

1. WHAT SHOULD YOU PACK FOR THE PROGRAM?

Weather in Israel in May and June is warm (some would say hot) and sunny, although some evenings are cool enough to require a sweater or light jacket. Since you will be spending most of your time outdoors visiting Biblical sites, you will need primarily casual clothing. Jeans or slacks and short-sleeved shirts or blouses and T-shirts are recommended. (If women prefer skirts, these are also fine, but they should cover the knees.) Natural fabrics (such as cotton), which breathe and absorb perspiration, are preferable to synthetics in the heat. Longer shorts and sleeveless shirts may be worn on some field trips (such as a day in the Dead Sea area). You will not be admitted to religious sites in such attire, however. Guards at these sites check to assure that all who enter are wearing clothing which covers the shoulders and the knees. This principle applies to both men and women. You will be advised before each field trip day whether this type of site will be visited on that particular day. (Many archaeological sites that are Biblical sites are not officially considered "religious" sites because there are no functioning churches, synagogues, or mosques there today.)

Comfortable walking shoes are essential. Although sandals may be worn on many trips, be sure that you also pack a pair of tennis shoes or hiking shoes and socks for days when we shall be walking in areas with thorns.

One or two nicer outfits (slacks and a shirt for men and a dress or a skirt or slacks and a nice blouse for women) are appropriate for church services in Jerusalem.

There will be opportunities to swim in the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Pack a swimsuit and a towel. (The hotels in which we shall be staying don't permit their towels to be carried down to the beach.)

You will also have an opportunity to walk through a tunnel constructed during the time of King Hezekiah (8th century BC). It was designed to bring spring water to the residents inside the walls of the expanded city of Jerusalem while depriving access to water to the Assyrian enemy outside the city. Spring water, knee-deep in some sections, still flows through the tunnel, which is not lighted. You will need rubber or plastic shoes and a flashlight/torch.

Other essential items you should pack include sunscreen, sunglasses, a hat, a canteen or water bottle carrier, and an alarm clock. A day pack is useful for field trips, especially the walking trips.

Since you will be in Israel for such a short time, you probably won't want to spend any of that time at a laundromat, although one is available in town. Woolite (packed in a zip-lock bag so that it won't leak onto the clothing in your luggage) is useful for washing socks and underwear in your sink. Dental floss is quite strong and can be used in creating a makeshift wash line.

Of course, bring a Bible, pens and pencils, and a writing pad!

The electric current in Israel is 220, so you will need a converter and plug adapter if you are bringing 110 appliances.

2. HOW MUCH MONEY SHOULD YOU BRING AND WHERE CAN YOU CHANGE IT INTO ISRAELI SHEKELS?

Your lodging, meals, and touring are covered by the program fee. (Please note, however, that drinks are not included with meals other than breakfast.) The only money you need to bring is spending money for bottled water if you have a sensitive stomach, snacks, and souvenirs. Cash and travelers' checks can be changed at banks and authorized money changers. (The banks usually charge higher exchange fees than the money changers.) ATM machines are also available in Jerusalem and other large cities. Cash (particularly larger bills) brings a better exchange rate than travelers' checks. However, if you bring cash you are advised to also bring a money belt since, unfortunately, the Holy Land has its share of pickpockets.

3. WHAT ARE THE VISA AND IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS?

Israel has visa agreements with over 60 countries. **Nationals of these countries do not need to obtain an entry permit or visa prior to their arrival in Israel;** they automatically receive a B2 Tourist Visa, valid for three months, upon entering the country. These include nationals from: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, Finland, Fiji Islands, Germany (persons born after 1.1.28), Gibraltar, Great Britain, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nevis, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, San Marino, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts, Surinam, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tobago, Trinidad, Uruguay, and U.S.A.

If you are a national of a country not on this list, let our office know this as soon as possible so that we can send you instructions as to how to apply for a visa from an Israeli Embassy (or another diplomatic mission who represents Israel) in your country of residence. It can take a month or longer to process a visa request.

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond your date of entry into Israel, and you must have a round-trip ticket.

No immunizations are required.

4. A SPECIAL NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS IN THE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF JORDAN PROGRAM

Jordanian society is very conservative. Shorts and sleeveless tops are not appropriate for either men or women.

