



WELCOME

We are so excited that you have decided to join us to walk the land of Israel this summer on the Ancient Paths Study Tour! The heart of the Israel study tour is to explore the Biblical text in its original location and culture. In Ezekiel 20:6, God describes the Promised Land as the most beautiful of all lands. As we explore the geographical locations that provide the setting for His epic plan of salvation we will walk the land of the patriarchs, explore the ruins of the cities of the monarchy, and witness firsthand the region of the work of our Messiah and Savior, Christ the Lord. The text of the Bible will come to life as we follow the ancient paths and learn to walk as Jesus walked. Like you, I am already counting down the days in anticipation for what the LORD has for each of us. Anticipate great things. God has chosen each of us to accomplish His plan for us as we journey together!

Rod and Libby

A TYPICAL DAY

On this walking tour, we will not log hours on a tour bus or waiting in lines to have momentarily tourist stops. Instead, we will travel by bus to sites and then hike from the drop-off point. Teaching will take place on site as we stop, take breaks, sit on rocks and delve into the story of the Scriptures. This trip will include some intense hiking. In addition, every site in Israel will require walking. Expect to walk 7-10 miles per day (sometimes uphill) on ancient, uneven, rugged paths and through rocky, archeological ruins.

We will begin most days with a 6:30 wake-up, 7:00 breakfast and 7:30 departure. The morning will consist of hiking and teaching. We will eat a picnic style lunch on site. The time of our lunches will vary due to our schedule each day and can sometimes be as late as 1:30. We recommend that you bring some snacks to fuel you and tide you over should you get hungry before lunch is served. The afternoon activities will be similar to the morning. We will return to our hotel each day by 6:00 at the latest for a much-needed communal dinner along with time to regroup, relax and reflect.

WHAT TO PACK

You will need a good, sturdy pair of hiking boots or shoes for this tour. Obtain them as soon as possible so that you can begin to wear them and break them in. Having a high quality, well broken in pair of boots/shoes is essential for this experience! Many people wear boots but some wear a low-top hiking shoe or a tough trail running shoe. Please find a boot or shoe that you are happy with. This will be one of the most important items you bring on this trip because you will wear them every day. A GoreTex or waterproof shoe is not recommended for this trip as you will want your feet to breathe and even if they get wet, they will be able to dry more quickly.

Please follow the suggested packing list that you have received for general attire and important items. Please keep in mind that this trip is very casual and expect to wear outdoor/hiking gear every day. However, while still casual, we will have ample time to clean up and change for dinner. Also, be prepared to bring a "modesty kit" as some sites require modest dress. This would include fully covered legs and shoulders. A pair of zip-off pants is most helpful on days when pants are required but women could also bring a loose-fitting skirt to slip over their shorts. A pashmina type scarf is helpful for women when covering the shoulders and neck area. Please refrain from bringing short shorts. We ask that women also refrain from wearing white t-shirts while hiking. Depending on the time of year, temperatures in Israel range from lows in the 70's to highs in the high 90's.

GEAR + GADGETS

You will receive a hydration backpack, complete with a study guide, travel Bible, flashlight, electrical adapter (not converter) and luggage tags from GTI Tours approximately two-three weeks before trip departure.

Please think about bringing minimal electronic gear and gadgets. We know this is not easy, but this trip is a great time to unplug as much as possible and be present in what is happening. In an age where everything is accessible and fighting for our time and attention, it's a blessing to be able to rest and cease from busyness. We encourage you to make a personal commitment to take advantage of this opportunity.

HOW TO PREPARE

physical

Training is essential for this trip. Walking on a treadmill with a high incline, lunges or walking some stairs are great ways to prepare. You should be able to climb 10 flights of stairs without being fatigued or out of breath for our study tour. You will be on your feet for most of the day so if you have a job where you sit for the majority of the day, you will want to put in the extra effort to train.

history + geography

You will be introduced to the basics of historical geography throughout the course of our trip. Once you receive your study guide from GTI Tours, please peruse the maps section of the guide and become familiar with them as this will help to orientate you once we are in the land.

reading

Please take the time to read the materials on the reading list that was sent out with your registration confirmation. Being on a study tour is a little bit like drinking water from a fire hose. The more you read ahead of time, the clearer things will be for you on the trip.

sh'ma

We are completely confident that not a day passed in the life of Jesus where he did not pray the Sh'ma. Please take some time to read over this, as we will pray this together on a daily basis. We will also take the time to say the Sh'ma together in Hebrew. If time permits, you can become familiar with the version we will use as it is on the front cover of the guidebook you will receive from GTI Tours.

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.