

ISRAEL STUDY TRIP JERUSALEM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE 2017



Thank God for granting me yet another great opportunity to learn more about His chosen people and the land of Israel which He has blessed. Of all my three visits to Israel, this is the best because it was a study trip. The lessons were clear and easy to understand because there had been pre-sessions. In addition to the pre-sessions, we were also given maps with instructions on how to mark before embarking on our trip to Israel.

This study trip covered areas in and around Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Galilee. We stayed mainly in Jerusalem and Galilee to cover the areas. I personally found the field trips well organized and very enjoyable. I greatly benefited from the lecturer that Jerusalem University College provided. Vernon Alexander was knowledgeable and well-versed with the historical background of each of the places that we visited. He was also able to show which part of the Bible the place that we were visiting was featured, its geographical significance and its geological importance. He also highlighted motifs that re-occurred throughout the Old Testament narratives. When the instructor related the place to the bible facts, it was devotional in nature. His sharing made us reflect on our personal state. His sense of humor was also very much enjoyed because it helped to keep everyone interested in the otherwise dry and academic subject matter.

En-Gedi

En-Gedi was the place where David spent his time running away from King

Saul. We spent some time hiking in this place. As we hiked up the rugged slopes we were awe-struck by the rugged beauty of the place. The terrain was not easy to traverse as it was not a flat level path to walk on. At times we had to hike up and down uneven slopes and steep stone steps. There were some nice shady areas of rest when we came across 2 or 3 small pools scattered throughout the trail of our hike. Our instructor Vernon had given us a number of passages that we could meditate on if we had to stop along the way during our hike. These passages included Psalm 18, 63, 42, 54 and 57. Many of us took his advice. We looked up the specified passages when we had to stop and found it refreshing to read them after stopping to rest in the middle of a difficult hike while enjoying the scenic view of the surrounding cliffs. Once while enjoying our sandwich lunches prepared on the spot with ingredients prepared by Jerusalem University College kitchen, we were treated to a rare and beautiful sight of a group of Ibexes traversing the face of the En-Gedi Cliffs

Mount Carmel

Our visit to Mount Carmel this time was a very different one for me as we were not brought to the usual area where there was a church. Instead, we were brought to the very edge of Mount Carmel. We



climbed down the face of the mountain a little way to find a place to sit along the side . Our instructor himself climbed a bit further down and shared with us the significance of the place in 1 Kings through the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal. The unusual open air classroom experience served as a refreshing reminder that only the true and living God who created the heaven and the earth was the provider of all our needs and that He alone should be worshiped.

Laish

Laish was the name of this ancient city before the Israelites conquered it and renamed it Dan. (Judges 18:29) It is here that Jeroboam made the golden calves and introduce a form of what began possibly as a compromise in worship of the one true God. This was a political move on the part of Jeroboam to prevent people from defecting over to Jerusalem during his reign over the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This however caused Israel to fall into the sin of idolatry and apostasy. The sharing from this place was a stark reminder to me of the dangers of compromise.

Caesarea

At Caesarea, our instructor Vernon (*pic below*) shared with us the story from

Acts 10 of how Peter was called to share with Cornelius a Gentile centurion , the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Against the backdrop of the beautiful Mediterranean Sea, our JUC instructor wrapped up the entire course by summarizing the history of the nation of Israel. He highlighted that the nation of Israel was supposed to be a blessing to all nations but failed. Jesus the Son of God became flesh and through the nation of Israel came as a Light to all nations. Through believing in what Christ has done at the cross of Calvary, we have become the “new Israel”. As Jesus’ solution to the Roman problem was love, we too through love must now be an example to others and point them to Him. Our instructor then finished off by pronouncing the Aaronic blessing upon us. He also encouraged us to read two to three chapters daily during personal devotion time. Thank God for making it possible for me to attend this course. Apart from meeting and making friends with other brethren from other churches and countries, I learned many things through this course. The lessons helped me to appreciate and understand better the Bible and its events in its proper context.



~ by *Hannah Yeo*