



Australian tour testimonies

I was impressed by the drive for life, courage, productivity and integrity of the Jewish people, as they have been returning in ever increasing numbers, making this barren rocky land flourish again.

It was wonderful to travel with Christians who beautifully reflected the character of our Lord. Thanks to God for giving us the privilege of seeing the places where He did so much in the past, and where He is fulfilling His word today. **Ros Rennie**



The Western Wall Plaza

Remnant of Warsaw Ghetto wall

God's beloved Israel, a place of contrast and appeal; rock upon rock, mountain desolate... so thoughts resonate - how does the land sustain? except God sends the winter rain. Just then an oasis beckons me and fills my heart with glee!

As a pilgrim in the land it has helped me understand... walking where Abraham, David and Jesus did is awesome, everlastingly vivid! It has brought the Word alive, with resolve to help this land survive. God's heart is for its peace and its sweet release; so let me encourage you to support and visit Israel too.

Dell Mandelkow

Seeing the Bible come to life before my very eyes opened my mind further. Seeing the people and the lands of Israel opened my heart even wider. Living and working with the people of Israel opened my life - forever! God reigns! Israel lives!

Steve Riley



Bridges for Peace Headquarters in Jerusalem



At Birkenau extermination camp



Here I reflect on one day in an amazing holistic journey of mind, heart, spirit and body in the Holy Land, Israel.

I travelled into the heavy sadness of the Holocaust Memorial Museum, of the unbelievable suffering as recalled by survivors and to the reality that 1½ million children died and are now remembered in the 1½ million shining lights in a dark world.

I gazed at the model of the Second Temple and was amazed to look at the Dead Sea Scrolls housed in the Shrine of the Book.

Now I was reflecting on Peter's repentance for having denied Jesus three times. How many times have I done the same thing!

Just before sunset, I was at the Western Wall marvelling at the enthusiasm of young people, Jews welcoming the Shabbat - the atmosphere was amazing.

A day from death and darkness, to new life and hope.

Ann Richards



Bedouin entertainment in a tent in the Negev desert

Poland & Israel 2008

We saw where the holocaust took place. This horror and the suffering the Jewish people faced at the hands of the Nazis became very real. It was very disturbing for all of us. The Polish people were warm and friendly. Poland was filled with old world charm.

The Bible really comes to life in Israel. The Australian Light Horsemen ceremony was special, as was being baptised in the Jordan River.

The day we retraced Jesus' last days on earth was also very special, beginning with the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, Via Dolorosa and the Garden Tomb where Jesus rose from the grave. **JESUS IS ALIVE!**

It was very moving to sing the song 'Jerusalem' as we arrived into Jerusalem. The visit to the Bridges for Peace Headquarters and food bank were also very special.

The best time we had was with the children at the school. Interacting with them and getting to know some of the kids were for me highlights. I think a part of me was left behind in Beit Shemesh. I pray the Lord will let me come back some day. **Lyn Tunbridge**



At Tel Be'er-sheva - modern city in the background

Will you pray about joining us on tour this year? Call us now on 1800 000661

The highlights for me were the indescribable joy of being back in the land of the Bible and among God's precious people.

Highlights were the outstanding guest speakers we had, and being able to spend time in the Levin School among the beautiful children, as well as a chance to stay with the host families, to talk and share together with them.

Jan Robb



Bill baptised in the Jordan

We considered it a great blessing that God enabled us to travel to Poland and Israel. The trip gave us a strong sense of what Jewish people have gone through and who they are now.

Our eyes were opened to what we are never told in the media, that Israel is filled with many people just like us who are seeking to live a life of happiness.

However, many more than in Australia have a concept that God is a part of their lives and that He should be sought wholeheartedly. We were also impressed by the unity and loyalty of the Israelis that produces a passion to protect all that Israel is today.

Bill & Sharon Hull *The Valley of Tears in Syria, below a group of young armed IDF soldiers*



Evidence in Karmiel in the north of BFP's Matthew 25 ministry

I found the tour very educational, from the death camp which contrasted with the beautiful village nearby, the history of Poland, the culture of Poland which surprised me - it's a very rich and beautiful country.

Then on to Eretz Israel, God's chosen country and God's chosen people. What can I say, there were many highlights but the children's assembly on the second last day reduced me to tears. They were so appreciative of the few hours we spent painting their school. I will never forget this trip and plan to return in the future. **Elaine Jackson**

It's very difficult to put into a few words what the highlights of this trip were, every day was a highlight. For me being back in the land of Israel was a joyous occasion. However, the real highlight was the time spent with my Jewish family and hands on work at the Levin School. I count it a privilege to have been a part of their lives for a few days. I have been truly blessed beyond measure.

If anyone reading this is undecided about coming to Israel, let me share the words that were on a tee-shirt I brought - ISRAEL - JUST DO IT!! I promise you, you will be blessed. **Glenda Frazer**

En Gedi - over 400m below sea level



There were so many highlights, each day was wondrous. Sitting on the Mount of Beatitudes and hearing Jesus' words moved me; singing 'Shout to the Lord' on Lake Galilee (Kinneret) on a perfect day; the still emotions I felt at the Garden of Gethsemane and the Garden Tomb; visualising the Israelites and the

I have wanted to visit the Holy Land since my late teens. I felt my highlight was the Garden Tomb and it was because I really felt the peace and nearness of the Lord there.

Staying with Sara and Moti was so special. They opened their home, but more than that they shared their family with us, consisting of five wonderful young men and a young daughter, also a precious grandson. We will all stay in touch. They even included us in their morning prayers after breakfast, so special. Thank you for making it all possible. **Margaret Friedrich**

The Golan Heights reflect the setting sun



Tree-planting in Lavi Forest at Golan Junction in the Galilee

Philistines on the hills near Beit Shemesh; and gathering "five smooth stones" from the brook where David found his. Being on the top of Mount Carmel and looking down on the valley of Megiddo - knowing what will come there I cannot describe my

emotions. Israel and her people - her whole history and how things are right now before my eyes. No wonder Elijah was close to God up there.

Finally being accepted and loved by 'my family' at Beit Shemesh - painting the goalposts at the school, endless partings, hugs and kisses and dancing with the children. I am leaving my heart here with God's people. **Wendy Day**

Descending from the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount



Overlooking the Valley of Armageddon from Mount Carmel





Men at work at the Adayahu School in Beit Shemesh

Serious & fun tour memories for us all

Jewish father and sons on Shabbat evening



My impressions and the impact I have gained of Israel are simple. I have found that the people love their country and will look after it and defend it.

But more important they really love family life and honour their mothers and fathers very much, most love their God and worship and pray and honour Him through Torah ritual and their way of life.

They are an example to the world, so that the world can re-establish godly principles and the values that God demands of us. **Peter Friedrich**

It has completely changed my whole perspective and created a deeper love and understanding of Israel.

Living with an Israeli family and having the privilege to volunteer alongside the people in Beit Shemesh - my love for them has become a very emotional and moving experience that I can't put into words. Living and experiencing daily life with a family has given me more than I expected and created a thirst for a promised return trip.

Israel is not only fulfilling but addictive in seeing prophetic fulfilment.

Grant Cummings



Sharon smiling her way through Hezekiah's Tunnel



Keith with his five Elah brook stones (see 1 Samuel 17:40)



School groundsman Mordechai is proud of his new staff!

Fascinating - exciting - very thought provoking - ***** 5-star!

I will pray every day for the peace of Jerusalem according to Psalm 122:6; I will be an ambassador for the land and people of Israel in whatever ways I can and wherever I can; I will support the work of Bridges for Peace in Israel in whatever ways I can.

The highlight of the trip for me was the school parade where we all took part.

The company was top class and the leadership was great. I will never forget my trip to Israel. I feel I have made some lifelong friends here, my host family were great.

Tom 'felafel' Venables

God placed a love for the Jews in my head when I became a Christian, then a passion when I toured first in 2003. A sixth tour last March and the privilege to volunteer for eight months at the BFP Outreach Centre (Food Bank) was capped off with the most recent tour with Keith and the most delightful bunch of Aussies. It is a wonderful sight to see 'first-timers' to Israel open up and blossom on the path to sights, sounds and smells that Keith sets out.

For me it is overwhelming to see this tiny country in all its beauty - each day an anticipation of the wonders our Daddy will teach us. A fantastic group of godly people, pure joy to have met each one of you - thank you, Keith.

Rosemary Vagg

Identifying with the biblical Hebrew culture at our BFP HQ



Flags fly as schoolkids say goodbye to our tour group



My three most memorable experiences were:

The IDF post near the Syrian border, with the realisation of the importance of Israel keeping the Golan Heights, and the story of Yom Kippur. The second was welcoming Shabbat at the Western Wall. Last but by no means least my time at Beit Shemesh.

Thank you for a wonderful rich adventure in the Holy Land.

Merete Dickinson



'Felafel' Tom says thanks and goodbye on the shofar at Beit Shemesh school

Reflections and recommendations from an enthusiastic pastor from New Zealand who participated in our 2008 "Standing with Israel" tour

What I gained from my visit - and good reasons for you to visit Israel

A tour of Israel with Bridges for Peace will:

1. Help you gain a greater understanding of **the land of the Bible**, including the geography and topography. See spectacular scenery in the Negev desert and experience genuine Bedouin hospitality.
2. Give you a greater appreciation of **the places where Jesus ministered**, including Capernaum, Mount of Beatitudes, Tiberias, Sea of Galilee, River Jordan, Caesarea Philippi and many others - learning what Jesus did and taught there.
3. Give you a greater knowledge of **the long and rich history of the Jewish people** and an appreciation of the church's Jewish roots.
4. Give you an opportunity to learn more about **what took place in the Holocaust** through a visit to the Holocaust museum Yad Vashem and the Children's Memorial.
5. Give you a better grasp of **the issues facing modern day Israel** and the challenge for their survival. Enjoy interesting lectures by well informed people.
6. Help you come to a greater understanding of **the depth and richness of Hebrew**, the language in which most of the Old Testament was written.

You will also have the opportunity to:

1. Spend time in the city of Jerusalem and at the many sites of biblical interest, including the Temple Mount, the Western Wall, Mount of Olives, the garden of Gethsemane, Hezekiah's Tunnel, and of course many others.
2. Visit the ancient city of Beersheba and see Abraham's Well. Learn about the strategic role of the ANZAC forces in the liberation of the city in 1917.
3. Visit the ruins of ancient cities like Beth Shean and Caesarea and observe the stunning Roman architecture.
4. Visit spectacular and interesting places such as Masada, the Dead Sea, the Golan Heights, Megiddo and Mt Carmel where Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal.
5. Visit the Valley of Elah to see where David fought Goliath - and take the opportunity to souvenir five smooth stones!
6. Visit Qumran and hear the fascinating story of the Dead Sea scrolls.
7. Stay [if opportunity arises] in an Israeli home and build a relationship with a modern day Israeli family.
8. Learn about community life in Israel and express your support in a practical way by involvement in a local community project.
9. Be introduced to the wonderful flora and fauna of Israel and the tree planting program in Israel.



Says Allan, 'Try some St Peter's fish!'

10. Appreciate the benefit of a knowledgeable Israeli guide who will make the various places you visit come alive.
 11. Be part of a team - which is a great way to tour.
- And for those involved in ministry - you will obtain valuable resources unavailable in Australia or New Zealand. So don't forget to allow some spending money!

Allan Taylor

And now some final pictures - just in case you need a little more encouragement to join us on our next tour in October-November 2009



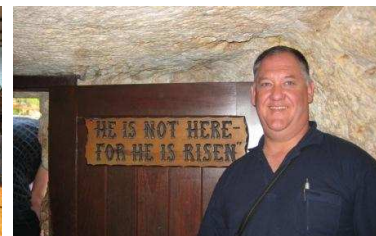
A camel ride in the desert to really wake you up!



'Come on in - the water's lovely!' Floating in the Dead Sea



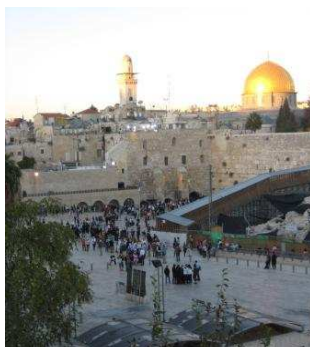
Lake Galilee boat ride



Inside the Garden Tomb



Shopping in the Jerusalem Cardo



Looking across to the Western Wall



In one of the Bethlehem shepherds' caves