

# 2019 EXPERIENCE ISRAEL TOUR

## Study Guide for 8e: Masada



**Historical background:** Masada is a fortified fortress built atop a mesa at 1300 ft. above the Dead Sea. Herod the Great designed Masada to be a fortified stronghold and it was the last stronghold to stand before the Romans conquered it. The plateau on top of the mountain is 20 acres in size. Herod's luxurious palace (pictured above), is carved into the northern face of the mesa. On the western side are the remains of his ceremonial palace and administrative center. Just wait until you see the bathhouse and hot room engineered by Herod! The floor (pictured below) was suspended by pillars, and hot air created from a furnace circulated under the floor and through clay pipes in the walls. It is amazing to see the fortress Herod created, but more importantly, though, is to understand the Jewish history that took place here at Masada about 70 years after Herod's death. A few years before the Romans destroyed the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, a group of Jewish rebels fled to Masada and overcame the Roman garrison there. Others joined them after the Roman destruction, but ultimately, in 73 AD, the Romans built a siege ramp and invaded the fortress. When they breached the fortress, however, the Jewish rebels were dead, having committed mass suicide rather than go into Roman captivity. Jews were (for the most part) totally driven from their land at that point.



**Bible Application:** Because Israel did not recognize Christ as their Messiah, the destruction of the Temple and Jewish life as they knew it was inevitable. Christ foretold this in [Luke 19:41-44](#).

1. As you read in verse 41, Jesus drew near and saw the city of \_\_\_\_\_ and he \_\_\_\_\_ over it.
2. He said in verse 42, "Would that you, even you, had known **on this day** the things that make for peace? But now they are \_\_\_\_\_ from your eyes."
3. In verse 42, Jesus seemed to pause when He said, "Would that you, (pause) even you, (pause)...," perhaps revealing the deep emotion he felt as He spoke. He was burdened for His people.
4. Re-read Luke 19:41-44. Why do you think Jesus wept over Jerusalem?
5. What do you think Jesus meant (in verse 44) when He said, "... because you did not know the time of your visitation?"
6. Jesus had purpose in coming to His own. According to [Matthew 20:28](#) and [John 18:37](#), what was His purpose(s)?

7. You might be saying, what does this have to do with **Masada**? Jerusalem was destroyed as Jesus had prophesied in [Luke 19:41-44](#), prompting about 960 Jewish zealots to barricade themselves on **Masada**. Ultimately, though, not even the mighty fortress could save them. Only the Savior they denied could do so. Without hope and determined to avoid Roman captivity, the Jews committed mass suicide.
8. Masada was the last stronghold to be destroyed and, though God promised the land to Abraham and his descendants, the Jews were driven out. But the land still belonged to them and, in 1948, Israel was reborn and Jews have returned (and continue to return) to the land God promised them.
9. We are witnessing the return of Jews to the land God promised them in [Genesis 15:18](#). 2,000 years before Jesus came, God made a covenant with Abraham. Write out the promise made in verse 18, and check out the map to get a visual of the promised land.

**Thanksgiving and Praise:** Thank you God for the opportunity we will have to visit Masada and remember the time in history when your people gave up their lives so that they would not have to be slaves again. They didn't recognize the visit from the Prince of Peace prophesied in [Isaiah 9:6](#). Your sorrow and tears over Jerusalem and your people are a great reminder of how much You love us.

### Digging Deeper:

Read more about [Masada, the Jews Final Stand](#).

Enjoy this 17-minute video about [Masada](#).

**Keep looking for blessings!**

