

# Journaling a Preacher's Pilgrimage



## to Israel

**How a visit to Israel will forever  
change the way you read your Bible**

Pastor Edward Rice

“If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land,  
and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.” (Num 14:8)

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Front Cover: Garden Tomb near Golgotha Jerusalem, Photograph by author.

Jacket Cover: Bet She'an Ruins, Israel, Photograph by Pastor Lee and Donna Pickett, Thompson Manitoba

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## About the Author

Pastor Ed Rice is a retired USAF Systems Engineer surrendered to be a Baptist Preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Saved in 1960 at the age 8 he grew up tutored in the Scriptures through Tuscorora Baptist Church in Addison NY. Drafted into the military off of the dairy farm in 1972, Ed and Bev Rice raised 3 boys while serving as a Missile Technician in the USAF. After completing a USAF AECP bootstrap program he graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in electrical engineering and was commissioned in the USAF where he served until 1995 as a weapons integration, and systems engineer at Wright Patterson Air Force Base and Rome Laboratories. He finished his Masters degree in Electrical Engineering through The Air Force Institute of Technology in 1990. Pastor Rice, after serving as a youth pastor at each air base where he was stationed for the past 20 years, surrendered to be a Preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in June 1992. He has been pursuing his MDiv, DDiv degrees since that time and since 1998 has been Pastoring Good Samaritan Baptist Church in Dresden New York. His staunch belief in the preserved accuracy of the inspired Scriptures and his rich background in the history of Bible believing Baptists makes his insights throughout this 10 day tour of Israel pointed but Biblical. If you have never visited Israel do not miss this opportunity to journal through these 10 days. If you have visited this journal will take you back, and bring you up on the many changes since your visit. If you plan on visiting Israel, do not go without first taking this 10 day journaling experience.

## About the Subject Matter

Exod 19:1 ¶ In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.

2 For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be **a peculiar treasure** unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

6 And ye shall be unto me **a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation**. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

## **Dedication**

I wanted to go to Israel ever since 1960 when I was saved and attended Marian Clark's Sunday School class at Gang Mills Baptist Chapel. I listened to him talk about the places where Jesus walked as if he had been there. I do not know that he had, but the pictures that he painted in my mind's eye week after week, and God's promises that he taught in that Jr. boys class assured me that I would one day stand with my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, on the Mount of Olives and see Jerusalem with him as the King of kings and Lord of lords. I still will, but to visit there in the flesh was a dream I inherited from my Sunday School training and my father, Levi Rice. Since his salvation in the same Church in 1958, Dad always wanted to go to Israel, to actually see Jerusalem, and he had tickets in hand after his second bypass surgery. His heart was weak, but I had told him that to go and even to die in the land would be better than to forgo such a dream. I was disappointed that his doctor and others, concerned for his heart, talked him out of his 10 day trip to the Holy Land. He canceled his opportunity and died without visiting Israel. When the opportunity came for Bev and I to go on this 10 day Pastor Familiarization Tour it was financially impossible because we had just purchased tickets for our 10 day trip to Cajamarca, Peru, where our son Shane was ministering as a missionary. Impossible or no, the journal of this trip to the Holy Land is dedicated to Misty, Kassandra, Rachael, Rebekah, Moriah, Micah, Alexus, Charity, Lucas, Parker and Christina Rice, our 11 grand children, with the expectation that they too, one day, will get to walk where Jesus walked, and that they too, will one day stand on the Mount of Olives with their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

### **God's Dedication for Israel**

Deuteronomy 30:6-8

And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.

## ITINERARY

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### Holy Land Pastor's Educational Tour

Christian Journeys

107 Lakeshore Drive

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**27 Jan – 05 Feb, 2009**

**Day 1. Tue 27 Jan:** Toronto Canada to Tel Aviv Israel #LY104 Depart 23:55 Arrive Ben Gurion Airport 18:05 El Al Airlines

**Day 2. Wed 28 Jan:** Israel, Tel Aviv, Boarding our touring coach for Netanya, through Tel Aviv – off of Joppa, “*Welcome to Israel Dinner*” Blue Bay Hotel

**Day 3. Thu 29 Jan:** Caesarea, Caesarea Aquifer, Mt. Carmel, Druze Lunch in , Megiddo, Valley of Jezreel, Nazareth, Dinner and overnight stay at Kibbutz HaGoshrim in the upper Galilee.

**Day 4. Fri 30 Jan:** Tel-Dan National Park, Headwaters of the Jordan River, Ancient City of Dan, Excavation of Laish, Caesarea Philippi, Golan Heights, Olive Farm, Golan Heights, Kibbutz HaGoshrim in Upper Galilee

**Day 5. Sat 31 Jan:** The Mount of Beatitudes, Sea of Galilee Boat Ride, The Jesus Boat Museum, Tabgha, Peter's Fish, Peter's House, Capernaum, Jordan River Dinner at Kibbutz Ginossar

**Day 6. Sun 01 Feb:** Gideon Springs, Bet Alpha Synagogue, Bet She'an, Qumran, Ein Gedi, Dead Sea, Moriah Classic Hotel,

**Day 7. Mon 02 Feb:** Masada, Jerusalem, Via Dolorosa, Dinner at Moriah Classic Hotel, Western Wall at night

**Day 8. Tue 03 Feb** Overlook Jerusalem: Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Mount Zion, City of David, David's Palace, David's Tomb, Active Synagogue, Eccumenical Shop, Israel Museum, Archaeological Park, Southern Steps, Temple Wall, Western Wall Tunnels, Dinner at Hotel

**Day 9. Wed 04 Feb:** Overlook Bethlehem, Holocaust Museum, The Garden Tomb, Holy Sepulcher Church, Garden Tomb, “*Farewell Dinner*” in Joppa

**Day 10, Thu 05 Feb:** Israel to Toronto non-stop overnight. #LY103 Depart 00:55 Arrive 06:30

### God's Itinerary for Israel

Isa 35:1-10 ¶ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. 2 It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. 3 Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. 4 Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

5 ¶ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. 7 And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. 8 And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. 9 No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: 10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

## Preface

During my 48 years as a born again Christian I have visited Israel countless times through the slides and stories of others, now Bev and I would visit it in person. I would be remiss if I did not capture every piece of information, every sight, every thought and emotion in a journal. My slightly honed writing skills and copious note taking experience would be challenged beyond capability as information, sights, thoughts and emotions poured out of every day, every hour, yeah every minute of these 10 days in Israel. The months prior to departure had passed with such a hectic pace of pastoring a very small struggling Baptist Church that no preparations for this trip were complete. Every site that we were to visit should have been researched with every Bible passage revisited prior to boarding the plane. None were. If this journal had been placed in my hands days or even hours before our departure it would have been a marvelous marvelous tool of preparation for what we were to experience. I wish it were complete and more detailed in capturing every piece of information, Scripture reference, sight, thought and emotion of this trip. Alas, it is but a taste of an adventure that will whet appetites for growth into the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Bible.

The journal itself is made up of thirty, two page Half Shekel Journals which were sent out for review over the weeks since our February 2009 trip. Through these Half Shekel Journals each event of our adventure was captured and recorded. Much more research into every site and fact is want to be done and easily accomplished with the vast capabilities of the internet search engines. This journal is but a step towards the research which is to consume a Christian's life; growing in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a first step that can change forever how you read your Bible, set your desire on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, and get busy in growth and witnessing. It is a step that will cause you to long for your trip to Israel, whether it be a first, once in a lifetime visit, a revisit, or the visit where we will stand together with the Lord Jesus Christ on the Mount of Olives. Every Christian will eventually visit Israel.



Why the Half Shekel? ... The shekel is the base unit of Israeli money like the dollar is ours. With their economy as it is it exchanges for one of our quarters, although it is the size of a nickel. The half shekel is twice as large as a shekel but half its worth, about 12 1/2 cents or 1 US once-upon-a-time 'bit'. We called these Half-Shekel Journals because it is twice as large but half the worth of the real thing, OR it represents my little 'bit' of info, OR it cost me a half shekel to get it printed, OR, since a cup of Aroma Coffee over there cost 16 shekels, the half shekel is almost as worthless as our 2 cents, and the journal is my 2 cents.

If you have never asked and received the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal saviour and lord of your soul, my prayer is that your reading this journal and exploring further the truths of His precious Word, the Holy Bible will lead you to a place where you will. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:17,18,36)