

## **WE WALKED WHERE JESUS WALKED: HOLY LAND TOUR 1985**

By Anna Belle Edwards

In the early part of 1985 we decided to replace our old carpeting. So one day when we were in Watsonville shopping we decided to look at some carpet. We stopped at a downtown carpet shop where carpeting was on sale. We waited around for a while for someone to wait on us. No one paid any attention to us so we left. On the way home we decided to stop at Hart's Furniture and see what they had and their prices. Vern Hart was right there to help us. We looked them all over and checked the prices and decided on what we wanted. I was looking around when I noticed Vern showing Bert a map of the world on the wall and went over to look too. There were tacks on many of the cities and strings attached leading to other tacks. I asked Vern what it was all about. He said that those cities were all the places in the world where he had visited and most of them were mission stations. I told him that there was only one place in the world that I wanted to visit and that was the Holy Land. He then told us that he and Dr. Kraft were getting up a tour of the Holy Land and they would like to have us go with them. He gave us some literature on it and we left. Before we arrived home we both knew we wanted to go.

Vern and Mildred were long-time members of our church, Watsonville First Baptist. And Dr. Kraft had been our minister for fifteen years back when our children were small. He was then pastor of Los Altos Baptist.

In a few days we went in and gave Vern a deposit on our tickets. We had our pictures taken and got our passports. Then we began collecting the things we would need for the trip. I was so excited! All my life I had dreamed of visiting the Holy Land and seeing the country and walking where Jesus walked. And now my dreams were to become a reality! It was hard to believe. The days passed quickly. There was so much to do. We did get our carpeting and got our house back in order.

### **May 12, 1985 Mother's Day -- Headed for the Holy Land.**

The long-awaited day finally arrived, May 12, 1985. Vern Hart picked us up at 10:30 in the morning. He took us to his house where we waited for the arrival of Pat Estes from Santa Cruz and his daughter and son-in-law and boys. They arrived in their motor home and we all rode in it to the San Jose airport. We were the first of the group to arrive. But soon Dr. Kraft and Dorothy arrived. Then the rest of the group came. The Harts and Bert and I were the only ones from Watsonville. Pat Estes was from Santa Cruz. One couple was from Washington. They met us in Los Angeles. The rest were all from Dr. Kraft's church in Los Altos. There were 48 of us.

Our luggage was checked and we were given name tags to wear on the whole trip. We were allowed one suitcase and one carry-on bag each. We were soon on our way in a PSA plane for Los Angeles. There we had a two-hour wait. From there we headed north. We flew over Canada, the North Pole, Greenland, Iceland, and down over Europe to Copenhagen, Denmark. We had a section of the plane all to ourselves. It was nice. There was a little excitement when a lady put her seat back and it refused to come back up. Vern worked on it for some time, but it stayed down. Another seat was found for the lady. Several of the group made a big thing of it and took a lot of pictures. The night passed quickly. No one slept much. We lost eight hours.

### **May 13 Monday.**

Someone opened the shade and the bright sunshine hit me in the eyes! I was suddenly wide awake. For a minute I wondered where I was. It seemed that everyone was awake at once and all the shades were up at once. The whole plane was flooded with bright light. There was no more sleep for anyone. We were somewhere over Iceland. The sun was shining on snow and ice. We arrived at Copenhagen, Denmark at 1:45, their time. It was a long flight and we were all tired. A bus took us to the Scandinavian Hotel. Our room was on the 25th floor. We had a beautiful view from our window. It overlooked a busy street, small lakes, and pretty little parks. There were many, many people riding bicycles. Our guide told us the bicycles have the right of way over pedestrians.

We rested a while and then went out and walked around some. But it was too cold to stay out long. We went back in and found our way to the dining room where we could buy our dinner. Dinner was not included at that hotel. Some of our group walked a few blocks and found fast food places. But we were tired and it was cold out. We went to bed early.

### **May 14 Tuesday.**

After breakfast in the hotel the bus took us to the airport at 9:30. We waited in a long line again to get our plane. It seems there are always long lines. Vern kept our tickets and passports most of the time. That sped things up some. It was 11:15 when we took off for Israel. We flew down over Turkey and the Mediterranean to Tel Aviv, Israel. We waited in another long line to clear customs. Our Jewish guide, David, had arrived there ahead of us and sped things up for us.

When we went out of the building to go to our bus, there were crowds of little children standing behind ropes on both sides to welcome us. One little girl leaned over the rope and handed me a card she had made. She had printed WELCOME TO ISRAEL in large letters on it. I shall always treasure it. Some of the other ladies felt cheated because they did not get one. As we got on the tour bus, the guide's little daughter handed each of us candy.

Our bus took us to the Dan hotel in Caesarea. It is a lovely place. We were there by eight to eat dinner. I shall never forget that dinner. It was a giant Smorgy. I never saw such a beautiful arrangement of fruit and vegetables. There were also many fish and cheese dishes. It was all so good, a dinner one cannot forget. It was great! In all the hotels our group had a section to ourselves. We were never bothered with cigarette smoke. The waiters were all so nice and tried so hard to please. Most of them understood English.

### **May 15 Wednesday.**

We left our hotel at eight. We had several places to visit that day. The first was Caesarea. Excavations of the old city began in 1956. From the Roman period was the huge amphitheater. It has been restored and is used for concerts. We sat on the seats and walked down all those stairs to the bottom and walked among the broken stones and pillars. The remains of the water aqueduct that brought water from the mountains twelve miles to the city was very interesting. There were many interesting ruins of the once-beautiful city. At one time Caesarea was the most beautiful city of all Palestine, with palaces, public buildings, market place, marble temple, amphitheater, and hippodrome. There was a harbor in which great ships could anchor. Caesarea was the capital of Palestine for 500 years. Here Peter preached to Cornelius who became the first gentile convert.

When we got back to the bus, David, our guide, passed out jelly beans. He told us they were a gift from our president.

Our next stop was Mt. Carmel. It is a range of mountains 16 miles long, 4-5 miles wide, and 1,800 feet high. Its name is derived from "Karem El" which means "Vineyards of God." In ancient times these mountains were covered with vineyards and were very fertile. They stay green all year and are the prettiest mountains in Israel. We traveled east to where the Mt. Carmel range meets the sea.

### **May 16 Thursday.**

Today we traveled north to the border of Lebanon. It is heavily fenced with big rolls of barbed wire above the fence and many guards. On the other side there was much activity. There were tanks, trucks, and jeeps, and armed men all over. We took some pictures of them and watched them for a while and left.

We traveled south and east to a pretty area with trees and much cold, clear water. It was the main source of water for the Jordan River. It is called Caesarea Phillippi. The ancient city of Caesarea Phillippi was built on a terrace at the base of Mt. Herman. During Roman times it belonged to Herod the Great. In ancient times there was a shrine to the god Pan. It was here that Peter acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah (Matthew 16-16).

We drove up a winding road to the top of Golan Heights. It is 4,000 feet elevation. It is a sacred place to Christians. It was the place Jesus chose for His transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36). The mountain is 1,300 yards long and 450 yards wide. It is surrounded by the remains of a fortress wall built in the 13th century by the Moslems. In 1124 the Franciscans built the Church of the Transfiguration here. There are remains of the older Byzantine church of the 6th century and the 12th century Crusaders' church, and remains of ancient strongholds and monasteries. The view from the top was breathtaking.

The Syrian border was also heavily fenced with the coiled barbed wire above. But there was only one guard and no one else in sight. He was friendly and Vern talked to him in German.

Farther down, near the Lake of Galilee, we visited the ruins of a Byzantine church. It had been built in the 5th century.

The Mount of the Beatitudes was our next stop. It is the traditional site where Jesus gave the Beatitudes (Matthew 5). In 1957 the Franciscans built a church over the Mount with a beautiful view of the lake. This is the "Church of the Beatitudes." We toured the church and then sat on the back step as Dr. Kraft read the Beatitudes to us from the Bible. It was a beautiful and interesting place. We felt the presence of Jesus as we walked where he walked.

Tabgha, traditionally the site where Jesus fed the 5,000, was our next stop. After touring the church built over the old Byzantine church, Dr. Kraft read Matthew 14:13-21. Close by is the Church of Premacy, built over a massive rock. Here Jesus appeared to His disciples and cooked breakfast for them and gave Peter the command to "Feed my sheep" (John 21:9).

### **May 17 Friday.**

In back of our hotel was the beautiful Sea of Galilee. It is 13 miles long, 7 miles wide, 132-157 feet deep, 32 miles around, and 686 feet below sea level. It has been known by several names down through history: Lake of Galilee, Tiberias and Kinneret, which means "harp" in Hebrew. It is shaped like a harp. It has an abundance of fish -- carp, mullet, sardines, catfish, and combfish. The water is sweet and pure. And it is mostly calm.

It was a beautiful morning. After breakfast, we all met in back of our hotel where a boat was waiting to take us across the lake. When we were part way across the boat stopped. Dr. Kraft said, "This is approximately the place where Peter walked on the water. Do we have any volunteers?" (There were none.) Then we read Matthew 14:25-32. When we reached shore

our bus was waiting for us.

We spent quite a lot of time at Capernaum. Capernaum is located 2-1/2 miles from where the Jordan River meets the Sea of Galilee. In ancient times it was a busy city. It was a customs station on the way to Damascus and the home of a high Roman officer. Merchants brought silk and spices from Damascus and took back dried fish and fruit. Capernaum became the center of Jesus' ministry after he was not understood in Nazareth. It is in ruins today, but is very interesting. Much excavating has been done and is still going on. One of the most important finds is the Capernaum synagogue. It was built in the 3rd century over the ruins of a synagogue built by the Centurian whose servant was healed by Jesus. (Luke 7) Some of the stones still standing echoed with Jesus' voice as He taught in the synagogue. The Franciscans uncovered what is believed to be the home of Peter with the remains of the 5th century above it. There were some beautiful tiled floors uncovered. An old olive press interested me. It was used to press the oil from the olives.

We stopped at a place by the Jordan River that is all prepared for baptizing people. There are stairs down the bank to the water and cement ramps out in the water with ropes along the sides to hold on to. The water is deep and swift. Two of our group were baptized here by Dr. Kraft. It is a beautiful place.

We stopped at a crusaders' fort. We looked around and then went to a park at the foot of Mt. Gibow. It was a beautiful place. We ate our lunch there -- pocket sandwiches. They tasted so good. We were hungry.

From there we moved on to Jericho. Jericho lies in the Jordan Valley. It is a lovely tropical place way out in the middle of brown, sun-baked desert. Here they grow beautiful gardens, oranges, bananas, and dates. The present city is on a dome about 80 feet higher than the surrounding land. City after city had been built over the ruins of the previous one. About 1908, excavations were started. More was done in 1952-56. The result of the excavations was the discovery of the earliest levels ever found in any part of the world. Objects found and tested dated back to 7,000 B.C. with the Israelites from Egypt. Joshua destroyed Jericho and put a curse on it. A few generations later it was rebuilt. Elisha sweetened the water at a spring by putting a handful of salt in it. We all got out of the bus and looked at the spring and the water. It is like an artesian well. The water keeps flowing out and is used for irrigation. No water is wasted. The rainfall per year in that area is one or two inches. Water from the Jordan River is also used for irrigation. Israel, with very little rainfall, furnishes southern Europe with most of their citrus fruit.

From Jericho we traveled down the "Old Jericho Road." It is a narrow, unpaved, bumpy, winding road in the hills. It is the same road that Jesus traveled 2,000 years ago. We crossed an old bridge that the Romans built 2,000 years ago. After a few miles we came to the "New Jericho Road," a modern paved road. We passed Arabs living in tents just as they did 6,000 years ago.

We finally arrived in Jerusalem! As we were about to enter the city, our driver stopped and we all got out and walked down the hill into the city. We were soon at our hotel, the Ramada Renaissance, where we would stay for six nights.

Jerusalem stands high on the Judean hills and has been crowned queen of the world's cities for centuries. To the Jews it is a symbol of their past glories and the hope of the future. To the Christians it is the city which saw Jesus die and arise from the dead. It has been the source of faith and peace, the world's most sacred city, a city of terror, war and blood. Jerusalem has been the scene of more wars than any other city of the world. It has been besieged more than 50 times, conquered 36 times and destroyed 10 times. Its origin is lost in antiquity. It is mentioned in the Bible under the name Salem in the time of Abraham. (Genesis 13:11) There are presently 330,000 Jews in Jerusalem and 100,000 Arabs. There are three universities. The wall around the

Old City was built 460 years ago on the foundation of the original wall that was there in the time of Jesus. There are many old olive trees scattered around the city. Some are thought to be 2,000 years old. Olive trees never die.

### **May 18 Saturday.**

Today we visited many places in this beautiful city. There are many more to see. We left the hotel at 8:30 AM. Our first stop was Mt. Scruppus. From there we went to the Mount of Olives. It is located east of Jerusalem, across the Kidron Valley. It is about 300 feet higher than Jerusalem. From there one can see all of the surrounding country. It is sacred to the Jews because some of the old prophets are buried there. It is also sacred to the Christians. Many of the important events of the life of Jesus took place there. Here Jesus ascended into heaven. The present small church built there was a chapel built by the crusaders in the courtyard of the church. The Moslems occupy the site today and have added the present cupola. There are still olive trees there today.

We entered the Old City at the Damascus Gate and went to the Temple Mount. Tradition has identified the Mount as the mount upon which Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac. (Genesis 22:1-22) It was the site of Solomon's magnificent temple. It was destroyed in 587 B.C. and another one was built. Herod enlarged it and this was the one that Jesus knew. The Dome of the Rock, a Moslem shrine, stands on the site. It has stood for 13 centuries. It is very beautiful. It is octagon in shape and the decorations are oriental. The dome is 180 feet tall. We were allowed to go inside, but our shoes and cameras were all left outside. One of the group stayed out with them. Everything inside was very beautiful and priceless.

We left the Temple Mount by way of Stephen's Gate. The large gate had been sealed shut and a smaller one had been cut in it. It has been called "the eye of the needle."

We ate our lunch in a park. We had bagles, cheese and cokes. From there we visited the Upper Room. The building was built by the crusaders in the 12th century. It was built on the site of the original Upper Room. The room was the place where Jesus ate the last supper with His disciples and the place where the Holy Ghost was given. Dr. Kraft read Mark 14:12-16 and we sang some songs.

The Pool of Bethesda was our next stop. In Jesus' time it was a meeting place for invalids and cripples. The water was thought to have healing powers. Here Jesus healed the man crippled for 38 years. (John 5:1-18) The pool was buried for several hundred years. It was found to be 350 feet long and 200 feet wide and 25 feet deep. It was surrounded by porches and divided by another. One pool was used for washing sheep. It is far down and old stairs were found in the excavation.

St. Anne's Church was our next stop. It is built over a place thought to be the home and birthplace of Mary's parents. We sang some songs and listened to the beautiful echo. It was beautiful.

We visited a model of the city of Jerusalem in the time of Jesus. It is an exact copy and is very beautiful and interesting. It is located in the grounds of the Holyland Hotel.

### **May 19 Sunday.**

It was eight o'clock in the morning when we left our hotel and headed for the Shepherds' Field. The Bible does not give an exact location of the fields where the shepherds were the night they saw the star and followed it to the stable where Jesus was born. Ancient tradition has fixed it on a hill about two miles east of Bethlehem. When we arrived in the field, there were two shepherds there with their sheep. We watched them draw water from a well with a bucket and rope, and pour the

water into a trough that was hewn out of rock. We sat on rocks and Dr. Kraft preached a Christmas sermon. Across a canyon we could see Bethlehem.

In Israel there are many beggars. They are all over. Our guide had told us when we arrived not to give to one unless we were prepared to give to all. Children are taught to beg very young. As we were about to leave Shepherds' Field, a tiny little boy no more than three years old held out his tiny, cupped hand to me. I really wanted to give him something very badly.

After leaving Shepherds' Field we were taken to the Church of the Nativity, a Greek Orthodox church in Bethlehem. The outside resembles a medieval fortress and is encircled by three convents. It is built in the shape of a cross and is very large. It was built in the 5th century and is believed to be the oldest church in the world. It is believed to have been built over the stable where Jesus was born. We went down some poorly-lighted stairs to the "stable." The room is 35 feet by 10 feet and is lighted by 48 small lamps. A silver star with the Latin inscription "Here Christ was born" marks the spot where it is thought Christ was born. The holy manger where they laid him lies to the right.

In Hebron we visited another (church) Mosque. It is believed to be the burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their wives. This huge building began as a Jewish temple. The present structure of the Mosque stands over the Cave of Machpela. In the Mosque there are six tombs which are said to stand directly over the graves of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their wives. No one descends down into the caves. It is considered too sacred to walk in. Abraham's, Isaac's and Jacob's tombs are covered with green and gold cloths, and those of Sara, Rebecca, and Lea with red cloths. We could look down a small window to the cave. There is a small light burning all the time.

We drove through the plains of Bersheba, then through hill country covered with rocks. There are no rocks on the plains. It is nice country. This is country God took Abraham to in Genesis 12. The wells are 1200 to 1500 feet deep. The crusaders cut down all the forests, but more have been planted. The government made jobs for the people that were out of work. They were put to work planting trees and paid for their work. The hills are terraced and every little spot that will hold a tree is used. No land is wasted.

We had lunch in the desert country. It is hot and dry. The rainfall here is only four inches. A couple of trees were there close to where we had lunch. We were told they were of the acacia family. They had long, sharp thorns on them. We were told that the cross of thorns that was put on Jesus was made from ones like those. Water for irrigation in that area is brought 140 miles. Israel is 60 percent desert. Yet it is amazing the amount of produce they grow.

We stopped to watch a herd of camels and take pictures. There were baby ones, half-grown ones, and grown ones. They were interesting.

We came into a small valley with high cliffs on both sides. The bus stopped and our guide told us that this was approximately the area where David slew Goliath. (Samuel 17:48-51) He read the verses from the Bible and then told us to get out of the bus and see if we could find the stone that killed Goliath. We all got out and picked up stones.

Farther down we stopped at Bell Caves. They are all bell-shaped and reopen at the top. They were formed about the first century B.C.

Tonight we all went out for dinner. We were taken by bus to a nice restaurant. Our dinner was very different. We had pita bread and lots of little dishes of different kinds of filling to put in the bread, shishkabob, and cooked rice rolled in grape leaves. (grape leaves are not my favorite food.) Tomorrow is a free day.

### **May 20 Monday.**

Today was our "Free Day" to wander on our own, shop, take pictures, rest, or whatever. After

breakfast we picked up our free bus tickets. The early buses were all full until 11 am, so we went to our room and rested. We caught the bus at 11 and got off at the Jaffa Gate. Just inside the gate we saw stairs leading to the top of the wall. Of course there was a charge. Everywhere they had their hands out for our American dollars. We went up to the top and walked along the top. The wall is 40 feet high and one can see all over. We went up and down a few stairs in places. We walked until we came to the stairs leading down to the "Market Place." There are 34 towers and eight gates. The wall was built in its present state by the Turks in 1542.

We went down the stairs to the Market Place. The Market Place is indoors, similar to one of our malls but much, much narrower. There are small shops on both sides and are open in the front. There are so many things for sale. In some shops there are huge pieces of fresh meat hanging. There are all kinds of fresh vegetables, fruit of all kinds, clothing, baskets of various sizes and shapes, pictures, glassware, novelties galore, and much more. The clerks are eager to wait on people and are busy urging people to buy. The place was crowded. In places we had to push our way through. At times there were a few steps to go up. It was all so interesting, and different. For our lunch we bought us each a bagel. Farther down we bought us each a big glass of freshly-made orange juice. Still farther down Bert got me an ice cream and himself a banana. And that was our lunch, not bad. I bought myself a pretty, white cotton blouse and Bert bought some little hand-carved camels. We really enjoyed that place and would like to go again.

We left the Market Place and walked around, and found a little lunch room to have some coffee and pie. We climbed a lot of stairs and visited the Tower of David. There were many interesting things there to see. The day passed so quickly and it was soon time to catch our bus back to the hotel. We had climbed many stairs and walked a lot. But we had enjoyed every minute of it.

### **May 21 Tuesday.**

We left the hotel at 7:30 and headed south for the Dead Sea. We had to descend 4,000 feet. The Dead Sea is 1,300 feet below sea level, the lowest place on earth. It is 17 miles long and 10 miles wide. It is 1,278 feet deep at the north end and 10 feet at the south end. It is called the Dead Sea because there is no life in it. It contains a huge concentration of minerals because it has no outlet. One cannot sink in it.

We traveled south through mountains until we reached the Jordan Valley. The Jordan River empties into the Dead Sea. But there is not a great amount that reaches there. Much is used for irrigation on the way. Where water is available, there are green fields and grapes.

Our first stop was Masada. Masada is a massive rock formation that stands 2.5 miles from the Dead Sea in the Jordan wilderness. The massive rock fortress is 1/4 mile long, 220 yards wide, and 2,000 feet above the level of the Dead Sea. It is cut out of the mountain range by deep gorges which surround the base. In 40 B.C. Herod the Great built himself a great fortress there with a great wall around it, a unique water system with cisterns to store water, storage room for food, and many other buildings. In the year 70 when the Romans took Palestine and Jerusalem, 960 Jews hid out there. It took the Romans many months to build an earth ramp up Masada and break in. When they did, it was no victory. The Jews had all chosen death over slavery, and committed suicide.

We were taken up Masada in cable cars. We could see all over the whole valley. We walked around the top and saw the ruins of the massive fortress. We wondered how those huge stones were moved up there and set in place over 2,000 years ago. We also wondered how two inches of rainfall could supply enough water for all those people. God only knows.

After our visit to Masada we drove to a beach park and ate our box lunch. After lunch some

of our group went in the water and played. One does not swim in the Dead Sea. The strong minerals would damage one's eyes. I did not go in the water. I only put my feet in. The water was warm but the rocks and sand were HOT! They burned my feet. It was hot that day. I lost no time getting my shoes on.

Our next stop was En Gedi. We traveled about ten miles north of Masada. We walked up a little path to some trees and a rock outcropping. There in the hot desert wilderness we found a beautiful little oasis. There was a pretty waterfall tumbling down a cliff and a beautiful pool of cold, clear water in the shade. There were two boys standing under the waterfall cooling off. They left when we arrived. This is the place where David spared Saul's life. (1 Samuel 28:8) His men wanted David to kill Saul when they found him sleeping. But David said he would not kill God's anointed. But David did take a piece of Saul's robe to let him know he, David, had been there. It was so peaceful and cool there that we all hated to leave. But there were many more places to visit.

We moved on to the old Essene settlement of Qumran. Much excavating has been done and is still going on. Much has been learned about the Essene people and there have been many interesting finds. One interesting find was their scriptorium with its benches and tables and two bronze inkstands with dried ink in them! The Essenes were a religious sect. Before the Romans wiped them out, they hurriedly hid their most prized possessions, the scriptures, which they put in jars and hid them in caves in the nearby mountains. There they stayed for 2,000 years. A shepherd boy saw the caves and became curious, and crawled in one. He found the scrolls in jars and sold them in the Market Place for a few coins. Eventually the government acquired possession of them. One scroll is 24 feet long and contains the whole book of Isaiah.

On the way back to our hotel we visited the tomb of Lazarus. We went in and down stairs to the actual tomb.

We went to the Hilton hotel for dinner. Our group had a banquet room to ourselves. It was a very nice place and the dinner was so good. Dr. Kraft spoke and also David, our guide. David is a Christian Jew. He knows the history of his country and also the Bible.

### **May 22 Wednesday.**

This was our last day in Israel. Our first visit was to the Garden Tomb and Golgotha. They are located north of the Damascus Gate. No one knows for sure that it is the exact location. But it is very much like the Bible description of the place. We took turns going into the tomb. The entrance is low and one must stoop. There are two rooms, one where the mourners stood and one where the body was put. The cave is hewn out of rock in the cliff. It is surrounded by a beautiful garden. Golgotha is close by. Then we all sat on benches in the shade. We sang some hymns and Dr. Kraft read John 14 and spoke. Then we had a communion service. The little olive-wood cups were ours to keep. It was a beautiful climax for our visit to the Holy Land.

We left the Garden and drove to the Jaffa Gate and walked through the Jewish section. We saw lots of old ruins that have been excavated. They continue to dig and sift dirt and learn more about the people who lived there in those early times.

We all walked down the the "Wailing Wall." It is a portion of the retaining wall Herod built around the second temple in 20 B.C. During the Byzantine period the Jews were allowed to come once a year and weep over the dispersion of their people and the destruction of their temple. That is how it became known as the Wailing Wall. There is a fence down the middle of the area by the wall. Men go down on one side and women on the other side. I did not learn why. People write little prayers on slips of paper and roll them up and stick them into the cracks of the huge stones of the wall. There were hundreds of visitors there. And there were some religious activities going

on.

We walked along the Via Delorosa, the pathway on which Jesus carried the cross. Each Friday the Franciscan Fathers conduct a ceremony there.

We left the Old City and drove to the Kidron Valley and visited the Pool of Siloam. This pool was built by King Hezekiah as a reservoir at the southern end of the tunnel to receive the water of the Gobon Spring. It was at this pool that Jesus sent the blind man to wash the clay from his eyes. "So he went and washed and came back seeing." (John 9) We visited both ends of Hezekiah's tunnel, King Hezekiah cut the tunnel in solid rock to protect his water supply of the city from invading Assyrians in the year 700 B.C. The "S"-shaped tunnel is 600 yards long. The workmen started at each end and worked toward each other. When they met in the middle they were only off four feet! There is still water there.

We had lunch down town, a sandwich of soft cheese and spinach and a drink. The sandwich was good even though it does not sound good.

In the afternoon we went to the Israel museum. It is called the "Shrine of the Book." This small museum is onion-top shaped. It was designed to resemble the jars the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in. The Essene Community considered themselves as "Sons of Light" and the rest of the world as "Sons of Darkness." It is expressed by the whiteness of the Shrine and the blackness of the wall near the entrance. We could not take our cameras in with us. The scrolls are on display under heavy glass. There were also letters and objects found in the caves and the Qumran excavations.

Some of our group went to the Yad Washem Museum. Much of that was depressing to me. There was so much about the massacre of the Jews. We returned to the hotel tired. We had a great day!

### **May 23 Thursday.**

We had a bad start this morning. It was not funny for us. We were up by 4 AM. We dressed and put our suitcases out in the hall to be picked up, and went down to eat. The breakfast was great, all of them had been. There was always such a great variety of things to choose from: an assortment of fish and fish dishes, boiled eggs, many kinds of cheese and cheese dishes, lots of fresh fruit, toast, rolls, coffee, fresh orange juice, and much more. All of it was good.

After eating we returned to our room to get our carry-on bags. When we returned to the lobby our group was gone! We asked at the desk and were told our bus had left. I was so upset it was all I could do to keep from crying. The clerk was very nice. He said, "not to worry, I fix." He called the tour headquarters there in Jerusalem and had them contact the bus. Then he called a taxi. The taxi took us 35 miles to where the bus was waiting for us. We had not been missed! Someone had counted twice and both times came up with 48, so they left five minutes early. They had better learn to count.

We arrived in Tel Aviv in plenty of time to catch our plane. Our flight arrived in Athens, Greece early. Our tour bus was waiting for us. Our guide was a Greek lady and it was hard for me to understand her. First of all, she took us to the Accropolis. The Accropolis is a rocky hill dominating the center of the city. It is accessible only from the west side. It has always been a fortress and a religious center of the state. The principal cult was that of the goddess Athena. In her honor the temples of the Accropolis were built. The Parthenon was one of these. It stands on one of the highest parts of the Accropolis. It and several others were built in the 5th century B.C. Although partly in ruin, the Parthenon still fills one with awe. It can be seen from any part of the city.

Mars hill, a rocky high place at the western end of the Accropolis, is as far as we walked.

There are 16 steps cut in the rock leading to the top. We all went up to the top. We could see all over the city. It was so beautiful! Dr. Kraft told us that it was here that the apostle Paul stood and preached to the Greeks. (Acts 17:18-24)

After leaving we were taken to the museum. It was nice. There were many interesting things to see. There many very old statues of Greek gods. We bought our dinner in our hotel. Our hotel, the Meridian, was very nice. One of the nicest, I think.

#### **May 24 Friday.**

This morning we left Athens on a three-day cruise of the Greek Islands. Our room was on the Appollo deck. It was very tiny compared to our huge rooms in the hotels. And the bathroom was VERY tiny. It was a beautiful day and we spent the afternoon on deck. The water was so blue and so calm. By late afternoon my stomach began to bother me.

We arrived at the tiny island of Myconis about 6:30. Most of the group went ashore for two hours. My stomach did not feel very good so we did not go. Vern told us that there were no cars on the island and that the street was very narrow. One could almost stretch one's arms out and touch the buildings on each side. I'm sorry I was not up to going ashore. Vern gave me some capsules. I'm sure I will feel better soon.

#### **May 25 Saturday.**

We traveled all night and arrived at Rhodes this morning. Rhodes the largest of the Dodecanese Islands and one of the most enchanting in Greece. The harbor was so beautiful. A tour bus picked us up as we got off the ship and took us around to see many beautiful places. We visited an old stadium that was built during the third century B.C. Then we spent some time at a ceramic factory. We watched as skilled craftsmen made beautiful vases, jugs, plates and things, and painted them. Some of the group bought souvenirs and had them shipped home from there.

The beaches were very pretty. The water was so blue and the sand so white. There were rows and rows of beach chairs with a colorful beach umbrella on each chair. They were so pretty.

After lunch our ship moved on. At dinner we had a section of the dinning room to ourselves and everyone dressed for dinner. The food was so good and the waiters tried so hard to please us. The waiters brought the food to the tables on huge platters and gave each person the amount he wanted. Bert could not eat the sweet deserts so the waiter brought him a little basket of fresh fruit. Each lady was given a nice bag and the men were each given "worry beads." One couple in our group was celebrating their 11th wedding anniversary. The group gave them a plate from the ceramic factory and a cake. The waiter cut and served the cake. It was a great evening.

#### **May 26 Sunday.**

This morning we went ashore on the island of Patnos. We were taken by tour bus to the top of a mountain to a monastery. We toured the monastery. Then we were to go down a lot of stairs to the cave where the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelations. I still felt a little shaky and those stairs looked like too much for me. So I stayed at the top and waited for them. Everyone else went down. Then we returned to the ship.

After lunch we sat in the theater for church. We sang some hymns, prayed, had brief testimonies, and Dr. Kraft read from the Bible and gave a brief sermon. It was nice.

Our ship arrived in Turkey and we all went ashore. A tour bus was waiting for us. We were taken up through mountains and into a valley to the ruins of the old city of Ephesus. The ancient city dates back to 2,000 years B.C. Our bus let us out at one end and picked us up at the other end. We walked down the marble street. Our guide told us names of each building and what it was

used for. Much of it I could not understand. Many statues and parts of buildings are still standing. It was all interesting. The huge amphitheater (iditerium) could seat 24,000 people. It was in good condition. We did not walk up the hill to it. It was very hot that day. But we could see it.

Our bus was waiting for us when we reached the parking area. There were several people selling things. They tried very hard to get us to buy their merchandise. Things were cheap. They wanted our American dollars. Many were hard to get rid of.

Tonight is our last night on the ship. We will be back in Athens in the morning. It has been a beautiful cruise. We will never forget it.

### **May 27 Monday.**

We arrived in Athens early. A tour bus picked us up and took us to see some of the surrounding area. We had lunch in a little Greek restaurant in the country. We had eggplant with eggs in it. It was good, but too greasy for me. There was also goat cheese, bread, and baked lamb.

We visited the Corinthian Canal. We walked out on a bridge and looked way down at the water. It looked far smaller than it is. It was built over a period of eleven years, 1882-1893. It is 6,939 yards long, 75.6 yards wide, and 23.3 yards deep. The distance around is shortened by 200 miles. We saw lots of pretty country and then visited a museum. There we saw many statues of Greek gods and many relics of days gone by. We learned much about the country.

### **May 28 Tuesday.**

On our way to the airport this morning we saw the Changing of the Guard. The bus stopped so we could watch. It was very nice.

Our plane took us to Copenhagen, Denmark. A tour bus was waiting for us. It is a beautiful city with many old and beautiful buildings. Most of the buildings are very old and are made of bricks. Many have statues on the rooftops. Some are statues and many are horses and riders. There are many parks with trees and flowers and fountains. The river runs through the city. Both sides were lined with pretty fishing boats and pleasure boats. We could look far across the water and see Sweden. We saw the Changing of the Guard at the Queen's palace. But there was only one guard. During the changing there were three. It was nice.

When the tour was over we were taken to our hotel. We put our things in our room and walked a few blocks to the Trivoli Gardens. It was a big, beautiful park. There were huge beds of tulips all in bloom. Each bed was a different color. Oh, they were so pretty! There were other flowers too, and big trees and lawn. There was an amusement section and places where fast foods were sold. We bought some sandwiches and sat on a bench and ate. The time passed quickly and it was time to return to the hotel. We wanted to get back to the hotel before it got dark. We did not want to get lost.

### **May 29 Wednesday.**

We were up at six, ate, and were on our way to the airport by nine. After checking in we had a very long wait. We did not leave until 1:30. Their time is nine hours ahead of ours. While waiting for our plane a lady and her daughter told me they and three others of our group had gone across over to Sweden the night before. They were taken over in a small boat and it took 45 minutes. They walked around a little and stopped to get something to eat. But their American money and travelers checks were refused. That was the only place on the whole trip that American money had been refused. Between them they dug up enough Danish money to pay for their food. I felt badly that I had missed a chance to visit Sweden. I would have liked to have

gone. My grandmother (Dad's mother) was born there.

When we arrived in Los Angeles we had another long wait for our plane to San Jose. Vern's daughter and son-in-law were there with their motor home to pick us up. We did not go right home. Vern and Mildred had to stop and see their first great grand child. She was born while we were gone. After we saw the baby we stopped and had some lunch. We arrived home at 9:30 PM, very tired, but with loads of happy memories. We had walked where Jesus had walked!

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