



2019 EXPERIENCE ISRAEL TOUR

Study Guide 7b: Caesarea Philippi

Historical background: Caesarea Philippi was in the northern part of the land of Israel, about 4 miles east of Tel Dan. It is near the base of Mt. Hermon and is the location of one of the largest springs feeding the Jordan River, making this area lush and green.

In 20 BC Herod the Great controlled the territory and built a temple dedicated to Caesar Augustus. Philip, Herod's son, took over after his father's death and renamed it Caesarea Philippi after Tiberius Caesar and himself. Beginning in the 3rd century BC, sacrifices were cast into the large cave found here as offerings to the god Pan, the half-man half-goat god of fright. This dark area was considered the gates of hell. Today it is known as Banyas. Caesarea Philippi is about 30 miles north of the Galilee area. Christ brought his disciples here before He made His way south to Jerusalem, and ultimately to the cross.

Bible Application: Read [Matthew 16:13-28](#). This passage is very powerful. Jesus brought his disciples to Caesarea Philippi, the place known as the gates of hell. Here Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and Jesus said,

¹⁸ "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Not only did Jesus inform His disciples that he must suffer, be killed, then raised on the third day, but also that the gates of hell would not prevail against the church He was to build on the rock. What an object lesson! Soon after, Jesus made his journey from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem, where He would be crucified. Right here, He delivered the Gospel message of hope and eternal life and promised to build His church. Jesus would be crucified, and the church would begin, never to be defeated by the gates of hell!

Take time to watch this [video](#).

Thanksgiving and Praise: As we stand on this rock, before the gates of hell in Caesarea Philippi, let's remember that we are the church. Jesus Christ, the ROCK, stood right here and proclaimed His church. Then He promised the gates of hell will not prevail! Wow! We must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus, for He gave us the keys of the kingdom of heaven (our hope). He tells us to always be ready to share the hope that is in us ([1 Peter 3:15](#)). What courage this gives us to do that!

Digging Deeper:

[Caesarea Philippi](#)

[Northern Cities and Their Pagan History](#)

Keep looking for blessings!