



The Half Shekel Journals of 2022 by Pastor Ed Rice #21 Tue 8 Nov Precipice, Zippori

In the predawn hours of our 8th sunrise in Israel it once again dawned on me that I was in Israel, this morning, in the Gia Beach Hotel, Tiberias, Israel, on the Sea of Galilee. The Psalmist describes the soon coming sun as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, which rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. I had an hour and a half head start on the race and spent it with a Bible, a penlight, and a prayer cloth.

It was hard to comprehend all that



The Horns of Hattin
Two mounds of extinct volcano

we had seen in the past eight days. It was a daily loading of God's benefits, even as the Psalmist said, "*Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah*" (Ps.68:19).

Today our plate was to be full with an early visit to Nazareth's Great Precipice, described in Luke 4:28-29, "*And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29 And rose up, and thrust*

him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong."

Then a visit to Zippori, name changed to Sepphoris, only 5 kilometers from nearby Nazareth. We would go up to Mt Carmel after lunch, then tour Megiddo, the stronghold city at the southern gate of the Carmel mountains. Finally we would cross the Jezreal valley and stop where the Jordan River out pours from the Sea of Galilee. It was an exciting outline of events and I wanted to pull some Bible facts out for each location.

Breakfast at the Gia Hotel dining room was exquisite this morning. Probably because I was getting used to eating the hot meatless omelet with cold fish, fruits, and vegetables that

was offered at a Kosher breakfast. I think I mentioned that *breakfast* was called that because it was to break a twelve hour fast intended to give our digestive tract a healthful



Rock Quarry near
Horns of Hattin

rest. This was working well for me this week; the “Mediterranean diet” and my carefully lowered sugar input was reducing my lower back's arthritis inflammation significantly.¹ Walking extensively and consistently, with a walking stick and arch supports was also contributing to my feeling ten years younger, ... or maybe it was just being in Israel, the land that God loved and called Beulah land.

For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. ² And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.



*³ Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. ⁴ Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land **Beulah**: for the*

LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married (Isa.62:1-4).

On the bus Pastor Charlie congratulated us for being on time for the start of each day, reviewed the highlights of this, our last full day in Israel, read some scriptures and prayed a special blessing on our day. Eiad guided the luxurious tour bus out of Tiberius and on to Route 77 headed west. When Joe, our superb guide, had the microphone, he echoed Pastor's congratulations for our promptness, then began a dialogue, teaching us the Hebrew word of the day (I captured many of these in my journal notes but I am remiss at

¹ Your chiropractor, doctor, or back surgeon will never tell you this... But studies consistently show inflammation and joint pain are a consequence of the foods you eat. Keep eating the wrong foods? You're stuck with joint pain for life. Start eating the right foods? Your joint discomfort fades away. Scientists say many foods can stamp out inflammation... but we've narrowed it down to the tastiest top 10. June 30, 2023 Article By Steve Hefferon. yatayata/healthandwellnesstools.com, Email me for a list of Steve's 10 best and 5 worst foods, see email addr at www.GSBaptistChurch.com.

translating the scratches into legible English, let alone Hebrew).

Joe had just began describing the events scheduled in our day when he was interrupted by a look out the bus window. “Oh, look out to your right and you can see a double hill of a large but extinct volcano. Those would be The Horns of Hattin and on the 4th of July 1187 AD the Crusader forces suffered a great defeat in the Battle of Hattin.”

Under Saladin the Muslim



armies once again became the eminent military power in the Holy Land. They recaptured Jerusalem and other crusader held cities, and the defeat prompted the third Crusade², which began two years after the battle of Hattin.

The pace of our trip, the knowledge of our guide, and the overwhelming flood of information available in any brief moment of this trip, was absolutely sobering. Joe took

us from an upcoming glimpse of the Precipice near Nazareth back 2,000 years ago, fast forwarded us a thousand years into the heart of the Crusades, then, before I could click a good picture of an extinct volcano, had us back to 28 AD when an angry mob tried to throw Christ off “the brow of the hill whereon their city was built on” (Luke 4:29).

It was too much, I knew so little about the history of the Roman crusades it was embarrassing. Even so Joe's



² The Crusades are often given the misnomer “Christian” Crusades, but be careful not to make that mistake. The Crusades were Roman Crusades, they were Catholic Crusades, but they were never “Christian” Crusades. There was nothing “Christian” about any of them.

talk about the rock quarry in my fleeting picture, and the Arab village that was there now, only touched the surface. There was, in Joe's coverage of Kattim, the 1909 Kibutz that settled in the area. The Kibutz had a communist, Marxist, socialist ideology that drove them, but they did settle much of the territory in the early days.

An encyclopedia of information could only capture what slid past the right hand window of the tour bus, and then, as quickly as it came, it disappeared and left a funny taste of my ignorance in my mouth, and mind,.. and camera. I could not make out a single blurry picture snapped from the bus window. I think those were two mounts of



an extinct volcano, but it was hard to say with any certainty. As the bus turned off Route 60 and climbed up the winding road towards the Precipice, I, for one, was glad that it was doing the climbing and not we ourselves.

I knew the scripture Pastor Charlie would

open to when we assembled together at the top; Luke.4:16-30. In the City of Nazareth, where Jesus grew up, he stood up and read “as his custom was” (vr.16). This time,



however, he read a portion of scripture with such power, and with such authority, people took notice. He purposefully stopped his reading and closed the book at the breakpoint between the Messiah's First Advent and his Second Advent, the large crowd that had gathered took particular notice, “*And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him*” (vr.20). As he boldly taught them that he was the very Messiah, and began to rebuke them for their unbelief, “they were filled with wrath” (vr.28). The Bible says, “*And (they) rose up, and thrust him out of the city,*

and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong” (vr.29).

The bus was unloading. Joe began to explain how we could not be certain that this was the very spot, the very “brow of the hill”, but if not, it was close. And besides look at all the places you can see from this vista. We gathered around Pastor Charlie



and he opened our Bibles to Luke chapter 4. I shall recommend here that you now do the same, read with insight verse 16 through 30, and see what happened on a very similar precipice in verse 30.

While your Bible is open be sure to examine Isaiah.61:1-2a, to see where Jesus “stopped reading”, and muse on the reason he stopped there. Also muse on the precipice found in Luke 4:9, same chapter, only 20 versus earlier. There is a major

player involved in wanting the Messiah thrown off of a great precipice. Satan is involved in how, and why, people hate even the reading of God's Holy Word. Think back about how they hated and feared the



Scriptures on the Temple mount, on Day Two of our time in Israel. God is so good his word so powerful, able to divide the thoughts and intents of man's heart,.. even a depraved heart (Heb.4:12).

Our guide Joe was ecstatic as he pointed out spots we could see from this amazing overlook. From this Precipice, near



Nazareth, we could see Mount Tabor across the great Jezreel Valley. In the valley we could see Afula, known as the “Capital of the Valley” because of its strategic location (It is said that Afula is the origin of the great falafel, a deep-fried ball shaped fritter of ground chickpeas that we were getting all to familiar with on this trip).

Back towards us a little, you could easily make out Jael's tentsite, where Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, hammered a nail of her tent into the temples of the fleeing Sisera, and nailed him to the ground! (Jud.4). Just beyond, one could just barely make out the infamous Megiddo, the stronghold city on a strategic pass into the Carmel mountains.

Looking toward Mt Carmel we could see Yokneam, a city at a second strategic pass into the Carmel mountains. We could just make out Muchraka, where God's prophet Elijah withstood Ahab and Jezebel's prophets of Baal. And just left of our birds-eye view of Haifa, we could overlook Nazareth, and see all the way to Mt Carmel's little Druze village of Dalijat El Karmel. From this vantage point all these Bible lands came into a focus and dimension that will forever make my Bible reading more alive and vibrant. The United Monarchy Map, Plate 4 in my Scofield reference Bible, with its 1 inch of paper being 20 miles of real estate, is more precious today than it has ever been. Alas, the bus was loading for our next stop at Zippori National Park.



Zippori, name changed to Sepphoris, is only 5 kilometers from nearby Nazareth. In the 12th century Crusaders built a small watchtower and a church on the city's hilltop. It is the Roman Catholic traditional birthplace of Mary, mother of Jesus, and the watchtower was dedicated to Anne and Joachim, traditionally the parents of Mary. According to Josephus' “Antiquities 18.27”, when Sepphoris became the administrative capital of Galilee in the lifetime of Jesus, Herod set out to make Sepphoris the “ornament of all Galilee.” Large areas of Zippori have been excavated to find public buildings and baths, residential areas, an amphitheater, market building, industrial installations, mikvah, cisterns, a complex drainage system,

mosaics, the narrowest ancient synagogue in Israel and a great deal of glass, our visit today gave a spectacular overview of all of that, plus a birds-eye view of the Jezreel Valley. The city may get its name from the Hebrew word "*tsipor*" (bird) because the grand view from the town gives a sense of



flying.

With all the things I have included here about Mark Twain's journaling experiences, Beverly read me this article from one of her "Farm Country" magazines, and then dictated half of it into my phone: voila...

Journaling for help. University of Texas at Austin psychologist and researcher James Pendercker contends that regular journaling strengthens immune cells called team lymphocytes. Other research indicates that journaling decreases the symptoms of asthma and rheumatoid arthritis. Panda Baker believes



that writing about stressful events helps you come to terms with them, thus reducing the impact of these stressors on your physical health.

Scientific evidence supports that journaling provides other unexpected benefits. The act of writing accesses your left brain, which is analytical and rational. While you're left brain is occupied, your right brain is free to create, intuit and feel. In some, writing removes mental blocks and allows you to use all of your brain power to better understand yourself, others, in the world around you. You can find 100 more reasons to journal; my mother wrote in her journal (several volumes) most every day of her life, some days only a sentence or two, but what a treasure to leave her children.

Journaling is not another insurmountable task to add to your to-do list. In fact, it's a wonderful way to tackle life with more merriment and less moping. According to a study published in advances in psychiatric treatment, journaling just 15 to 20 minutes on five occasions was enough to help participants deal

with traumatic, stressful, or otherwise emotional events.

Time Index of some Photographs

img_4392.jpeg	Precipice	11/08 9:38	32°40'50.09"N 35°17'52.39"E Alt 377.38
100_4759.jpg	Zippori	11/08 1030	
img_4396.jpeg	Zippori National Park	11/08 1030	32°45'02.62"N 35°17'03.93"E Alt 277.8
img_4401.jpeg	Al-Mukhraqa Panorama	11/08 1306	32°40'21.73"N 35°05'18.25"E Alt 467.5
img_4402.jpeg	Tamer Halabi Restaurant	11/08 1308	32°40'21.48"N 35°05'18.36"E Alt 467.4
100_4784.jpg	Mount Carmel	11/08 1312	
img_4404.jpeg	Megiddo National Park	11/08 1417	32°35'12.85"N 35°11'08.20"E Alt 160.1
img_4410.jpeg	Baptismal Site Gift Store	11/08 1651	32°42'38.32"N 35°34'13.92"E Alt 190.8
img_4413.jpeg	Gai Beach Hotel	11/08 1839	32°47'07.00"N 35°32'38.01"E Alt 206.5