

Assemblies of God Center for Holy Lands Studies Trip Notes

<http://www.holylandsstudies.ag.org>

WELCOME

The Assemblies of God Center for Holy Lands Studies welcomes you on this journey as you encounter your faith where it began. We hope this journey will enhance your understanding of the Bible and provide a spiritual renewal as you enter into the physical stage upon which God's revelation took place. Contained in this communication is information basic to your program to Israel.

PROGRAM EMPHASIS

The philosophy of the Assemblies of God Center for Holy Lands Studies is the use of the three-dimensional setting of the Bible (i.e., the lands of the Bible) to serve as doorway through which participants enter and engage the world and thought of the Bible, to hear the words of the prophets as their ancient listeners, to sit at the feet of Jesus and soak in his teachings hearing his words within their first century context. This program to Israel focuses upon the land and lives of Old Testament and New Testament personalities. Biblical themes shape the trip encounter as we travel through the land. Emphasis is placed upon the contexts of the Bible, historical, geographical, linguistic, religious, and cultural. As we encounter the land and the biblical text within its geographical, historical, and cultural contexts, we utilize this three-dimensional experience with the Bible as the foundation for our devotional experience. In addition to formal lecture times, numerous discussions will take place during travel times while on the bus and at various sites.

NOTEBOOK

A notebook has been prepared for you as a study and learning aid. The notebook contains maps, charts, diagrams, and notes that will assist you in your study of the various disciplines we will discuss. The notebook will be distributed in the USA and Canada about two weeks prior to our scheduled departure date. International participants will receive their notebook in Israel.

PROGRAM DYNAMICS

Is It Safe to Travel to Israel?: This is a very common question. While like any form of travel, there can never be a guarantee of safety; travel in Israel has proved to be very safe. Our local driver and/or guide always remain in contact with situations within the land. If there is ever a hint of potential danger, we do not go into that area. We do not take chances! Almost everyone who returns from our trips remarks, "I never once felt unsafe."

Physical Demands and Preparation: The trips of the Assemblies of God Center for Holy Lands Studies are unique and not your typical "tourist" tour of Israel; we visit both traditional sites as well as sites not on typical tours. Our goal is to maximize your time in the land providing you with a most unique and rewarding journey. At times, the pace is demanding and daily activities often go for a full 8-10 hours. There is limited free time. Israel is not flat, nor is it smooth under foot; therefore, we strongly recommend that you **begin preparing for the physical demands of the trip long before our departure.** It is recommended that you prepare your body for the physical demands of the trip. If you are physically prepared, the trip will be more enjoyable, educational, meaningful, and fun. We recommend physical training that includes cardio and strength training: stair climbing (actual stairs or machine), running/walking 3-5 miles per day, and bike riding are all very good.

You should consult your physician concerning these requirements and any medications or conditions that may have an impact on your ability to participate fully. Prescription drugs you anticipate using during the trip should be packed with some in your suitcase and some in your carry on. We suggest you bring along a written prescription as well, it can be filled if needed. Traveling to the lands of the Bible requires no immunizations though you will want to be sure your tetanus shot is current.

Typical Day: Most days begin with a wake up call at 6:15 a.m., breakfast starts at 6:30, on the bus and under way by 7:20! Devotions will take place on the bus. We will travel to the sites by bus, where we will begin our hikes and visits of the sites. Most days will involve moderate hiking. Lunch usually falls between 12:00-1:30. It is highly recommended that you carry snacks with you. Eating small snacks throughout the day is best for keeping energy stored up in the body. We recommend that snacks (without chocolate-it melts) like trail mix, granola bars, nuts, dried fruit, crackers, or protein/energy bars be taken along with you. At the end of the day, we will arrive at our hotel for a wonderful dinner and welcomed sleep. Our hotels serve wonderful breakfast and dinner buffets, and the rooms are very comfortable. At the end of a long day, you will be able to have a wonderful meal, a refreshing shower, and a good night's sleep.

Devotional Times: Every morning as we leave our hotel we will have an opportunity for prayer and devotions. We encourage personal and group devotions during your time in the land. Throughout your program, we will endeavor to encounter the land of Israel within its devotional setting.

Sheep verses Goats: It goes without saying that for this type of program to be successful and to maximize our limited time in the land, we all must move as a group. A ten-minute delay here, a ten-minute delay there, and another delay of one kind or another can actually require us to eliminate a site planned for visitation. Our schedule is full and requires all of us to be punctual at departure times, and to follow your "shepherd" with diligence and closeness. Do not be a goat and wander off. The clock is always ticking against us and the last thing we desire is to spend valuable instruction time looking for individuals that may have strayed too far from the flock when the rest of the flock is ready to go.

Heat and Hydration: The heat in Israel is a very real concern. Even during the rainy season (mid-October to mid-April), it can still become hot. The daily temperatures from May to October typically range from the 80's up to 115 degrees. The evenings can cool off into the 60's. **Keeping yourself hydrated is extremely important.** We always have a sufficient supply of water on the bus; however, it is not always available once we are on a hike. Dehydration occurs from excessive loss of water from the body brought on by heat, humidity, a lack of wind, etc. It is critical to keep yourself hydrated before, during, and after our daily journeys. A steady intake of fluid is most beneficial; consuming a large amount of fluid in a short period of time does not help dehydration and is stressful on the body. Some trip participants bring powdered electrolyte replenishment mix, such as Gatorade, Powerade, Propel, etc. Also, we recommend that you limit your caffeine intake, which you may want to start doing a week or two before the trip.

Climate and Clothing: The daytime weather in Jerusalem during May is generally mild from a low of 60F (15 C) to a high of 77 F (25 C). In the Galilee region to the north, in the Jordan Valley, in the area of the Dead Sea, and in the Negev to the south you can expect warmer temperatures. There is only a modest 20% chance of rain at some point during the program. It is best to "layer" your clothing rather than bring an excessive number of individual specialty items. No "dress-up" cloths are needed. Casual ware is customary and more practical. Shorts are OK. No short-shorts please. **PLEASE NOTE:** Bath towels and small bar soap are provided at all hotels; shampoo and hair dryer are provided at some hotels. Electrical supply is 220 volts. Bring a converter and European style plug adaptor if needed. Some small appliances convert from 110 volts to 220 volts automatically; however, hair dryers and curling irons do not work with converters. . Check you electrical appliances in advance of departure. **You will want a comfortable, sturdy pair of**

walking shoes. We recommend boots/shoes with good ankle support. **Be sure to break in your shoes thoroughly before you come on the trip.** Avoid heels (!), dress shoes(!), or street shoes(!).

Clothing and Modesty Kits: Casual dress is recommended such as lightweight pants/shorts and t-shirts (shoulders must be covered at all times—men and women). A lightweight hat is a must, preferably one with a brim that covers the neck and ears. At times, Modesty Kits are required. A Modesty Kit means that for both men and women shoulders and knees are covered: for women, long pants, skirts, or capris and shirts that cover shoulders; for men, long pants and shirts that cover shoulders. “Slip-over” or “wrap-around” clothing is best for such occasions. We will notify you in advance when your “modesty kit” of clothing is needed.

Itinerary and Daily Scheduling: The daily schedule is pre-established but remains flexible. See the *Itinerary* for details. When circumstances permit additional sites will be added to the schedule. When necessary the daily itinerary will be adjusted to take advantage of changing circumstances. Sites may be visited in an order other than that previously published. Be prepared for flexibility regarding our daily activities.

PROGRAM COST AND FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Program Cost: See the program *Flier* for the program price.

Financial Note: The Center for Holy Lands Studies programs are designed to eliminate the numerous incidental financial responsibilities one often encounters on packaged tours. Tour agencies and their clients often publish a low base price giving the appearance that you have discovered a bargain. On such programs you are held financially responsible for any number of fees not accounted for in the published program cost. These “hidden” or “unannounced” fees can add up to as much as \$150-\$300 by the end of your trip. In an effort to minimize your individual responsibilities for undeclared fees, the Center has calculated such fees and included them into your overall program cost. Except for the daily lunch meal and items related to optional personal choices, your program cost covers all such incidental fees and tips. We do this in order for you to have a realistic cost of the program and to eliminate the hassle so often associated with “hidden” fees. For clarification please review the Covered and Not Covered features listed below.

Money: In addition to your regular tourist-type purchases and your daily lunch expenses (\$8-\$12 per day), it is recommended you bring a “slush fund” of about \$15-\$25 per day for incidental spending (snacks, water, soda, maps, taxis, tourist guide books, etc.). US Dollars and Credit Cards are fine. You may convert these funds into local currency at the airport (time permitting), at our hotels or at nearby banks. ATM machines exist but are rare, at times they are difficult to locate, are not readily available during the program and distribute only Israeli currency. **Do not depend on ATM machines for your financial needs.**

Items Covered in Your Program Cost: (a) Roundtrip airfare and all scheduled program related activities, group transfers and scheduled admissions. (b) Accommodations. (c) Private touring bus. (d) Any local guide as needed. (e) Instructor. (f) All tips. (g) Two meals a day. (h) Program Notebook.

Not Covered in Your Program Cost: (a) Daily lunch meals and specialty beverages or bottle water at meals. (b) Personal health or accident insurance – **Required**. (c) Personal travel insurance – **Recommended**. (d) Any incidental personal expenses for snacks, shopping, etc. (e) Any overnight lodging, ground transportation, flights and meals not included in the program itinerary as outlined by the Center for Holy Lands Studies.

Airfare Note: Your fee does include roundtrip airfare.

Airfare Taxes and Tariffs: Your airline ticket price was prearranged by the Center for Holy Lands Studies months in advance of your departure date. Often taxes or tariffs associated with your ticket are adjusted by the airlines at the time your airline ticket is issued. In the event an increase of cost is applied by the airline, you are financially responsible for the increase in your airfare. The Center cannot determine in advance if a tax or tariff is to be applied. If an increase is applied, the Center will inform you and request payment.

Airline Baggage Restrictions: (a) One primary suitcase per person, not exceeding 62 dimensional inches (length + width + height) and not exceeding 50 pounds. (b) One piece of carry-on hand luggage not exceeding 22" x 16" x 8" and not weighing more than 13 pounds.

Single Room Supplement Fee: The Center for Holy Lands Studies programs are priced on double-room occupancies. If you desire a single room an added fee is applied. The Center will make a single room request on your behalf. A single room is not guaranteed by the Center since it is up to the various hotels to comply with the request. Historically, such a request is faithfully honored by the hotels used by the Center for Holy Lands Studies programs. Contact the Center for the single room supplemental rate.

INSURANCES: As indicated, medical insurance is **required** and travel insurance is **recommended**. The Center for Holy Lands Studies does not issue such insurance policies and any need to secure such a policy is your personal responsibility.

OPTIONAL Travel Insurance: If you desire to protect your travel investment against an unforeseen cancellation or a needed emergency return flight home, it is recommended you purchase a travel insurance policy. If you desire to purchase such a policy, please note that most insurance companies will restrict certain coverage unless you submit for coverage within **14 days of registering for the program**. If you desire this optional insurance, **do not delay** your purchase of this insurance.

Insurance Assistance: If you desire to purchase medical or travel insurance, here is a list of web sites and phone numbers (all toll-free) that can assist you in your search for a provider. Please note that Emmaus is not involved in securing insurance for you and is not under any contract with the companies listed below. This information is a courtesy to assist you if you have a need.

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| • Access America | http://accessamerica.com | 1-866-807-3982 |
| • Insure My Trip | http://insuremytrip.com | 1-800-487-4722 |
| • Travel Guard | http://travelguard.com | 1-800-826-4919 |
| • Travelex | http://travelex-insurance.com | 1-800-504-7883 |
| • AAA | http://aaa.com | 1-800-463-8646 |

WHAT TO BRING

Medical and First Aid Items: Medical problems usually revolve around three common illnesses: (1) **Dehydration:** Israel has a very high solar intensity and as a result you will need to drink water more frequently to avoid dehydration. (2) **Diarrhea:** This is most often caused as a result of your body adapting to new foods and new water. The food and water in Israel is sanitary, safe and comparable to USA standards. Nevertheless, most participants on the program will undergo mild, moderate or more severe episodes of diarrhea. Be prepared for a 5-7 day supply of anti-diarrhea tablets. (3) **Constipation:** This is most often caused as a result of time zone adaptation and your body adapting to new foods and water. Most on the program will undergo mild, moderate or more severe episodes of constipation. Be prepared for a 5-7 day supply of stool softeners and/or laxative tablets. **NOTE:** All of the participants on the program will experience one or more of the above conditions. It is unavoidable. It is a fact of international travel that we all must face. If you are prepared in advance and have the proper medical aids, you can manage these discomforts successfully. If you neglect any one of the above, you can expect to spend a few days of medical

Rest-and-Recovery in your hotel room. Not only will you be uncomfortable but also you will miss some valuable sites and instruction while not traveling with the group. Should circumstances warrant, you will receive professional medical attention to bring you to a more speedy recovery. **(4)** Also bring with you traditional first aid supplies such as band-aids, antibiotics, sun-block, aspirin, and a full supply of your prescription medicine. Experience has shown that it is not recommended you stop any medication just prior to the trip, but wait until the trip is concluded before you stop any medication. Treat all of the above symptoms early and immediately – do not hesitate. Please inform Emmaus during the program if you are experiencing any of the above illnesses. We want you to remain healthy for travel.

Packing and Laundry: Historically, most people over-pack for international travel. A good rule of thumb is to pack your bags and then eliminate at least 25%-33% of your items. This will reduce the amount of your contents and provide needed space for purchases made during your travel. There is limited space available on the bus for luggage. Please keep your luggage size and contents to a minimum. Luggage is limited to one primary travel bag and one small soft day-bag. In Jerusalem our overnight locale can send out your clothes for cleaning and have them returned to you the next day. Expect an average of \$3-\$4 per major item and \$1-\$2 for minor items. Please be aware that you are at times required to manage and transport your own luggage. It is recommended you pack for 6-8 days of travel and take advantage of laundry opportunities. A typical laundry expense would be \$15-\$30 depending on articles sent out. Time is precious. It is recommended you send out your laundry rather than hand wash.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST:

Clothing: There is no single list of clothing articles that can meet the needs of everyone. However, the list below can offer you some assistance on what would be appropriate to bring. This list assumes you will send out your laundry at least once during the program or you will hand wash items as may be needed. For a December, January, February or March program please adjust this list for warmer clothing.

- Wide-brimmed hat
- 2 pair of long lightweight pants
- 2 pair of shorts (no short-shorts)
- 1 light jacket
- 1 sweater/sweatshirt/fleece
- 7-8 days of socks
- 7-8 days of undergarments
- 1 pair comfortable, sturdy boots/shoes
- 1 pair water-shoes or Teva type shoes
- Sandals or comfortable casual shoes
- Swimsuit and towel (one-piece swimsuit please for cultural sensitivity)

Supplies:

- Passport...Passport...Passport
- Facial washcloths as needed (not typically provided by hotels)
- Travel clock with alarm
- Durable Sunglasses
- Travel documents and airline tickets
- Medical and traveler insurance papers
- 1-2 32 oz. water bottles
- Bible
- Trip Notebook (supplied by Center for Holy Lands Studies)
- Small notebook for journaling and taking notes

- Pens and highlighter
- Small flashlight
- Snacks
 - Granola bars, protein bars, nuts, trail mix, dried fruit, crackers, beef jerky (no chocolate-it melts)
- Small and large ziplock bags for snacks and collectibles
- Cash and Credit Card
- Camera, extra batteries, film (recommend 15-20 rolls in a led lined bag for airport security), or memory cards
- Powerade, Gatorade, Propel powder, or something for electrolyte replenishment (if desired)
- Imodium-d, aspirin, ibuprofen
- For women, bring a supply of feminine hygiene products
- Hand sanitizer (small bottles are recommended)
- Personal toiletry and medical items
- Sunscreen
- Small plastic bottle of laundry soap in a ziplock bag to wash clothes in your room
- Electrical adapter (220 voltage, European type)
- Inflatable pillow for airplane and bus (if desired)
- Melatonin or Tylenol PM to help regulate sleeping patterns
 - Please drink a lot of water on the flights as this will significantly decrease jet lag
- Neosporin and band aids
- Moleskin or Spenco Blister Kit for blisters
- Tissue packs (potentially 1-2 per day) as some of the bathrooms do not supply toilet paper

PASSPORTS:

Your passport must be valid for a full six months after the return date of the program. If your passport expires before this projected date you will need to apply for a new passport. No exceptions.

If you do not have a USA, CANADA, UK or EU passport you must notify the Center for Holy Lands Studies since special circumstances may apply to your entry into Israel. If an Israel Entry Visa Stamp is required prior to your arrival in Israel, the stamp and administrative arrangements are your responsibility. The above noted nations (and certain others) do not need an advance Entry Visa. For clarification of Israel Entry Visa Stamp requirements, please visit the following web sites:

www.israel-tourist-information.com/visainformation.htm
www.travelnet.co.il/israel/mtourism/us/index.htm

If you have any entry or exit stamps in your passport reflecting previous travels to an Arab or Muslim nation, you must notify the Center for Holy Lands Studies.

Do you need a Passport? If so, take steps now to secure your Passport. This is most important. Dozens of administrative documents are dependent upon having your Passport information. If you do not have your Application and your Passport at 90 days prior to departure, there is the possibility that your Application will not be accepted. See the following U.S. State Department website for passport information: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html. Seven to ten days after you have applied for your passport you may view the delivery status of your passport at the following U.S. State Department website: http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/status_2567.html. The U.S. Postal Service also has passport applications to secure a new passport or to renew an old one. Visit <http://www.usps.com/>.

Perform a search for "Passport" and follow the links. Your local Post Office also has Passport information available.

APPLICATION:

Application: You may register for any of the Center for Holy Lands program via our website.

Deposit Fee: A **\$300** deposit fee (per person) is required. This fee is applied to your overall program cost.

HOTEL LIST: A separate document located in your Tour Notebooks will lists all hotels and important phone numbers.

USEFUL BOOKS FOR ISRAEL:

Anson F. Rainey and R. Steven Notley, *Carta's New Century Handbook and Atlas of the Bible* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2007)

Carl G. Rasmussen, *NIV Atlas of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999)

Jerome Murphy O'Connor, *The Holy Land* (5th edition; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

USEFUL ISRAEL WEB SITES: (Some sites may have revised their web address)

<http://www.biblelandpictures.com/>

<http://www.bibleplaces.com/>

<http://unbound.biola.edu/index.cfm?lang=English>

<http://www.holylandphotos.org/index.asp>

<http://faculty.smu.edu/dbinder/archaeol.html>

<http://www.otgateway.com/>

<http://www.ancientsandals.com/>

<http://www.thevirtualbible.com/>

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/jewishsbok.html>

<http://www.ntgateway.com/>

<http://www.en-gedi.org>

<http://www.iTanakh.org>

<http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH00wf0>

<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/>

<http://www.bib-arch.org/>

<http://www.msn.fullfeed.com/~scribe/artifax.htm>

<http://www.historian.net/newindex.html>

<http://www.info.gov.il/eng/mainpage.asp>

<http://www.israel-tourist-information.com/visainformation.htm>

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/subwwway/links.cfm?categoryID=1>

DISCLAIMER: The program itinerary is subject to change. In the event of an unforeseen change in the schedule, we promise you every effort will be taken to provide you with the same goals and objectives as outlined in the published itinerary. The published program price is subject to change should circumstances warrant. This would include (but not be limited to) changes in airfares, airport taxes, visa fees, airline fuel surcharges, rate changes by agents and their suppliers and changes in international exchange rates

PERSONAL INFORMATION: The Center for Holy Lands Studies does not share your personal information with anyone not directly associated with the administrative needs to facilitate our domestic and international travels.

PROGRAM CORRESPONDENCE: Please note that the primary correspondence between The Center for Holy Lands Studies and those interested in attending a program will be conducted by the use of email. If you do not have email, or experience email compatibility problems, alternative

arrangements can be made via mail, phone, or fax. If you have a GROUP LEADER for your program, contact your group leader, he or she may be able to answer your question or questions directly. All other correspondence is to be directed to the Center for Holy Lands Studies. Our web site serves as the primary and authoritative source of program information: <http://www.holylandsstudies.ag.org>. Please review the Center's web site periodically and especially the Notes for occasional revisions or updates to your program material and responsibilities (financial or otherwise).