

ISRAEL 2027

WALK THE WAY TOUR

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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SAFETY

Is it safe to travel to Israel? This is usually the first question one wants to know. Unfortunately, there has been conflict in the Middle East for as long as time. Currently, our contacts in Israel have assured us that everything is safe and groups are touring regularly. We also know that things can change quickly in this part of the world. There is always a chance that we could be forced to cancel our trip due to unsafe circumstances. For this reason, we strongly encourage participants to purchase travel insurance, which would protect financial investments in the event of a cancellation. Travel insurance would be on your own and approximately an extra \$150.

TYPICAL DAY & WEATHER

A typical day will begin with a wake-up call at 6:00, breakfast at 6:30 (or as early as available), devotions at 6:55, and then we're on our way! Most of our days will involve moderate hiking. Lunch tends to fall between Noon and 2:00. Since lunch can come later in the day, it's highly recommended that you carry snacks with you. At the end of the day, we'll arrive at our hotel for dinner. We stay at hotels with breakfast and dinner buffets and quality rooms. At the end of a long day, it is important to get off your feet, eat a great meal, have a warm shower, and a much-needed night's rest (generally speaking, you'll be able to get at least 8 hours per night).

The weather at this time of year is going to be warm. Temperatures can rise well into the 90's and even hit 100+. You will need to dress accordingly as well as carry a camelback-type backpack to ensure you have plenty of water.

SHOES, PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING

You will need a comfortable pair of hiking boots or shoes. Obtain them well in advance of our trip to break them in thoroughly before departure. Having a high-quality, well-broken-in pair of boots/shoes is essential for benefiting the most from this experience! We suggest having two types of shoes: quality hiking shoes/boots and an extremely tough trail runner. It is good on your feet to alternate shoes a couple of times during the trip. Please find a boot/shoe that your feet are happy in. Your shoes will be one of the most important items you have for this trip.

As you get ready for the trip, please know there is **NO** level ground in Israel, and you should prepare for 3 to 5 miles of hiking/climbing/walking each day. Physical training (long before our departure) is a must for you to get the most out of our time together. This can not be emphasized enough.

The more you train before the trip, the more you will enjoy this journey. The first thing that goes when you become physically tired is your mind. The more physically prepared you are, the better your mind will be. The trip will be more meaningful, spiritually impactful, and fun if you prepare in advance for the activity level we'll experience. It is highly recommended to do physical training that includes cardio and strength training (especially core strength). Some examples are: stair climbing (actual stairs or machine), lunges, bike riding, running, and long walks are all very good. Additionally, doing some hiking and climbing stairs with your backpack, including your Bible, notes, water bottles, etc., is good practice.

Please consult your physician if you have conditions you feel may impact your ability to fully participate. Prescription drugs you will need during the trip should be packed both in your suitcase and your carry-on. We suggest you bring along a written prescription as well, which can be filled if needed.

Please contact your health provider to check your coverage when traveling outside the United States. Traveling to Israel requires no immunizations, though you will want to be sure your tetanus shot is up to date.

BATHROOMS

It is very important to take advantage of bathrooms when they are available. Our trip will take us to some remote locations with facilities not always readily available.

TIPS

We will tip our guides and drivers and have included this expense in your total cost. The rate is based on a suggested \$7 per day for the tour guide, \$5 per day for our driver, and \$2 per night for hotel staff.

CASH/PAYMENTS

US dollars and credit cards are acceptable at many places; however, it would be wise to have Israeli shekels as well. You can do this at an ATM in the airport. Credit cards will carry an international fee with each transaction.

WHAT TO BRING

Please follow carefully the “Suggested Packing List” which will be provided later. Be prepared to bring a “modesty kit” each day, meaning long pants or a skirt and something to cover your shoulders, as there are several religious sites that require “modest” dress. If you forget these items, you will not be allowed to enter certain places.

GEAR & GADGETS

Feel free to bring a digital camera, action camera, and/or your cell phone for taking pictures. Please do not use your cell phones for taking or making calls during the day. Also, a word of caution: please make sure your camera doesn’t control you. Sometimes people experience an entire trip through the lens of their camera and miss so much of the experience God has for them.

DATA AND CELL PHONE SERVICE

Most cell phone providers offer international plans; however, we would suggest that you not do this unless absolutely necessary. Most of the time we are awake, our friends and family at home will be sleeping. Early mornings in Israel will be late evening in the USA, and late evenings in Israel will be early mornings in the USA. Therefore, we suggest keeping your phone on airplane mode to avoid data charges and only using WiFi at the hotels for connecting to family and friends back home.

HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

Familiarize yourself with the basic maps provided in the Maps Section of the study guide, which will be provided ahead of our journey.

WHAT TO READ

In preparation for our upcoming Israel experience, these are the readings that are highly recommended. Yes, it is a lot - do what you can.

Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Psalms 120-134, Isaiah 40-66, and Malachi. Time permitting: Joshua 1-11, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings.

New Testament: The Gospels (if limited on time - read Matthew), Acts 1-12.

BE FLEXIBLE

While we will have a very detailed itinerary, sometimes things happen that are beyond our control. We will do our best to stay on schedule, but please understand there may be times we will need to make adjustments.

SHEMA

Shema is a Hebrew word that means to “hear” or “listen” with the intent to obey and act. During our time together, we’ll recite a portion of the Shema daily. Please take time to memorize this portion for our journey together.

**Hear, O Israel
the Lord is our God,
the Lord alone.
Love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your might.
And love your neighbor as yourself.**

BONUS: ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL ON THE BIBLE

“Irrefutably, indestructibly, never wearied by time, the Bible wanders through the ages, giving itself with ease to all men [and women], as if it belonged to every soul on earth. It speaks in every language and in every age. It benefits all the arts and does not compete with them. We all draw upon it, and it remains pure, inexhaustible, and complete. In three thousand years it has not aged a day. It is a book that cannot die. Oblivion shuns its pages. Its power is not subsiding. In fact, it is still at the very beginning of its career, the full meaning of its content having hardly touched the threshold of our minds; like an ocean at the bottom of which countless pearls lie, waiting to be discovered, its spirit is still to be unfolded. Though its words seem plain and its idiom translucent, unnoticed meanings, undreamed of intimations break forth constantly. More than two thousand years of reading and research have not succeeded in exploring its full meaning. Today it is as if it had never been touched, never been seen, as if we had not even begun to read it.”

[Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man*, pg. 242]