



## NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON ETHIOPIAN JEWRY

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# Young Leadership

## MISSION TO ETHIOPIA AND ISRAEL AUGUST 15-21, 2009

### Itinerary components:

*All components subject to change.*

## ETHIOPIA

### GONDAR

- **Distributing and installing anti-malaria mosquito nets in Jewish homes (mud huts).**
  - *Over the past year and a half, \$5,445 was raised for this project by two American Bar Mitzvah boys. At \$5 per net, that's 1,089 nets that will help prevent malaria in Beta Israel children!*
- **Painting educational images in the new NACOEJ Beta Israel Community Primary School, in preparation for the new school year.**
  - *Paint the walls with the Hebrew and English alphabets, maps of Israel and Ethiopia, images of Jewish holidays, Hebrew vocabulary, and more!*
- **Visit "Abantoniynos" Jewish children's cemetery**
  - *This cemetery used to be reserved for the Beta Israel children. It is now used for the whole Beta Israel community, but unfortunately, many of the new graves still belong to children*
- **Visit Ethiopian Jewish mud-hut homes**
  - *Observe and learn survival techniques of Beta Israel families.*
- **Traditional Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony at Goha Hotel**
  - *The three-cup coffee ceremony. All caffeinated. See how "buna" has been made and served ritually for centuries in Ethiopia.*
- **Visit Beta Israel Adult Education Program**
  - *Observe the all-oral Adult Jewish Learning Program, specially designed for this community under the auspices of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel*
  - *Discuss the incredible new adult literacy program!*
  - *Learn why it is essential for adults on their way to Israel to learn to read Amharic.*
- **Tour the Beta Israel Compound with Getu Zemene, the heroic leader of the Beta Israel community**
  - *View the synagogue, mikveh, classrooms, and former Feeding Center for Children Under Age Six and Pregnant and Nursing Mothers, all housed in the compound.*
- **Visit the SSEJ Beta Israel Metal Workers and Weavers Factory**
  - *Observe traditional weaving on pit looms, and metal work, which provide income to some community members. See a tallis made right in Gondar!*
- **Ethiopian traditional serenade and dancing night spot in town**
  - *Here's what they'll do: Entertainers, with a familial dynasty of traditional singing poetry, will serenade you with verses made up about you, and teach you a traditional Ethiopian shoulder dance.*
  - *Here's what you'll do: Try the dance, and have a 10 birr note ready to stick on the Ethiopian performers' foreheads!!!*

- **Be inspired by the Beta Israel School Lunch Program**
  - *The NACOEJ Beta Israel Community Primary School is unique in that it provides large, nutritious lunches to all 920 school children, including eggs, carrots, oranges, bananas, potatoes, beans, and bread rolls. For most of the children, this is their only meal of the day. This lunch continues throughout the summer rainy season. Donors fund these lunches that cost 50 cents per meal.*
- **Join the Community’s Morning Prayers at the Beta Israel Synagogue**
  - *Follow along with the community members, who pray in a mostly oral tradition.*
- **Learn from the “Shmagleotch”**
  - *Discuss the community’s dreams and current living conditions with the Shmagleotch, the revered elders of the community, whose wisdom solves local and family problems.*
- **Beta Israel Summer Jewish Education Program for Children**
  - *See Hebrew and Jewish studies taught in the specially designed summer program, when most schools in Ethiopia are closed. Interact with the 920 boys and girls, and let them teach you!*
- **Tour Fasilides’ Castle**
  - *Visit the castle compound, which housed Ethiopia's emperors in the 17th and 18th centuries.*
  - *See an unexpected Jewish star!*
- **Tour Gondar Countryside**
  - *Get a first-hand glimpse of day-to-day life in rural Ethiopia.*
- **Shop in Gondar Market**
  - *Buy your souvenirs in the colorful Gondar market. Find a “natela”. Don’t step on the chickens.*
- **Visit Wolleka – a centuries-old Beta Israel village, whose former inhabitants are already in Israel.**
  - *Visit the old Wolleka synagogue, a main sanctuary for the Beta Israel for hundreds of years. It’s small, but it meant everything to the community.*
  - *Current residents still make Jewish-style crafts, which you can purchase.*

## **ADDIS ABABA**

- **Shopping at the Mercato in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia.**
  - *The largest outdoor market in Africa! Do not carry any valuables.*
- **Visit the Adenite Synagogue**
  - *Learn about the Jewish community that came from Aden, Yemen and settled in Addis Ababa.*
- **Mount Entoto**
  - *Mount Entoto is the highest peak overlooking mountainous Addis Ababa, where Emperor Menelik II resided and built his palace. It is considered a sacred location and holds many monasteries. The mountain is densely covered by eucalyptus trees planted during the reign of Emperor Menelik II; thus it is sometimes referred to as the "lung of Addis Ababa". (Info from Wikipedia)*

# ISRAEL

- **Teach English to Ethiopian-Israeli children in the NACOEJ Back-to-School Summer Program, in small group or individual settings.**
  - *Ethiopian children in Israel usually come from poverty-stricken, illiterate homes. Their parents cannot afford even highly subsidized day camps, and often cannot even read with their children, leaving most children to spend their summer vacation playing in the streets. As a result, many Ethiopian-Israeli children forget much of what they learned during the previous school year, experience humiliating classroom failure during the next school year, and worsen educational gaps between them and veteran Israeli children. The NACOEJ Back-to-School Summer Program combines the fun of camp with an intensive review of the previous year's work, plus nourishing meals the children badly need.*
- **Meet with Ethiopian-Israeli social workers, college students, graduates, and professionals.**
  - *Talk about their perspectives on the failures, struggles, and accomplishments of the Ethiopian community in Israel.*
  - *Be inspired by how much they have accomplished, and learn what more needs to be done.*
- **Tour an Ethiopian-Israeli neighborhood, from an insider's perspective**
  - *Learn about how the community's high unemployment rates, and high concentrations of poor and poorly-educated minority families in sub-standard housing affect the integration of the Ethiopian community in Israel.*
  - *Find out what NACOEJ is doing to help prevent a cycle of poverty in the next generation of Ethiopian-Israelis, and how you can help.*
- **Visit an absorption center**
  - *This is the first stop for Ethiopian immigrants in Israel, where they learn how to integrate into Israeli society. Families typically live in the absorption center for at least a year.*
- **Pay Tribute at the Memorial on Har Herzl**
  - *Memorial to 4,000 Ethiopian Jews who died on the way to, or in, Sudan in 1984-5, as they tried to reach Jerusalem during Operation Moses.*