zion excavation in Jerusalem for a day. To use the biblical expression—we will take you, quite literally, from “Dan to Beersheba” (*Judges 20:1; I Samuel 3:20; II Samuel 3:10 & I Kings 5:5*).

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 the archaeological basis underpinning the rationale used by many archaeologists for using the biblical narrative as one means of informing the research on the ancient people and events of the Levant.

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 60 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). 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 all over the world join in for his teachings over our [United Israel YouTube channel](#), inspiring people to live a more authentically biblical lifestyle. Ross is a student and teacher of biblical Hebrew, is knowledgeable about the historical Jesus and late 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism, and has spent many years seeking to understand and interpret earliest Christianity from its original and thoroughly Hebraic perspective.



**Tour Coordinator** – *DeWayne A. Coxon* is the founder and President of [Blossoming Rose](#). He received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University and was in college teaching and administration for many years before becoming curator of Biblical Tamar Park in Israel. He has visited Israel well 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. <http://blossomingrose.org/>

# Tour Itinerary

## Day One

**Friday – March 3 – USA to Israel**

We will depart on Friday, March 3, flying overnight and arriving in Israel on Saturday, March 4. **(We must be at the airport three hours prior to international flight departures.)** Flights should be arranged to arrive in Tel Aviv before 4:30 pm. Our charter bus will leave the airport at 5:00 pm. If your flight arrives after this time, you will need to take a private taxi or Neshar van to Jerusalem to our Jerusalem hotel.

## Day Two

**Saturday – March 4th – Jerusalem, Dinner, Old City Walk, Western Wall**



Leaving the Tel Aviv airport we will drive from the Mediterranean coastal plain to the mountains of Jerusalem—2600 feet above Sea Level. Time permitting, we will drive to the top of the Mount of Olives for a breathtaking view of the Temple Mount at sunset. We will check into our Jerusalem hotel and settle into our rooms. After a delicious dinner, we will take a nice leisurely stroll into the Old City of Jerusalem through the Jaffa gate and then walk to the Western Wall or Kotel, just as the city comes to life as the Sabbath ends.

## Day Three

**Sunday – March 5<sup>th</sup> – Temple Mount, Western Wall Tunnels, Via Dolorosa, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, City of David and Hezekiah's Tunnel/Pool of Siloam, Dr. Tabor lecture after dinner.**



We will begin our day with a tour of the Temple Mount. Here we will discuss the modern reality of the site presently administered by Jordan as well as the past and future Temples. We will then tour the Western Wall Tunnels. The exposed portion of the Western Wall is approximately 200 feet long; the tunnel provides access to an additional 1,591 ft. of ancient wall. Almost 150 ft. into the tunnel we will see a sealed off entrance to a small synagogue known as “The Cave.” This is believed to be the closest point one can get to the Ancient Holy of Holies. After our tour of the Western

Wall Tunnels we will make our way to the Jewish Quarter and descend 20 feet below the present city level to visit Herodian Jerusalem in the Wohl Museum. We will then tour the City of David where those who wish can wade through the flowing waters of Hezekiah's tunnel. We will then return to the hotel for dinner with a lecture by Dr. Tabor in our conference room regarding the history of Mt Zion that we will visit the following day.

## Day Four

**Monday – March 6<sup>th</sup> – *Mount of Olives, Dominus Flevit, Garden of Gethsemane, Church of all Nations, Kidron Valley, Tabor's Mt. Zion Dig, Zion Gate, Upper Room, Pilate's judgment seat, Mamilla Mall and Jaffa Gate.***



We will begin our day with a bus ride to 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 down into the Kidron Valley and then up to Mount Zion where we will spend time at the Mt Zion excavation actually “getting our hands dirty”

with the holy soil of Jerusalem of 2000 years ago. Dr. Tabor will then guide us through the traditional sites of the Upper Room and King David's Tomb, and then on a special viewing of the Mount Zion archeology dig site. At the end of the day we will visit the newly discovered authentic site of Pontius Pilate's Judgement Seat with the Gabbatha Pavement and the Praetorium where Jesus spent the final hours of his life before being crucified.

## Day Five

**Tuesday – March 7<sup>th</sup> – *Samuel's Tomb, Caesarea Maritima, Nazareth Village, Gath Kopher, Megiddo, Mount Carmel, Sea of Galilee & Tiberias***



Today we head north to the Galilee. On the way out of Jerusalem we will stop at the traditional site of Samuel's Tomb and then we will travel 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.' From here we will drive past Megiddo of Armageddon

fame to Mount Carmel where, according to the Bible (I Kings 18), Elijah challenged 450 prophets of Baal. From atop our restaurant we will be able to view the Jezreel Valley. After lunch we will begin our journey towards Tiberias stopping at Nazareth Village, described as a “carefully researched re-creation of Jesus hometown,” providing us with a glimpse of life in the time 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 check into our rooms in the Leonardo Hotel in Tiberias on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, where we will stay for the Galilean portion of our tour. There will be time for shopping and plenty of opportunity to take in the beauty of the Galilee.

## Day Six

**Wednesday – March 8<sup>th</sup> – *Caesarea Philippi, Tel Dan, Golan Heights, Lunch in Druze Village, Boat ride on the Sea of Galilee***



We begin our tour of the Galilee with a stop at Caesarea Phillipi, mentioned in the synoptic gospels as the place where Jesus ask his disciples, “Who do men say that I am?” From here we can see the foot of Mount Hermon and discuss the messianic significance of this place (Psalm 133). 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. We then travel to up into the Golan to Katzrine, the Jewish provincial capital and on to the borders of Syria and Lebanon. We will go to Gennesaret and see a first Century boat found on the shores of Galilee in 1986 and then finish the day with a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee where we will watch the sun set. We will spend the night in Tiberias.

## Day Seven

**Thursday – March 9<sup>th</sup> – *Arbel Cliffs and synagogue ruins, Magdala, Mount of Beatitudes, Capernaum***



We begin our day with a breathtaking view of the Sea of Galilee from the Arbel cliffs. Here, we will also see the ruins of an ancient synagogue of Arbel We then travel to Magdala, the home of Mary Magdelene. We will travel from here to the traditional site of the Mount of the Beatitudes where we will discuss some of Jesus’ most cherished, and best known teachings. Finally we will travel to Capernaum where Jesus made his HQ and moved his family. Here we will also tour a third Century synagogue, built upon the visible remains of a first century synagogue. As we travel around the Sea of Galilee you will see sites whose names are associated with the Christian New Testament. We will then spend our last night in Tiberias.

## Day Eight

**Friday– March 10th – *Jericho, Jordan River, Qumran, Biblical Tamar Sabbath dinner and a Sabbath dinner followed by relaxing and visiting in the Sukkah***



After our tour of the Galilee, we will begin our journey to the south, traveling along the Jordan River. We will take some time to visit the ancient ruins of Jericho where “the walls came tumbling down.” We will visit Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Here Dr. Tabor will show us cisterns, a cemetery, ruins of a dining facility and of course the famous caves where nearly 800 ancient scrolls were discovered. We will continue on to the southern Biblical border of Israel, to Tamar (Ez. 47-48) and move into our rooms at Biblical Tamar Park. The Park Supervisor and volunteer workers will welcome us with an American style Kosher meal in the dining room. After dinner we will relax and visit together before an open fire in the Sukkah next to the dining room. This is a

special place that will allow us to experience the wilderness regions of Israel.

## Day Nine

**Saturday – March 11<sup>th</sup> *Sabbath Experience at Tamar, Prayer Mountain, Torah Study***



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, will climb “Prayer Mountain” and watch the sun rise. We will have a Shabbat morning service after breakfast, read the parsha and engage in a dialogue session for those who wish to participate. After lunch we will visit Mt. Hor and some related sites to the Torah readings.

After dinner, Dr. DeWayne Coxon will lead us on a

walk into the desert to the gravesite of Simha Pearlmuter, and share stories of this desert rabbi who founded Kibbutz Ir Obot, now renamed Biblical Tamar Park. Everyone will be welcome to sit around the sukkah fire before going to our rooms.

## Day Ten

**Sunday – March 12<sup>th</sup> *Biblical Tamar Tour, Masada, Dead Sea,***



We will begin our day with a tour of Biblical Tamar. 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 run or

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 tomorrow.

## **Day Eleven**

**Monday – March 13<sup>th</sup> – *Shopping and free time in Jerusalem, flights home***

We will depart Biblical Tamar Park and journey back to Jerusalem for some final shopping, and to take in, once again the ambiance of the Holy City. Alternatively, for those who elect, we will tour the Israel Museum, the largest cultural institution in Israel, among the world’s leading art and archaeology museums. At 6:30 PM, we will catch our bus back to the airport for our flights back home.

## **Day Twelve**

**Tuesday – March 14 – *Flight home***

Catching connecting flights back home.

## **Extension**

**Tuesday – March 14<sup>th</sup> – March 17<sup>th</sup> – *Old City, Museums, shopping***

For those who wish to spend additional time in and around Jerusalem, we will offer an extension for the tour. Those who elect the extension package will spend 3 nights at the Gloria Hotel, located inside the Old City, right inside the Jaffa Gate. Here you will be within walking distance of museums that were not included in the tour. We will visit the Tower of David Museum, the Burnt House, Davidson Center, and the Temple Institute. The Davidson Center and the Jerusalem Archaeological Park, considered Israel’s most important antiquity site, gives the visitor an expanded view of archaeological remains spanning 5,000 years of Jerusalem history. There will also be time to visit other sites of interest or simply spend some time shopping in the many shops in and around the Old City. Tour hosts will assist in coordinating excursions. More information is available upon request.

# Tour Package:

## Included in Tour

- Four Star Hotels – Breakfast and Dinner meals
- National Park passes
- All tips
- All meals at Tamar
- All listed sites that we visit
- Bus transfer to and from Ben Gurion Airport

## Not Included

- Flight Insurance
- Lunches while traveling

**Cost: \$2,350 for land only**

You will be notified by email when there are sufficient registrations to buy your airline tickets. If you would like to use the Blossoming Rose travel agent, the information is on the next page. Blossoming Rose will provide transportation to and from Ben Gurion Airport **at the designated times, which will be announced later.** If you arrive or depart outside of these times you will be responsible for your own transportation to and from Biblical Tamar Park or the 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 arriving and departing from Ben Gurion Airport. You can also go on-line to buy your own ticket or use your frequent flyer miles.

**You may reserve a place immediately by paying your deposit on-line at [www.blossomingrose.org/tours/2017.html](http://www.blossomingrose.org/tours/2017.html), or send it with the Registration Form to Blossoming Rose, P.O. Box X, Cedar Springs, MI 49319, or scan and email it to at [Info@blossomingrose.org](mailto:Info@blossomingrose.org).**