



INTERSECTIONS

where ✕ history ✕ identity ✕ religion ✕ converge

12—29 December 2023
Jordan – Israel – Palestine

Leaders |
Greg Jenks and Bishara Khoury

intersections@gregoryjenks.com

Information Kit

A 17-day pilgrimage to the land of the Holy One in December 2023.

where history, identity and religion converge

The Director and Spiritual Advisor for this special program is the Very Revd Dr Greg Jenks while our **Tour Leader and Guide** will be Mr Bishara Khoury. Together they bring a deep knowledge of the land and the sacred texts, as well as an appreciation of the complexities for the people and religious communities for whom these lands are home.

Greg Jenks has many years of experience leading groups of pilgrims to the Holy Land. He is a co-director of the Bethsaida Excavations Project in the Galilee, was Dean of St George's College in Jerusalem from 2015 to 2017, and is an Adjunct Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the University of Divinity, Australia. He is a highly-regarded teacher and author.

Bishara Khoury is a licenced tour guide with the Israel Tourism Authority and brings many years of experience with tour program and travel logistics.

Costs

The US\$4,600 cost for this exciting program excludes air travel and insurance, but includes all other in-country costs: accommodation (twin share), all meals, land transfers, guide fees and entrance charges. Single room supplement: US\$1,490.

Travel arrangements will be managed by [Lismore Cruise & Travel](#), who will also be able to advise on the best packages for air travel and insurances, including any add-on travel you may wish to arrange.

Registration

Please complete the registration form available on the program website and return it at your earliest convenience. Places are being limited to 30 participants to ensure a more personal experience for everyone. Once the 30 places have been filled we will open a waitlist.

Payment schedule

A deposit of \$500 is required at the time of booking. Full payment is required by 30 September 2023. Full refunds are available until 30 September 2023, after which \$250 from the deposit paid at the time of booking will be retained to cover costs already incurred with all other funds being fully refunded.

Please note that all prices are quoted in **US dollars**.



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Additional Information for Participants

Weather

We shall be in Israel during the northern winter, and the weather is likely to be cold. This is also the wet season for that part of the world, but the rain is not expected to impact on our travel plans.

Clothing

You will need comfortable casual clothes, and for entry to holy sites there are strict codes about modest dressing. For women arms covered from elbows and legs from knees; for men: no shorts (bring long pants or zip-on trousers). This should not be an issue for us in winter as we shall all be wrapped up well against the cooler temperatures. You will need comfortable but sturdy walking shoes as well as lighter footwear for periods when you are indoors. Be sure to pack a light rainproof jacket that can go over your other clothes.

Medications

Be sure to bring any medications that you take on a regular basis or need occasionally for intermittent conditions, asthma, etc. It is best to have a letter from your medical practitioner describing the medication and the conditions for which it has been prescribed. This can be very helpful when passing through customs.

Health and Fitness

It is essential that you fully disclose any significant medical conditions that may impact on your health during the program, as well as any special dietary requirements. We will review this information prior to the pilgrimage commencing to ensure that the accommodation and other restaurants cater for your needs.

The program involves a significant amount of walking most days, sometimes over rough ground or multiple steps. We have planned to itinerary to reduce the physical challenges so far as possible, but please consider your level of fitness and have some contingency plans for those times when you might be best to rest while the group completes a more demanding stage. It is always OK to choose to remain on the bus or to rest in a cafe when you need a break.

Mobile Phones and Internet

Our accommodation in Nazareth and Jerusalem will provide free WIFI, but the speed may be very slow. Check with your phone provider about a roaming plan for the period that you are in Israel, and be sure to seek advice on how to set your data options to avoid unexpected large bills. Generally speaking there will be quite good mobile service at almost of the sites we shall be visiting.

It is recommended that each participant have a mobile phone with either a roaming package or an Israeli SIM, in case there is a need to contact people who have wandered off from the group. This also provides your family back home with considerable reassurance as they can easily keep up with your adventures.

Travel Insurance

Each participant is required to have comprehensive travel insurance including medical and hospital cover. In the event that you need assistance in the emergency department of an Israeli hospital the care will be first class, but they will require payment via credit card before commencing. You need to pay the costs upfront and then seek reimbursement from your insurer afterwards.

Personal Safety and Group Security

We will have on the ground support from Bishara Khoury, a local logistic and support person, 24 hours a day during our program. I have worked with Bishara over many years and he has my total confidence. He will ensure our personal wellbeing and group safety at all times.

Currency

The Israeli unit of currency is the shekel (NIS), but US dollars are accepted nearly everywhere.

Major credit cards are widely accepted, but a dedicated travel debit card is highly recommended.

Digital payments using ApplePay or GooglePay are available in major centres.

Be sure to advise your bank of your travel plans and get your credit card authorised for overseas use.

Plan to exchange money at the airport as soon as you get through border control. If possible get some US dollars before leaving home.

Other Items

Sun Block with SPF 30 to 45 (for prolonged exposure)

Sunglasses (there will be sunny days even in winter) Personal toiletries, essential first aid supplies, bug repellent.

Band-aids, plus some aspirin and Imodium (or equivalent) medication for diarrhoea symptoms.

Alarm clock, camera (with extra memory cards), flash light.

A container for water is highly recommended. You can either bring a large, sturdy canteen, or wait until you arrive to purchase a 2 litre bottle and refill as necessary. There is a water cooler at the hotel in Nazareth.

A small backpack for holding personal items is highly recommended. This can keep camera, phone, first aid supplies, sunscreen, water bottle, etc all in one handy place.

Adaptors for Israeli power outlets (types C & H)



Laundry services will be limited so bring clothing that can be hand washed.

Bottle opener and can opener, perhaps as part of a utility pocketknife set. (Pack in main baggage and do not carry in your hand luggage.)

Marker pens, super glue, spare batteries, safety pins.

Note pad or journal to record your impressions, questions, etc. Pocket edition of the Bible

Anything else?

If you have any questions prior to the pilgrimage or during the time we are in the Holy Land, please do not hesitate to raise them with either Bishara or Greg as the program leaders.

Dr Greg Jenks

0426 067 344 (Australia)

0543 916 115 (Israel)

(00 972 543916115 for calls/SMS from outside Israel)

gregjenks@me.com

Mr Bishara Khoury

Israeli cell: 0545 692 894

(if calling from Australia: 00 972 545 692 894)

Emergency Contact Numbers:

Jordan 191 (any type of emergency)

Israel 100 (Police), 101 (Medical/Ambulance), 102 (Fire)

Important Reminders:

1. Passport & medication: You must always have them on you during this trip.
2. Punctuality: Help to avoid delays when moving from place to place.
3. Hats and Water: Please take a hat and water on all trips for your own personal health and safety.
4. Safety: It is very important to take care of yourself and to listen to the instructions very carefully.
5. Medical insurance: You must always carry a copy of insurance coverage with you each day during the trip.
6. Proof of Vaccination: Keep a photocopy of your vaccination proof with you.



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REGISTRATION FORM

PERSONAL DETAILS	PASSPORT DETAILS
Title (circle one): Mr Ms Mrs Dr Rev	Passport Number
Family Name	Name as shown on passport
First & Middle Names	Passport Citizenship
Preferred Name	Passport Expiry
Date of Birth	Place of Issue
Postal Address	Please provide us with a colour photograph or scan of the ID page from your passport
Mobile	SPECIAL REQUESTS
Email	Room share partner (if known)
EMERGENCY CONTACT Name Mobile	<input type="checkbox"/> Single room (US\$1,490 fee applies)
DEPOSIT INFORMATION <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Deposit Lismore Cruise and Travel BSB 082 522 Account 197 576 416 Reference: YOUR SURNAME	<input type="checkbox"/> Dietary Requirements (please specify)

Please email to both intersections@gregoryjenks.com and kaylene@cruiseandtravel.net.au

Personal reflections on safety

It is natural—and very understandable—that people may have some concerns about travel to the Middle East, including Israel and Palestine, at this time.

As a general comment, it is worth remembering that Israel is actually a very safe destination for travel and especially when travelling as a group with experienced guides who have local contacts and understand the risk factors well.

Short of an outbreak of full-scale war with a mass attack on Israel by its Arab, Iranian or Turkish neighbours, there is almost no risk of a Western tourist falling victim to military action or terrorist activity. Such an attack is unlikely at this time.

There are safety issues around certain locations that are a focus for internal tensions between Jews and Palestinians in Israel, in Jerusalem, on the West Bank and in Gaza.

We monitor the local situation on a daily basis and adjust our itinerary if we discern a need to avoid places that we had otherwise planned to visit.

The venues we stay all have arrangements for security and personal safety, including air raid shelters.

Even so, it is impossible to guarantee that military activity will not erupt at short notice or that personal violence against an individual will not occur.

On the other hand, millions of people go to Israel, Jerusalem and Palestine every year and it is exceptionally rare for any visitor to be caught up in civil unrest or military activity.

However, each participant needs to form their own assessment of the dangers involved in travel and their own tolerance for risks.

Australians are advised to register with the SmartTraveller website and to subscribe for periodic travel alerts:

<https://www.smartraveller.gov.au>

—Greg Jenks