

The tour was worth a lot more money than I am going to pay for it. A monetary ^{value} can not be placed on the friendship of the people who went on the tour. Nine persons on the tour were from Hahn, ~~and the rest~~ ~~and~~ ~~were~~ two ~~were previously~~ ~~previously~~ had just recently moved from Hahn. Most of the people from Hahn were my ~~best~~ friends whom I knew well before the tour. Among those attending ^{from the Church} were: Don Dixon (Pastor), the ~~Lasaseters~~ ^{Lasett} Laseter's, the Cartee's, Juan Harrison, ^{and} John Hale (whose mother came over from the states to go on the tour). Altogether 31 were on the tour. We had a German tour ^{guide who} ~~guide~~ ~~who~~ did an outstanding job. Any problem we had she took care of it for us if it was in her power to do so. She helped in the small things that ~~make~~ the tour more pleasant, for instance we didn't have to ~~g~~ have our suitcases searched for customs a single time. The only time ~~they~~ our ~~luggage~~ bags were searched was for security measures. ~~I~~ The overall high point of the trip for me was the 2 day bus tour of Israel. I liked northern Israel, especially around the Jordan river and the Sea of Galilee. Jerusalem was a big let down for me; It was so commercialized and also there ~~se~~ were too many tourists. The fact that two ~~places~~ ~~existed~~ where Jesus was supposed to have died and ^{been} buried did not impress me at all. I have no desire to go back to Jerusalem or Bethlehem, however I would like very much to go back to Israel and spend more time around the Sea of Galilee.

We met at Frankfurt on Saturday morning and checked in for the flight to Beirut, Lebanon. ~~We flew on~~ It was nice and warm when we arrived; ~~and~~ in the clear weather ^{on} ~~you~~ could see lights on the mountains on 3 sides of the airport. ~~x~~ The view was breathtaking after leaving foggy ~~xx~~ snowy Germany. It had ~~x~~ snowed the previous day ~~in xxx~~ at Hahn, but it did not stick on the ground. They had a swimming pool at the hotel ~~x~~ so went swimming that night and the next night. The weather was too cool for the natives to swim, but it felt good to us. The next morning we took a bus over the mountains to the Bekaa valley. On top of the mountains we stopped and we could see Mount ^{Hermon} Hermon in the haze. The mountains we were crossing did not have ~~xx~~ any trees on them and they were perfectly bare. The guide stopped the bus and let us take a picture of a cedar tree which was the only one in the area. He was very proud of that tree. Lebanon was supposed to be known for its cedar trees. After crossing the mountains we visited Baalbek and Roman temples. The Romans were good engineers when they built buildings. On the way to

in Beirut

back we passed some 2-story chicken houses which I thought was unique. I think that would be a good idea for the people who raise chickens in Arkansas. That evening we returned to the hotel dinner and overnight. The next day we drove up the coast to Byblos; Byblos is supposed to be the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world. Driving along the coast it was ^{our} the first good chance to see the Mediterranean Sea. The Sea is a beautiful green close to shore; from the air, ^{one can see the} the Sea becomes a deep blue as it gets further from shore. We returned ^{in the afternoon} to ~~xx~~ I checked out of our Hotel for the flight to Cairo Egypt.

It was dark when arrived ~~in~~ at the Cairo airport. I did not like the airport~~xxxxxx~~; the terminal building was an old building and you felt very uncomfortable inside. Seven of us (including me) did not have Visas. We had to wait for over an hour before our tour guide came out with the visas~~xx~~. The reason it took so long was that another ~~x~~ tour group was on the same plane we were on and ^{all} ~~none of the 40 had needed~~ got ahead of our guide; we had ~~visas~~ to wait until 40 visas were written up. They also didn't want to give our guide a visa~~x~~ because ~~she~~ he was German. After we finally left the airport, I noticed that the entire airport had strands of barbwire around it. We arrived at the Cairo Sheraton and it is the nicest hotel I have ever stayed in. My room was on the 10th floor out of 29. On one side of the Hotel you had a view of the Nile river; on the other side you could see the pyramids. I think one reason they chose such a nice hotel is because over half the tour felt sick while we were in Cairo. We had been gone about 3 days and the change in our bodies finally began to caught up with us. I had diarrhea, however I was luckier than several others because mine was controllable. The next morning we took a bus to the pyramids which are on the edge of Cairo instead of out in the middle of the desert. We got to ride a camel up hill the Great Pyramid. It was just like riding a tall horse. The thing I didn't like were all the beggar's. My camel driver kept wanting me to give him~~x~~ some money; we were told everything was paid for in the price of the tour. We had a picture taken of our group on camels in ~~x~~ front of the Sphinx. I went inside one ~~xx~~ of the pyramids which was nice; now I can say I have been inside the pyramids. It was very hot in Egypt, however the humidity was low. ~~x~~ Next we visited the Egyptian Museum with its Royal Mummies. However a few of the important treasures were in the museum in ~~Rome~~ Rome or someplace else. After lunch the ~~tour~~ group went on a tour of Cairo and several Mosque; I did not go because

I did not feel well. That night we had dress up to eat dinner in the hotel. I did not bring my suit and so I had to at least wear a tie. The only tie I had was a bright blue tie I had bought in Lebanon. Everybody in the tour made a comment on the tie, and then when we set down to eat the waiters even had something to say about my tie. The next morning we took a short boat ride down the Nile before we had to go to the airport. Since we left in the daytime, we noticed soldiers in trenches all around the airport. One can not fly direct from Egypt to Israel; we had to change planes in Nicosia.

Nicosia was the first place we had to open our suitcases and let them search our bags. We were not allowed to have any hand luggage and had to check all our bags through. We could not even keep our cameras with us. We landed at Tel Aviv and just walked and ~~were~~ were told to keep our seats. They came through the plane and picked John and another guy and take them outside and frisk^{ed} them and search^{ed} them before letting them get on the bus with the rest of us for the ride to the terminal. In the terminal a lady interviewed us and asked us about the security measures taken at Nicosia. She was taking a survey and wanted to know our opinion of the security measures we were subject too. We were at the terminal only a short time. We took a bus to the hotel in Tel Aviv where we spent the night. The hotel was a big let down after the one in Cairo. The next morning we set out on a 2-day bus tour of northern Israel. ~~We~~ We saw quite a few Army personal on the streets. Male's are drafted for 3 years and female's are drafted for 21 months if they are not married when they reach the age of 18. A new recruit receives about 22\$ a month base pay, so they do a lot of hitchhiking and the public usually gives them a ride. We drove along the coast and stopped in Caesarea. Then we drove on ~~the~~ to Haifa for lunch. Haifa is a big sea-port, and had a good view from the mountains right near the waters edge. The Mediterranean Sea is a real pretty deep blue in the distance. We then drove past Mt Gamal on our way to Safad which ~~is~~ means we turned away from the Mediterranean Sea. In Safad the buildings had a lot of holes in them from a war where they tried to take over the town. We headed north to a Kibbutz just north of Kiriyat Shmona. ~~Kiriyat-Shmona~~ The day before we were there is the town where the 3 bomb letters were mailed to President Nixon and two others. The letters were found the day before we arrived. Later I found out an ~~Ameri~~ American tourist was caught trying to cross the Lebanon border and charged with the ^{incident} mailing. He was caught the same night we were there. The area we were in has enemy territory on three sides. We stayed in Kibbutz ~~E~~ Kfar Giladi. A Kibbutz

It is a communistic type of society. Some are religious, but most are non-religious as is the one^{we} stayed at. They are sort of like a big family in which they try to be ~~self-sufficient~~ self-supporting. They believe everyone is equal and has the same privileges. ~~and they do not use money.~~ The members do not use money. They do a job and their needs are taken care of. Several Kibbutz are scattered across the country^{side} in ~~the~~ Israel. The next morning we traveled to one of the three sources of the Jordan River. We could drink ~~from~~ from the water where it came out of a cave in the mountain. I found out an interesting fact as to one of the reasons for the 6-day war. Lebanon was trying to dig a tunnel to the Mediterranean Sea and ~~divert~~ two of the three sources of the Jordan River. We drove past several mine fields left from the 6-day war that still have been cleared. If Lebanon had ~~succeeded~~ completed the project Israel would have gone to war sooner. If you have been reading the papers lately you ~~will~~ have noticed that there are fierce battles taking place in the Golan Heights which is the same area that we were in. We^{we} next traveled south towards Capernaum. ~~It was~~ I found out that the Sea of Galilee is also below sea level. The Sea of Galilee is^a very beautiful small lake. It is smaller than I had realized; the reason~~s~~ storms can create 10' waves on the lake is because it is below sea level and the wind gets caught in the valley with no place to go. We visited a chapel on the Mt. of Beatitudes at the edge of the Sea of Galilee. This was supposed to be the spot Christ taught the sermon on the Mt. It is easy now ~~x~~ for me to picture in my mind how Christ road ~~across~~ the sea on a boat to get away from the crowd and the crowd could fairly ~~easily~~ ^{easily} have walked to the other side where he landed. The Sea of Galilee was so pretty; and the water looked so clean and inviting. We could see the valley where Christ probably came through when walked up from the south to the Mt. of Beatitudes. We then drove ^{along} around the edge of the Sea to Tiberias where we ate lunch. at a ~~restaurant~~ restaurant on the edge of the Sea. We ~~xxx~~ had St Peter's fish for the main course; ~~in Israel~~ ^{although} ~~they cook~~ The fish was cooked, but ~~that was all~~; we had to cut off the head and tail and scale the fish before we could eat it. Some of the ladies at my table did not ~~like~~ like the ^{fish} eyes staring at them while they ate their fish. The fish was good when I finally did get to eat some of it. After dinner we threw bread to the fish that were swimming ~~xxx~~ around in schools near the dock. The water was nice and clear so that we could see scores of small fish swimming around.

After lunch we drove down the where the Jourdon River leaves the Sea of Galilee. I had always thought that the Jordon Fiver was dirty and ~~peu-~~ polluted; however at this spot the river was nice and clean looking. Next we headed toward ~~Nazareth~~ Nazareth on our way to Jerusalem.

We ~~didn't not spend~~ spent very little time in Nazareth. One high point of the trip was when we stopped by Jacob's well; ~~and then~~ Don read from the ~~account of Jacob's well, what happened~~ Don read from the Bible the account of what happened at Jacob's well. It ^{is} a unique experience to be able to look out the window and see the exact spot that is being discussed in the Bible and what went on thousand⁸s of years ago. It was dark by the time ~~we~~ we arrived in Jerusalem. Our Hotel was located about three ~~bel~~¹ ~~book~~ blocks from the old city of Jerusalem. The next morning we departed on a walking tour of the old city. We entered at St. Stephen's gate and visited the Church of St. Anne. The Church building was pretty, but I

was beginning to get tired of going inside every Church we came to.

We next walked to the Dome of the Rock which is a Masque. It is supposed to be impressive; however, on the inside was ^{what looked like to me} just a plain ordinary big dusty rock. The dome ~~is~~ ^{is} supposed to be ^{over} the site of the original Temple of Jerusalem. Some people say that ^{according to prophecy} ~~that~~ is the spot where the Temple is going to be rebuilt before the 2nd coming of Christ. Actual construction has already started on the new Temple; it is being built prefab in New York and will be flown to Israel. About 2 years ago someone tried to bomb the dome and so a guard searched our ~~bag~~ handbags at the door before we could enter the Masque. This struck me ~~as if was trying to defy God~~ ^{man} that man was trying to make a feeble effort to stop God from doing what He has said He would. do. Maybe they are ~~x~~ just making sure that the dome is not destroyed until God is read for it to be removed. We visited another Masque before going over to the Wailing Wall. Since it was Saturday the sabbath we were not allowed to take any pictures of the wall. The jews do not want any pictures taking while one is praying. We walked up to the wall, and ~~then we would~~ could see a lot of ~~xx~~ paper or notes stuck in the wall; these were ~~xxxx~~ personal messages to God. Next, we walked down the 'via dolorosa' ~~or~~ (the 'way of the Cross') The via dolorosa is supposedly the path that Jesus walked the day ~~he was~~ ^{of His} ~~crucifixion~~ ^{crucifixion} hung on the Cross. Fourteen stations or stops are marked along the way where Jesus stopped to rest or for some other reason. One of the stations was supposed to be where Jesus was tried by Pilot; after we crowded into ~~the~~ a small room, we were told we can now say we walked on the exact spot Jesus walked. ^{9th} One fallacy kept popping into my mind: ~~The fact the~~ the present old city of Jerusalem is ~~xxx~~ about 50 feet above the level of ~~the~~ Jerusaem ~~Jesus~~ during the time of ~~Jesus~~ ^{Christ}.

We were constantly plagued by you boys trying to sell slides of the 14-stations-of-Christ Via dolorsa ^{along with} and various and asundry other "souvernies". The streets were ~~small and~~ crowded and narrow with ~~a lot of~~ numerous small shops on either side, ~~if~~ we were told to safeguard our wallets to preclude them being stolen by the scores of beggars and pickpockets in the area. I was particularly disillusioned with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; The Russian Orthadox claim this spot is the tomb of Jesus. After touring the majestic Church we entered a spacious room with a myriad of candles. In the center of the room stood a large rock. Inside this rock is supposed to be the tomb of Jesus. We stood in line and had the oppertunity to go ~~inside~~ and lay our hands on the spot where Jesus laid for 3 days. Of course we were expected to ~~pay an offering to~~ ^{donate to} the priest who was standing ^{inside} ~~by~~ the enterence with an offering plate in his hand. ~~After~~ leaving the Church we finally exited through the Jaffa gate. After lunch, we drove to Bethlehem and again stoppped in front of another famous Church. ~~Since this Church was not quite as big as the last~~ The grand tour of this Church did not take ~~xx~~ ^{exceedingly} long and soon we were lead down into the cellar. We entered a fairly small room ^{with a} ~~and it~~ ~~xxxx~~ ~~star on the floor xxxx near one end.~~ The ^{star} ~~ix~~ represents the birthplace of Christ Jesus ~~xxxx~~. The ^{manager} ~~is~~ is in the museum at Rome. On the floor across from the star were three sets of godl ornaments to represent the gifts of the 3 wisemen. Bethlehem was a big disappointment to me and several others on the tour.

~~The next morning,~~ ^{Then} we drove through the Jewish Orthodox Quarter of New Jerusaleem. We visited the Hadassah Medical Center which is a hospital with famous stainglass windows in the Chapel. We stopped at the Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea Scrobls are kept. We had to take their word for ~~ix~~ what they said because ~~none~~ ~~of us could read them.~~ they were not written in English. Next, we visited the Room of the Last Supper. It was ^{just} an empty room on the second ffloor of an old building. After lunch, ~~we drove to Jericho via Bethany.~~ In Bethany we ~~visited another Church built over the place where Mary and Martha supposadaly lived.~~ It look like another cave to ^{me} and I was getting tired of looking into caves. We ~~visited~~ we visited the tomb of ~~xxx~~ Lazarus. A steep narrow passage way led down to what looked like a cave at the bottom. Of course an~~x~~ old lady was standing at the entrance with her hand out. ~~Nexxx~~ We drove to Jericho via Bethany. In Bethany we visited another hurch built over the place where Mary & Martha ~~xxxxxxx~~ were supposed to have lived.

On Sunday Morning we drove to the Garden of Gethsemane where Don gave a short devotional.

Returning from ~~Betha~~ Bethlehem we visited the Mt of Olives.