

# **ISRAEL - THE LAND OF THE BIBLE**

## **Orientation Week Five**

### **11/6/16**

#### **6:30 - Opening Prayer**

Circulate and introduce yourself again and meet someone you don't know as yet.

#### **6:35 - TRAVEL TRIPS & DETAILS**

**Baggage Fees** - We are booked through United-Lufthansa Airlines all the way from Spokane to Israel and back and so we should not have to pay any baggage fees. Check your bags in Spokane **all the way to Tel Aviv!**

On our return from Israel we check our bags to all the way to **Spokane (GEG)**.

**Packing** - **ONE** suitcase plus a carry on and a fanny pack or purse. Anything over 50lbs (22.6 kilos) will be charged excess baggage fees. Pack light and reasonable.

Don't forget a small voltage converter and adapters for any electrical appliances you bring with you, chargers, smart phones, razors etc. Israel is on 220V and the outlets are shaped differently. Use the plug designated for the Middle East.

**Clothes, what to wear** - The weather in early December typically will be comfortable during the days (70's in Galilee and 60's in Jerusalem) and cool at night. For instance the next five days in Tel Aviv the forecast is for highs from 79 to 81. In Tiberias it will be from 84-88 and in Jerusalem it will be from 71-76 and sunny. Sunrise will be around 6am and sunset around 4:40pm. There is some chance of rain during this time of year especially in Jerusalem. When we were last there it was mostly sunny but we had a few cloudy days in Jerusalem and one day when it rained. Think early October or April, early May in Spokane. You will need some raingear, a hat and a coat for chilly days. Comfortable walking shoes are a must. I also take along slip on shoes for at the airports and on the plane. At most holy sites you are not allowed to wear

shorts, or sleeveless shirts or tank tops. For Yardenit you will need your swimsuit if you are going to be baptized in the Jordan. There is an extra fee (about \$10) there to pay for the white robe you must wear and a towel. Hotel pools may be closed due to the time of year but we might get a chance to take a dip in the Dead Sea. Also if you use a washcloth you will need to pack one as hotels in Israel often do not provide them.

*From the Aviatours website:* Casual and comfortable, but appropriate for the holy places. Sleeveless shirts and shorts are not permitted in most holy places. Take clothes which can be layered over each other. Comfortable walking shoes (sneakers) are your best bet. What you bring will depend a great deal on what time of year you visit. Visits in the winter, fall, and spring require warm clothing and boots. Pack light. The fewer items you bring with you the more you will be able to carry home.

***Carryons, what to carry*** - Please pack a change of underwear, another pair of socks and another shirt or blouse in your carryon plus any cosmetics you need just in case your bag is lost or delayed. Also the cosmetics must be in a plastic bag like a quart Ziploc and must be taken out of your carryon for inspection at security. If at all possible use a carryon that has wheels. This will save your back in the airports.

Liquids, gels and/or aerosols are permitted through security checkpoints worldwide. Items must fit in one clear, re-sealable quart- or liter-sized plastic bag, in containers of 3 oz. (100 mL) or less. (For ease of memory, please follow the [3-1-1](#) rule. 3 oz. or less, 1 quart size bag and one bag per traveler.)

I use a fanny pack I purchased at REI for daily use and on the plane. It will carry my ticket, passport, credit cards, money, some medication, gum, etc. I find it is best to use. I do not carry a wallet with me because of security. There are places in Jerusalem or Nazareth where we need to be on the lookout for pickpockets. It is better not to give them a target. This locks and is resistant to slashing by a knife.

***Copy of passports*** - It is wise to keep a color copy of your passport with your *CARRYON* in case you lose your passport. Please

don't lose it! Please keep your passport and any other travel documents you carry with you at all times.

**Airports** - We will have some layovers in each airport we travel through. In Denver we will have an 8 and one half hour layover and aviatours has arranged for us to have a tour of the Denver area to pass the time. Here is what Eunice told me about our Denver tour: *The Denver city tour is arranged and you will meet with Ms. Donna Hoffman who will then take you on a tour to the Red Rocks amphitheater and downtown Denver. You will then be transferred back to the airport for your flight. Once we have finalized I will send you all details.*

In the other airports please do not leave the airport and stay with other members of our group. If you walk around the airport or go to eat please let someone know where you are going. We are all adults and I trust you to be responsible, but please know that I am a shepherd who likes to count noses and I will worry until all my sheep are safely aboard the airplane! Be considerate of others and if we have split up for whatever reasons get to the gate *EARLY* so we do not have to search the airport for you. We are a group; let's treat each other that way. I say this because of experience! Watch out for each other. We are traveling to a foreign country and while it is safe, let's be each other's keeper for the trip!

When you go through security put your watch, wallet, or any jewelry in a pocket in your carryon or fanny pack. It saves time going through x-ray screening.

When we arrive at Tel Aviv and Passport Control asks you the purpose of your visit, answer *"to tour the Holy Land as a pilgrim."*

When we get to Denver on our flight home we will have a three hour layover to get through customs before we have to board our plane for Spokane. Use the time to freshen up, walk, shop and get something to eat. Out of respect for everyone else please make sure you let someone know where you will be if you separate from the group and please be early at the gate for the flight to Spokane so we do not have to search for anyone.

**Nametags** - You will be given a nametag on a lanyard for this trip at the Spokane airport the morning we leave. Please wear that nametag throughout the trip. It helps us identify one another and

keeps us together as a group. It will also help Gadi our guide in Israel.

**Money** - Most of the places we visit in Israel will take dollars. You can exchange some for shekels if you desire. As of 11/1, 1 New Israeli Shekel = 0.26 US Dollar; 1 USD = 3.81 shekels. Please factor that into your plans for lunches or shopping. I leave it to you to decide how much spending money you will need. For larger souvenir purchases it is best to use a credit card so you don't have to convert money and it gives you some protection. Plan on about \$10-20 per lunch per day, plus \$1 for water on the bus. Bring smaller US bills, no higher than \$20 so you don't end up with tons of shekels in change! Remember to inform your credit card company that you are traveling overseas so they don't stop your card! Also it is wise to make a copy of your credit card front and back and take a copy with you in case it is lost.

**Tips** - *Aviatours* is now recommending \$9 per person per day for the trip. Here is how it breaks down: \$5 for Gadi; \$3 for the bus driver and \$1.00 for the hotel restaurant staff. Please do not tip the baggage handlers as their tips are included in the hotel price that we have already paid. We will have envelopes for the three hotels we stay at and you can give your daily tips to me (or our designated treasurer) and I will make sure the Maitre D' at each hotel receives our tips when we leave. We will use the same system for the driver and Ze'ev and will give them our envelopes at the farewell dinner on the 8<sup>th</sup>. We are in country 9 days so that works out to \$81 per person. On past trips Betty and I have tipped our guide and the bus driver a little more as an extra thank you.

**On the plane** - How many have never taken an international flight before? On the plane, drink plenty of water. Sleep when the lights go down. Our transatlantic flight going over will be at night but coming back it will be daylight. I often will take some Dramamine for motion sickness but also to help me sleep. Some people take some sleep medication to help them on the long flight over and back. It is very tiring when you fly 24 plus hours. Remember cabin pressures are equivalent to about 8000ft. You will dehydrate more rapidly than at normal altitudes. Walk when you can & stretch.

There are videos about some exercises you can do while on the plane. Use them.

***Jet Lag*** - When we get to Israel it will be 9 hours ahead of Spokane. That means if it is 8pm in Spokane it is 5am in Tel Aviv. You will feel the jet lag the first day or so in Israel. Try and sleep as best you can that first night in Tel Aviv. That will help you manage the days ahead on the trip. Returning home I have found the jet lag to be worse. It usually takes me up to three or four days to return to normal sleep patterns after a long overseas trip.

***Room Assignments*** - Room assignments have been made and you should have been notified. If you do not have a roommate you have been charged a single room supplement fee.

***Air mattresses for beds*** - Just a little tip. I like a softer bed and many hotels have very hard mattresses. Betty and I take a backpacking air mattress to put under our sheets to give a little comfort. They pack small and will really help you, though they are noisy!

***Food*** - Breakfast and dinner are all you can eat buffets in the hotels. There will be plenty of food. Try and eat a good breakfast each morning because lunch isn't always consistent as to when we will stop. You are on your own for lunch but it is usually cheap, \$10 or so. Falafel is really good in Israel as are the gyros or shawarma. You are also responsible for the food you eat at any of the airports. You will want to bring some snacks with you or purchase them in Israel as well. Trail mix, *PayDay* bars, nuts or other things are helpful on the bus as there may be some days when we will not be at a place where we can eat lunch. Watch out for chocolate or things that can melt in your backpack on the bus!

***Shopping*** - There will be time when we can shop in Israel. Bargaining with the street vendors is an experience in the Middle East. Watch getting pulled in to a shop when we are on our way to a site. Please stay with the group so we don't have to wait for someone and miss seeing what we are really there to see. We will factor in some shopping time so don't worry! Some of the larger

shops will ship things UPS back to the States. Be careful how much you buy so you can pack it in your luggage or don't go over the weight limit! Shipping things home is usually the best option if the shop will do that.

***Travel Insurance*** - Hopefully you purchased the travel insurance plan through aviatours. This will kick in if for some reason our trip is canceled or you lose baggage or have a medical emergency.

***Fee Schedule*** - You should all be paid in full at this time. If you have not paid your extra \$66 fee please do so ASAP!

***Clearing Customs in the USA*** - Please do not bring back with you fresh produce (fruits, etc.) as USA Agriculture Department prohibits it. Souvenirs and gifts are duty-free up to \$800, as long as you have been out of the country for a least 48 hours, and you haven't made an international trip in 30 days. Each member of the family is entitled to the same exemption regardless of age, and exemptions may be pooled. Also be aware if you purchase anything that has soil, fruit or anything similar it will be sniffed out by the dogs at customs and confiscated! On the customs form we fill out in the airplane before we get into Denver remember we did not visit a farm in Israel!

***Q & A*** for anything we didn't cover -

### **TRIP ITINERARY:**

**Tuesday, Nov. 29, Day One - *Travel Day*:** Leave Spokane at 5:45am on **United #1272** to Denver, arriving at 9:07am. Take a tour around Denver including Red Rocks Amphitheater. Fly from Denver at 5:35pm to Frankfurt all night on **Lufthansa #447**, arriving in Frankfurt at 11:10am on 11/30. Leave Frankfurt at 2pm on **Lufthansa #694** and to Tel Aviv, Israel, arriving at 7:10pm Tel Aviv time. Meals and entertainment provided on board the transatlantic flight.

**Wednesday, Nov. 30, - Day Two - *Tel Aviv - Jet Lag Day*:** Arrive in Tel Aviv at 7:10pm. Meet Gadi our guide and our bus driver. Transfer to our hotel in Tel Aviv, the ***Leonardo Tel Aviv*** for check-in, dinner and overnight rest.

**Thursday, Dec. 1, - Day Three** - After breakfast and check out we depart to see Jaffa and ***Simon the Tanner's House*** then travel to ***Caesarea***, Herod's Roman capital where Peter met Cornelius and Paul was imprisoned. Travel to ***Haifa*** a beautiful port city of Israel; then to ***Mt. Carmel*** where Elijah battled the prophets of Baal. Arrive to our Sea of Galilee hotel in Tiberias, the ***Leonardo Club Tiberias*** for dinner and overnight.

**Friday, Dec. 2, - Day Four - *On the way to Galilee*:** Visit the mount of ***Megiddo*** and the Valley of Jezreel site of Armageddon; see ***Mt. Tabor***, traditional site of the Transfiguration, then on to ***Nazareth*** and the Church of St. Gabriel one of the oldest sites in the city, then to ***Cana*** where Jesus turned water into wine and finally back to Tiberias and our hotel, the ***Leonardo Club Tiberias*** for a 2<sup>nd</sup> night.

**Saturday, Dec. 3, - Day Five - *Around the Lake*:** Take a ***boat ride on the Sea of Galilee*** and visit the ***museum of the boat***; travel to the ***Church of the Primacy of Peter*** where Jesus appeared to the disciples after the resurrection; visit the ***Mount of the Beatitudes***, traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, then ***Tabgha***, site of the feeding of the 5000. Go on to ***Capernaum***- the synagogue where Jesus preached and the ruins there, then visit the site of ***Bethsaida***; travel to ***Kursi*** the site of the healing of the man with the legion of demons. We end the day at ***Yardenit*** on the Jordan River and ***baptism*** for those who want to be baptized. Back to our hotel, the Leonardo Club Tiberias for dinner and overnight for a 3<sup>rd</sup> night.

**Sunday, Dec. 4, - Day Six - *The Golan Heights*:** Travel to ***Banias***, the New Testament site of Caesarea Philippi, where Peter declared Jesus the Messiah. Journey up the slopes of ***Mt. Hermon***, an alternative site for the Transfiguration. Then travel on to ***Tel Dan***, one of the most ancient sites in Israel dating to Abraham's time.

Time permitting, on the way back to our hotel, we will stop at the **Agamon** - an overnight stop for half a billion (yes, half a billion) birds migrating from Europe through Israel to Africa as they have done in Biblical times. We stay again for a 4<sup>th</sup> night at the Leonardo Club Tiberias.

**Monday, Dec. 5, - Day Seven - Journey down the Jordan:** Travel down the **Jordan Valley** to visit the ruins of **Bet She'an**, a city that has been settled since 5000 B.C. and in Jesus' day was one of the 10 cities or Decapolis. Continue past Jericho to **Qumran** where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. From Qumran we will journey to **Ein Gedi** and the valley where David hid from Saul. Take a hike up to the springs. Continuing south we will visit **Masada**, a fortress built by Herod the Great where Jewish Zealots held out against a Roman army in the Jewish Revolt. We will then ascend to Jerusalem and check into our hotel in Jerusalem, the Leonardo Jerusalem.

**Tuesday, Dec. 6, - Day Eight - Jerusalem:** We begin on the **Mt. of Olives** and the **Church of the Ascension**, then journey down to the **Dominus Flevit Church** where Jesus wept over the city and finally the **Garden of Gethsemane** where Jesus prayed and was arrested. From Gethsemane we will travel to the **Lion's Gate** where Stephen was martyred and visit the **Pool of Bethesda** where Jesus healed the paralytic. We wrap up our day visiting **Bethlehem** and the **Church of the Nativity**. We stay a 2<sup>nd</sup> night in Jerusalem at the Leonardo Jerusalem.

**Wednesday, Dec 7., - Day Nine - Jerusalem:** We begin the day on the **Temple Mount** and the **Dome of the Rock**, then on to the **Western Wall** or Wailing Wall. From there we visit the **Zion's Gate** and see the **Upper Room** where Jesus celebrated the Lord's Supper and the Holy Spirit came on the Disciples at Pentecost. Nearby is **David's Tomb** and then down to **Caiaphas' House** where Jesus was held for trial. We stay a 3<sup>rd</sup> night in Jerusalem at the Leonardo Jerusalem.

**Thursday, Dec.8, - Day Ten - Jerusalem:** We begin the day at the **Israel Museum** where we can see the **Shrine of the Book**, celebrating the Dead Sea Scrolls and the **model of ancient**

**Jerusalem** of Jesus time. We spend the morning at **Yad Vashem** and the Holocaust Museum then on to the **Knesset**, Israel's parliament. Then on we travel to **la Via Dolorosa** to retrace Jesus' steps to the cross ending at the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher**. We will then see the **Garden Tomb**, an alternate site for Jesus' burial and resurrection and celebrate **communion**. Then back to the hotel for a farewell dinner and summing up our journey. We stay a 4<sup>th</sup> short night at the Leonardo Jerusalem.

**Friday, Dec.9, - Day Eleven -Travel Day:** We get an early wake-up call in order to board the bus by 4am arriving at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv by 5am. We go through security and check out bags in order to board **Lufthansa #695** to Frankfurt. We arrive in Frankfurt at 11:40am. At 1:20pm we board **Lufthansa #446** to Denver, flying back over the Atlantic and arriving in Denver at 3:40pm. After clearing customs in Denver we board **United #255** to Spokane, arriving in Spokane at 8:18pm. Welcome home, you have just returned from a once in a lifetime experience!

**8:00 - Closing Prayer**

We meet next on the morning of November 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:00am at the Spokane International Airport!