



**The Half Shekel Journals of 2023** by Pastor Ed Rice  
**#2309 Tue 21 Mar Cana of Galilee, Sepphoris, & The Precipice**  
On Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> Bev and I were up at 05:30. Most of our



Mount Tabor viewed on the way to Precipice near Nazareth Israel Tuesday 21 March 2023 0808

packing was done last night, so after reading Joshua 8 and 9, and Psalms 81, on the 81st day of the year, we had our bags in the lobby of the Lake House Hotel, Sea of Galilee, at 0630. The trick of spending 14 days on an Israel tour with only one small check bag and one carry-on, without smelling funny on Day 14, had to do with washing laundry in hotel sinks and drying clothes on hotel shower curtain rods. On Day 6 we were as fresh and happy as we were on Day One.

We had a delightful breakfast with Jim and Cherie, and Golda; what an adventure we're having, and there was nothing but heightened expectations for this day. We were to head out toward Jerusalem today, and the little booklet from Pastor Pickett promised a great deal on this Tuesday.

Day 6 we Begin our day with breakfast and then check out of our rooms as we will be in the City Of God tonight, in Jerusalem. Be sure to have all your things packed and clear out your safe and please have your bags at the appointed place on time. After a short devotion on the bus we are off.

1. Our first stop will be in Cana or Sepphoris depending on schedule issues. Cana is where Jesus performed his first miracle in turning the water into wine. Both Nazareth and Cana were just small towns around Sepphoris. Sepphoris is not mentioned in the Bible. Today we will be asking WHY? I think this is vital to understanding the Word of God. John 2:1-11 (Cana), 1st Corinthians 1:25-28 (Sepphoris), Deuteronomy 7:6-8 (God's heart), What do we take away?

2. Our next stop is Nazareth Village, a First century living history village located in modern Nazareth. Isaiah 61:1-3, and Luke 4:14-20, What do we take away from here?

3. Our next stop will be at a place called The Precipice which overlooks the valley of Armageddon. This is a traditional site of the attempt to throw Jesus from a cliff. Luke 4:20-30, What is our takeaway?

4. Next stop is the Harod Spring. This is the actual site of Gideon's selection of 300 to destroy the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the children of the east. (Remember old, ancient, and new), Judges 7:1-8, Take away?

5. Next stop Beit Shean. Site of the hanging of King Saul's body on the city wall. Also the largest Archaeological dig in Israel. This is also the large Roman city of the Decapolis. 1Samuel 31:8-13.



Mt Tabor view from tour bus 21 March 23

6. Up to Jerusalem!!  
 Next stop the Capital of Israel. The Capital of God's universe. The City of The Great King. As the Israelites of old did, we are going to read the Psalm of Ascent as we ascend up to Jerusalem. There are 15 of these that were read worshipfully or quoted from memory as the Jewish people would ascend to Jerusalem on the feast days. They are also called the Psalms of Degrees, and the Pilgrim Psalms. The Psalms of Ascent are Psalms 120-134.



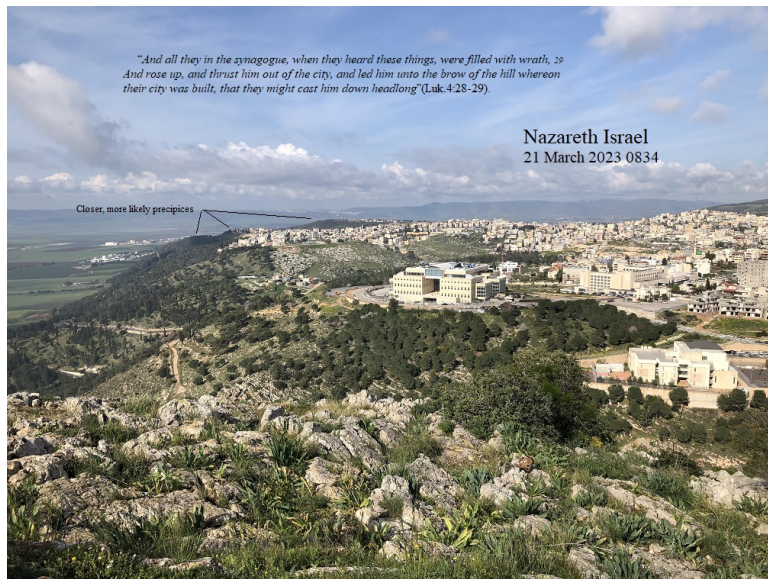
Pastor Stewart overlooking modern Nazareth from Precipice Tuesday 21 March 23 0834

- Psalm 120 The Lord is salvation and peace.
- Psalm 121 The Lord is help and security.
- Psalm 122 Joy in the house of the Lord.
- Psalm 123 The Lord brings Mercy from above.
- Psalm 124 The Lord brings hope.
- Psalm 125 The Lord preserves his people.
- Psalm 126 Sowing in tears reaping in joy.
- Psalm 127 Life without the Lord is vain.
- Psalm 128 The fear of the Lord is walking in his ways.
- Psalm 129 The Lord is righteous power.
- Psalm 130 The Lord gives hope in his Word!
- Psalm 131 It is good to be humble.
- Psalm 132 The Lord dwells with those who prepare themselves.
- Psalm 133 The Lord loves unity in his people.
- Psalm 134 Worship brings Joy to the Lord.

WELCOME TO JERUSALEM!! Let us all worship and give thanks to God!  
 The God of all mankind! The God who loves his Nation Israel, and loves all peoples of the earth.

We now check into the Prima Kings Hotel and enjoy a pleasant meal together. *Laila Tov.*

It was a blessing to have a short devotional each day when we first boarded the bus. Today Deacon Dave Johnson shared some Scriptures, and some thoughts about the birds he heard singing this morning; they would have been the same songs they sung to



*"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, so 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" (Luk. 4:28-29).*

Nazareth Israel  
 21 March 2023 0834



Jesus two-thousand years ago. Dave opened our day of touring with a prayer of thanksgiving. Our driver Costia guided our King-Long 12M Coach, 49 seat tour bus through Tiberius and onto Route 77 West, and Eli, our Israeli guide, welcomed our day, teaching us a Hebrew response to, “How are you?” *מה שלומך*, which would be, “Good, thank you”, טוב, תודה. Eli carefully sounded out each word and had us repeat it several times. Journal readers can do that by using the Hebrew Alphabet pronunciations shown below, and remembering that the letters are read from right to left. Good luck with that; let me know how you make out.

א	Aleph	silent	מ	Mem	<i>m as in mother</i>
ב	Bet	<i>b as in boy</i>	נ	Nun	<i>n as in now</i>
ג	Gimel	<i>g as in God</i>	ס	Samek	<i>s as in sin</i>
ד	Dalet	<i>d as in day</i>	ע	Ayin	silent
ה	He	<i>h as in hay</i>	פ	Pe	<i>p as in pastor</i>
ו	Waw	<i>w as in way</i>	צ	Tsade	<i>ts as in boots</i>
ז	Zayin	<i>z as in Zion</i>	ק	Qof	<i>k as in king</i>
ח	Ôet	<i>ch as in Bach</i>	ר	Resh	<i>r as in run</i>
ט	Tet	<i>t as in toy</i>	ש	Sin	<i>s as in sin</i>
י	Yod	<i>y as in yes</i>	שׁ	Shin	<i>sh as in ship</i>
כ	Kaf	<i>k as in king</i>	ת	Taw	<i>t as in toy</i>
ל	Lamed	<i>l as in lion</i>			

Rain forecasts and scheduling challenges required that we pass by Cana of Galilee and Sepphoris on our way to the Precipice overlooking Nazareth. As we got glimpses of Mount Tabor and then the location of Sepphoris out of the bus window, Pastor Pickett clarified some issues about the ancient city that awakened a passion in him. Sepphoris was the thriving Roman administrative center for the Galilee region. It was only 4 miles from Nazareth, and it was receiving a lot of attention due to the new archaeological sites at Tzippori National Park. Touring promotions, along with modernist ecumenical “scholars” were blatantly supposing that Jesus, as a child, must have visited this Roman city often. These imagined visits were nowhere to be found in the Bible, in fact, they



would be very contrary to the Bible.

Even though Herod was building Sepphoris into the “Ornament of all Galilee”, even though the powers of Hell convinced him to make his administrative capital of Galilee in this Roman city, right next to Nazareth, where Jesus was growing up, and despite the fact that forces a foot wanted to compromise Jesus's upbringing with seditions not in evidence, the Bible is

clear, true, and accurate, that Jesus was sinless. As a youth Jesus was “*found in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers*” (Luk.2:46-47).

In the Holy Bible Jesus was not in Zippori, or Tzippori, or Soppchoris, but after he was found in the temple he went down with his parents to Nazareth, and was subject unto them (2:51), “*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*” (2:52). Further, the first miracle he did was in Cana of Galilee, the Bible says so. Don’t let the world, the flesh, or the devil besmirch the youth of our Lord Jesus



Christ with stories about what was going on near Nazareth (or with Roman catholic stories about show off miracles done as a teenager!). Thank you Pastor Pickett for being clear, Biblical, and blunt about this rumor mill astir in Zippori, the city changed to Sepphoris, by the evil king Herod. The Bible is clear about the Hebrews, God's chosen:

*Thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than*

*any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved*



*you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt (Deut.7:6-8).*

The Bible is clear about Herod and his tomfoolery:

*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence (1Cor.1:25-29).*



Costia pulled the bus into the parking lot at the Precipice that overlooked Nazareth. Eli was ecstatic as he pointed out the many familiar Bible locations that one could see from this location, but somber as he pointed out the rising Arab Muslim population in Nazareth and they're persecuting controls on the Arab Christian population. Nazareth was a tiny “one-horse” town in Jesus' day, but

a thriving modern metropolis today. Under Christian dominance it became the MIT equivalent in Israel, filled with the elite and educated, the engineers and technology moguls. Presently the large influx of Arab Muslim population has so harassed and beset Christians that their influence and presence has dropped from 150,000 to 70,000, leaving a dire forecast for Nazareth's future.

We gathered in an alcove that exposed the great height and overlook the city, and Pastor Diedrich Peters opened our Bibles to Luke chapter 4. Verse 16 reports, “*And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into*

*the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” Don't miss that, in the town where Jesus grew up, his custom was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and to stand up for to read. When he did so on this day,*

*There was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal*



*the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, <sup>19</sup> To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. <sup>20</sup> And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. (Luk.4:17-20).*



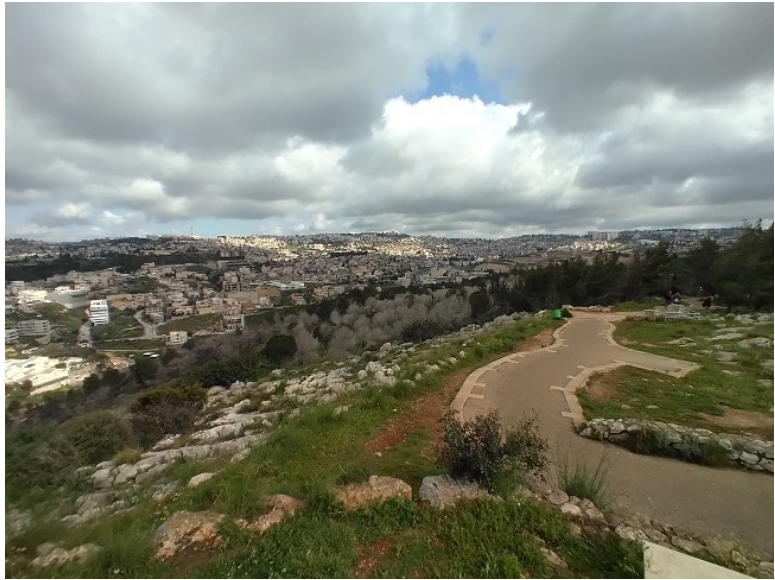
*If we “give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (1Tim.4:13), we cannot miss that Jesus abruptly stopped his reading just before the prophet announced “the day of vengeance of our God.” Jesus then went on to proclaim himself the Messiah, and note what happened when he did that: “And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled*

*with wrath, <sup>29</sup> 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”(Luk.4:28-*



29).

“It was on a precipice, the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, very similar to this one, where a miracle of deliverance occurred.” Pastor Peters peered over the steep fall of the precipice that held us as he recited the next verse, “*But he passing through the midst of them, went his way and came down to Capernaum.*”



Awesome, awesome: the things we could see from this precipice. As Costia guided the tour bus down the steep winding roadway towards Nazareth, Pastor Lee explained, after a particularly breathtaking view of Mount Tabor, that it was more likely not the Mount of Transfiguration. Both Matthew 17 and Mark 9 report that Jesus led them (Peter, James, and John) “*up into an high mountain apart by themselves.*” Mount Tabor



contained two prominent idolatrous worship areas, which would not afford a place where they could be by themselves for this miraculous event. The more likely place of the transfiguration is over on Mount *Scribbleslashscribble ...* as Costia broke hard and swerved to miss an incompetent driver, my pencil slid across my journal notepad and to this day I

cannot make out what Lee said from what I actually wrote here. (After Lee reads this I will get back to you.)

Nazareth village is a quaint little area on the backside of Nazareth. I found it spellbinding. That's our next stop.



## Msg #907 The Peace of Jerusalem

### What The Bible Says

Good Sam's Penny Pulpit by Pastor Ed Rice

The Bible exhorts us to *“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.”* (Psalm 122) As I viewed it from atop Mount Carmel last week the Promised Land dwarfed to a proper dimension while God's chosen people loomed into a proper perspective. Overlooking the lush green Jezreel Valley, Nazareth, Caesarea and Megiddo it was clear that God still loves Israel with a mighty love. Christians love what God loves, but unregenerate depraved man and his religions hate what God most loves. Man made religions are diabolical in their hatred and massacre of Jews. Today, Islam is open about its annihilation goals for Judaism and Israel. In 1492 as God cracked open a door for Christians to escape persecutions in Europe, God threw open the doors for Jews to enter their homeland and escape Catholicism's sword in Spain. In the 40s even America turned back boat loads of God's Chosen People attempting to escape the diabolical slaughter of Jews in Europe. A Christian standing on the Promised Land of the Bible, will more love what God loves, the people to whom this land was promised. In 10 days I learned clearly that every time a Jew sinks his plow in that ground the earth brings forth her increase, and every time an archaeologist sinks his shovel into that ground, Bible truths are found exactly accurate and profoundly pertinent. *“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. ... Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.”*

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300 Words for Week #907, Feb 15 2009

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