"PASTOR CHARLES D. EATMAN
LEADS PILGRIMAGE TO EGYPT AND HOLY LAND"

The Mount Pleasant Baptist Church family left Kennedy Airport aboard a 747 Egypt Air jet on Sunday, July 14, 1985.

Arriving in Cairo, Egypt was quite an experience. Cairo is dense, loud, and dirty, but it is also one of the most intriguing cities.Countless traffic jams, leaking sewage pipes and construction sites reveal the frenetic pace of Cairo's modernization over the past thirty years. Cars and buses hurl themselves recklessly down avenues, threatening life and limbs, while pedestrians swell the sidewalks and try desperately to cross the streets.

The tour guide was knowledgeable as we were taken to the Egyptian Museum which houses fascinating treasures. The collection that is the most important is the tomb of Tut-Ankk-Amon, the famous coffins and funerals masks, as well as a remarkable collection of jewelry.

The Citadel—dominating Islamic Cairo, the folty citadel was built in 1778 B.C. The interior is very dramatic, when the large chandelier and tiny lanterns are lit.

Giza—the home of the pyramids. The Pyramid of Cheops is the largest of the pyramids. We were determined to crawl through the narrow passageway which leads to the king's chamber. We did not complete the climb due to the heat and foul odour, but it was an experience.

Riding a camel at the pyramid site is also a must. Oh what fun! The famed Sphinx hewn almost entirely from a solid piece of rock has a serene and detached look.

We traveled to Upper Egypt to Luxor by overnight sleeper train. Luxor is the site of many impressive monuments. The temples of Karnak and Luxor and overwhelming, towering masses supported by forests of gigantic columns.

We crossed the Nile by boat to the west bank where famous tombs are chiseled deep into limestone. The inside of these

Pastor Charles D. Eatman

tombs are so magnificent and almost beyond description.

The many wonders we saw will long be marked in our minds.

Egyptian cities and communities are alive with bazaars selling all types of merchandise. The fun and joy we had trying out our skills to "haggle," for the best possible price.

This trip proved with faith and prayer all things are possible.

The Holy Land

The Holy Land will remain an outstanding event in the life of those who made the pilgrimage.

We landed at the Tel Aviv airport and met our tour guide who was most helpful and knowledgeable in explaining the rich history of this most beautiful country. We traveled through the Holy Land on a very comfortable, air conditioned bus with an expert driver.

The trip through the countryside of Jaffa gave us a magnificent view of the land and the plentiful produce, especially the Jaffa oranges. Traveling north we arrived in the city of Caesarea. The ruins of Caesarea consist of an assortment of remains from various historical periods. The remains include a Roman theatre, Byzantine mosaics, aqueducts and the crusader city.

Caesarea became the capital of the Roman province of Judea in 6 B.C. The Roman procurator of Caesaria from 36 B.C. to 26 B.C. was Pontius Pilate, who ordered the crucifixion of Jesus.

Nazareth—our next biblical site is a city of great churches built to commemorate Christ's childhood. It was the place chosen by God for the annunciation of the birth of His son. Here Jesus grew to manhood. The Church of Annunciation is built on the site of Mary's hosue where the Archangel Gabriel appeared before Mary to announce the birth of Christ. The church's huge bronze doors depict the life of Jesus.

Sea of Galilee—we sailed the Sea of Galilee with its calm water to the ancient town of Capernaum. This is where Jesus passed most of his public life, gave most of his teachings, and worked most of his miracles. On the shores of Galilee Jesus called Peter, Andrew and James (Matt. 4:18-20) to be his apostles. Here Jesus healed a leper (Matt. 8:1-8), spoke to the multitudes from Peter's boat (Mark 3:7-12), commanded the violent storm to be still (Matt. 8:23-27), and walked on the stormy water (Matt. 14:16-21).

Tabgha—the Church of the Primacy marks the spot where Jesus commissioned Peter "Feed my Sheep" (John 21:9). This is the site where Jesus fed the 5,000. The steep surrounding hills of the Sea of Galilee and one which is so memorable is the Mont of Beatitudes, overlooking the sea, field and town. This is where Jesus spoke the words: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3), most serene and beautiful of sanctuaries in the Holy Land. This was the perfect setting for our short service as each perosn reflected the meaning of this most beautiful scripture.

Jordan Valley Park—the Jordan River flows into the Sea of Galilee and there lies Jordan Valley Park, a lovely spot with watermills and greenery. This is the beautiful setting where pastor Eatman baptized our group. This was a very touching and inspirational Baptizing service in the River Jordan. This blessed event will never be forgotten.

Jericho—is known for its tumbling wall (Joshua 2:6). This town is green with water flowing in ditches alongside its streets. The waste lands on the outskirts of the town are the abandoned refugee camps which stand as a reminder of the many battles fought in Israel during the 20th century.

Jerusalem—the most important of the historical and religious sites in the Holy Land are located within the walls of the Old City, which is divided into four quadrants: the Christian, Muslim, Armenian and Jewish quarters.

On a hill in the southeast of the Old City the Temple Mount is a holy place for Christians, Jews and Muslims. The Mount is Mount Moriah, on which God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son as a test of faith (Gen. 22:2).

Two grand mosques dominate the Temple Mount: Israel's silver-domed al-Aqua Mosque, and the magnificent Dome of the Rock. The western wall is part of the Temple Mount built abot 20 B.C.—it is today the "Wailing Wall," which we visited on the Jewish sabbath. The prayer areas for men and women are separated by a screen, and we watched as they prayed and wailed.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre marks the traditional site of Jesus' crucifixion at Golgotha, and of his burial and resurrection. The Garden Tomb is the site of Golgotha, where Christ was crucified, where we saw the tomb and the skull-like look of the hill on which it is built. We enjoyed the oasis like the garden around the tomb. The courtesty of the international staff was very much appreciated.

The bone-dry slopes of the Mount of Olives, dotted with churches marking the sites of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, His teaching, His agony and betrayal in Gethsemane and His Ascension to heaven.

Bethlehem—the pale white town of Bethlehem is both the most beautiful and the most sacred place of the West Bank of Israel. The Birth of Jesus has made Bethlehem a destination for all religious pilgrimages. The Church of the Nativity is the oldest church still in use in the world. To enter the church we had to bend over and step through the narrow "Door of Humility."

Grotto of the Nativity—the site of the manger where Jesus was born is marked by a star bearing the inscription "Here Jesus Christ was Born of the Virgin Mary" in Latin.

Tracing the steps of Jesus has proven for all our group to have been a most rewarding Christian experience, and one which will stand out in our minds for the rest of our lives. We can only praise the Lord for being afforded this blessed opportunity.