

Tanja Shoshani

# Israel - Mosaic and Crossroads

Exploring the Land of the Bible within the Context of Modern Israel



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# Introduction

Israel can be described in many ways as a mosaic. In a mosaic, each piece is a complete element in itself, yet an integral part of a larger whole. Many historical mosaics have indeed been discovered in Israel. In a broader sense, the people who have arrived in the country from all over the world form their own living mosaic as parts of one nation. Similarly, the countless layers of history each contribute their own distinct pieces to the mosaic of Israel's past and present.

The purpose of this book is to offer a perspective and understanding of both the horizontal and vertical mosaic that is modern Israel, presented in the form of a travel book. Biblical history weaves through the entire narrative, alongside the current-day context.

In a mosaic, a single piece may go unnoticed—until it is missing. Likewise, Israel's history and present reality are complex, rich, and multifaceted. This led to the central question of how to define a perspective and scope—otherwise, the book could have become endless (and the target was to stay within one hundred pages). Many themes remain beyond the scope of this work. The aim here is to explore selected events and geographical locations in Israel that are connected to the biblical narratives and to examine how they manifest in the contemporary landscape. These places point to the past—but they are also part of Israel's living present.

This journey takes us through the most significant cities and regions of Israel, places that are familiar from both the Old and New Testaments. Often, a modern Israeli city stands beside or atop an ancient one—frequently even sharing the same biblical name. Some locations today are archaeological ruins, tel hills layered with remnants of human life and history from different eras, telling their stories through the language of archaeology.

This book has been a work in progress for many years. I have studied the land and its cultures deeply. I hold a master's degree in Semitic languages and cultures and have also pursued biblical studies in Israel as a postgraduate student at Bar-Ilan University. I received a grant from the Finnish Association of Non-Fiction Writers in 2018 to complete Finnish book work and this is translation of it (inc. some additions and corrections). I also took part in Israel's official tour guide training course, which included educational field trips across the country throughout the year.

The book includes photographs for illustration. It is recommended to follow along with a separate map.

Welcome on a journey of discovery to the land of the Bible and the homeland of Jesus!

Tanja Shoshani

M.A. (Semitic Studies), M.Th., Licenced Israeli Tour Guide

Israel - Mosaic and Crossroads is a richly layered travel companion that explores the biblical and historical landscape of Israel in the context of the modern state. From ancient Jerusalem and the context of the Old Testament in the footsteps of the Patriarchs, to modern Tel Aviv - Jaffa, and then to the Galilee in the context of the New Testament and the time of Jesus, the book journeys through key locations, offering geographical, archaeological, and theological insights.

Biblical narratives are woven into contemporary realities, inviting readers to discover how past and present intersect in this unique land. Illustrated with photographs, the book can be used by travelers on-site, but also serves as a stand-alone journey through time and place for readers at home. It is ideal for study groups, travelers, and anyone seeking a deeper understanding of Israel's history and significance.

