



ANGLICAN TOURS – ISRAEL June 2017

BASIC BACKGROUND FOR THE TOUR

TOUR BOOKLETS

There are two and these come with a printed version of this note. Book one is the tour itinerary, Tour member details, Maps, Church service sheet. Book two is called "Readings and extra material" which includes a hymn selection.

The pages where bible readings are mentioned in the "Itinerary Booklet" are listed as page numbers in the "Readings Booklet" The readings come from the CEV (Contemporary English Version)

A4 SIZE ITINERARY

A copy of this is included in the pack, which you can use for yourself or have it photocopied for others to follow you on route while you are away.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

For those who have not done anything about this, I can recommend Cover-More Travel Insurance as most likely the cheapest. Westpac give a better option if you have expensive cameras or Laptops.

INJECTIONS

This is of course up to you if you wish to take the precautions or not. What is recommended is listed on the "Travel Doctor Site" at <http://www.mdtravelhealth.com/destinations/asia/israel.php>

MEDICAL/OPTICAL NEEDS

It maybe wise to take with you a letter from your doctor saying what drugs you are taking. If you use prescription glasses, I would also suggest you take with you a copy of the prescription (just in case)

MONEY REQUIRED TO TAKE WITH YOU

Again this is a personal thing. Remember everything is paid for on the trip (including most meals & entrance fees – Lunches not included) with the exception of your personal needs. I suggest you take US dollars, a few Shekels (if the bank has these, or you can obtain these easily when we arrive.), a Master or Visa card with a small limit of \$500 (in case it is stolen) and a bank Travel Card with money included (You choose the amount and currency. Australian dollars OK as it will be converted into the currency at point of sale) Something between \$500 and \$1500 should be plenty. (Visa Travel cards can be used in most ATM Machines). Then you can top this up via the Internet (if you use this method at home) from your normal bank account. Having both cards helps just in case one card is not co-operative. DO NOT use traveller's cheques.

BAGGAGE REQUIREMENTS

Under the Emirates Airlines' your case is limited to 30k (Excess \$75 per Kg.)

Their cabin baggage policy allows each passenger

Quantity: 1 piece for Economy Class passengers

Dimensions: Length + Breadth + Height (including protrusions) must not exceed 115 cm (45") in total and can be stowed securely – Weight up to 7 kg

The following baggage items are deemed to constitute one piece of cabin baggage:

- Trolley Bag : 55 cm x 40 cm x 20 cm (22" x 16" x 8")
- Garment Bag : Dimension not exceeding 115 cm (45") and thickness not exceeding 20 cm (8") when folded
- Briefcase : 50 cm x 40 cm x 25 cm (20" x 16" x 10")
- If you need to take a CPAP machine this is not counted in your luggage limits as it is classed as medical.

CURRENCY: (Currently \$1 AUS = 2.78 Shekels) For easy calculating just work it out at 3 shekels to our dollar and 1 Jordan Dinah = (1.88) \$2 AUS.

Local currency is Shekels (NIS). The shekels have the following denominations:

NIS 200 / NIS 100 / NIS 50 / NIS 20 bank notes

10 shekel / 5 shekel / 2 shekel / 1 Shekel / ½ shekel / 10 agorot coins

Money can be changed at post offices, banks, change places or hotels. If changing at hotels, exchange rate is usually lower than elsewhere. It is recommended to use post offices if changing large amounts of foreign money as there are no commission charges.

One does not need too many shekels while traveling – just small change for the soft drinks / mineral water at local kiosks. Taxi drivers also prefer to be paid in shekels. Restaurants, hotels, stores and entertainment centers accept payment by credit cards (American Express, Visa, MasterCard and Diners). You can use \$US in Dubai airport

ELECTRICITY:

Israeli currency is 220 volts (USA is 110) - make sure to bring adaptors or ask the hotel reception if they have available – some hotels might ask for a deposit when handing out the adaptors / transformers.

Adaptors



Israeli electric plug



Jordan has a variety of plugs and the best ‘combined’ adapter I have found is the Brookstone adapter - <http://www.brookstone.com/travel/travel-accessories/converters-adapters>

These don't come cheap and not easily found in Australia. I purchased one in Sydney at one of the airport stores. Alternatively you could take (a) a two pin round one and (b) a three pin square one.



Global Twist Outlet Adapter

\$10 off \$50, \$25 off \$100, \$50 off \$175. Use code: SAVEBIG
\$34.99

Check out <http://www.cablechick.com.au/cables/av-powerboards.htm> \$27.95 plus postage and called a “Universal Travel Mains Socket Adapter with dual USB Charger.

FLIGHT DETAILS

Enclosed are details of your flights (and tickets). You can book yourself in when you like but you need to be there at least 2 hours prior to departure. This should give enough time to check in, and duty shop where needed. If you need to redeem duty tax, you need to do that before the boarding time (once inside the international area) or you will miss out.

We meet up with one another in Dubai. (Meet at the Dubai departure lounge - Terminal 3 an hour before departure)

DRESS:

Casual clothes recommended for touring and good walking shoes. It is summer so come prepared. Religious sites require modest dress i.e. shoulders need to be covered; some churches require the men to wear long pants and ladies to take a scarf that they can use as a head covering or wrap around in lieu of a dress.

PHOTO PICTORIAL ON TOUR: If family members or friends wish to follow our tour, I will be putting up photos every few days on our special web site at www.anglicantours.org.au

PHONE CONTACT DURING THE TOUR

Anyone in Australia wanting to make contact with us can do so by ringing the hotels direct. Details in the booklet. Alternatively they can ring Fr Max's phone during the tour. The tour hot line is +44 793 734 7673. IN ISRAEL Fr Max's number is 0528 075 158

INTERNATIONAL ROAMING – Receiving Calls from Australia

If you are taking your phone and using an Australian Sim card, make sure International Roaming is turned off before you leave Australia or else you will be STAGGERED at the cost when you return.

You would be better placed to ensure your phone is “Unlocked”, international roaming turned off and to purchase a sim card in Israel. More details about that later.

The **Woolworths sim** is excellent value. Purchase in plenty of time before you leave home. You can also purchase a local number that your family can ring at the cost of a local mobile call. When you receive a call from Australia, you also pay 5¢ per minute. Ringing Australia is 34¢ a minute and a text is 26¢ www.woolworthsglobalroaming.com.au

You will have free calls to home for 11 nights, but you can still use “Facetime” or “Skype” or “Imessage” which is free as you can link these through your “Free” hotel Wi Fi.

PERSONAL MOBILE PHONES

It is a good idea to program the numbers of Oliver (our guide) 0546 311 114, and Fr Max into your phone in case you have need to contact either one. On tour the number you plan to use in Israel (assuming you will have a phone etc) will be collected in case of emergencies.

SWIMMING BATHERS

If you plan to swim in the Thermal baths (well worth the effort and great fun. The baths are the size of a swimming pool but not as fancy) you will need to bring bathers. Also useful if you plan to have a swim or paddle in the Dead Sea.

POST CARDS & LETTERS HOME

Don't be surprised if you arrive home before the post cards/letters arrive. But at least family and friends will know you care. Stamps are often available in the hotel foyer or they will suggest where you can purchase them.

VEGEMITE FIX

If you can't cope without your daily 'fix', then you could bring a tube of vegemite (or two). Make sure you put this in your case, as customs in Israel get funny about things they don't understand.

YOUR SUITCASE LABEL

Included is a special tag for each of your cases, as well as a coloured ribbon to attach to them. This makes it much easier to collect luggage at the carousals by identifying your tour tag and ribbon. It is also useful to quickly identify a tour members bag if it is placed away from the main group when loading the luggage on the bus. Normally the men are allocated the task of dragging cases off at airports. If you require additional suitcase labels, please let me know in plenty of time to get them made up.

VISA

Jordan Visa will be organised by Anglican Tours. The Israel Visa is no longer stamped in your passport, and they will give you a (credit card size) visa to be kept with your passport. Be **VERY CAREFUL** as this makes them very easy to lose, and we don't want to have to leave you behind when we finally leave the country.

SECURITY

The hotels have a safe in your room, but you also need to look at other options to safe guard your money and valuables. One option is a type of wallet you strap to your person (under your clothes) to keep passport and money in. **NEVER** flash money around and keep a small amount easily accessible. You don't want to have to access your 'skin tight wallet' in busy places. (Unless of course you are a flasher)

NAME TAGS

You will be sent one of these with your name as you have indicated. Please wear these each day around your neck to enable the group to get to know one another. We normally use name tags for the first 5-7 days

HOTEL ADDRESS CARD

In your tour kit you have been provided a list of hotels we will be staying at with address and phone number (business card size). This is handy if you get lost and need to get back to the hotel and can't remember which one it is. Just keep this in your wallet or bag, but with you al ALL times.

VARIOUS TOUR BOOKLETS

Copies will be in your tour kit. Maps will be given to you (plus a hat) when we arrive in Israel.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENT

- Have on your person, credit card and identification (copy of your passport) in case of hospitalisation etc. You have to pay up front. Ambulance costs up to 1000 shekels, Hospital admission 1200 as a start.

BOOKS TO LOOK OUT FOR IN ISRAEL

If you want some serious background to the Holy Land, there are two excellent books written by RC Priest Fr Bargil Pixner. (1) The 5th Gospel (2) With Jesus in Jerusalem. They are not cheap, but excellent background material.

IRONING & WASHING

Laundry facilities in the hotel are unbelievably expensive (eg: Shirt \$16, Handkerchief \$1.50) Taking laundry powder and a cake of velvet soap and a nailbrush are your best friends. If you wish to use an iron, there is normally one on each floor. Just take a small container of water if you want to use the iron for steam pressing. (I know! I can hear it now. 'we are on holidays'. Well some of us like to keep up the standards !!!)

VESTMENTS make by Palestine women (Not open Sundays)

There is a shop in the old city in the Christian quarter called Melia, Art & Training Centre with a red canopy. Not far in from the "New Gate" in St Francis St.

TIME ZONE: Israel time is... 6.5 hours behind Australia. To make it easier, you can go to our web site (www.anglicantours.com.au) and we have included a clock with the current time in Israel. **Just click on 'Israel 2017' near bottom of the web page.**

BEFORE YOU BOARD THE PLANE

ARRIVING IN DUBAI

As we arrive from different capital cities we need to come together at the Emirates Departure lounge at least 30 - 60 minutes before departure. We depart from Terminal 3 on flight EK901 that leaves at 7.30AM. **SUGGEST YOU ARRIVE AT DEPARTURE GATE BY 6.30am.**

ON THE PLANE

These are long flights and a good book would be helpful and a light pair of slippers. If your feet swell (and this happens to a degree to most travellers) you could consider the special socks (compression stockings) designed to assist here. Maybe a crossword and a pen/ biro. Special suggested earphones (if desired), glasses. **THE SECRET.** Prior to entering the plane, place the above items in a separate shopping bag or similar so you can quickly place your bag in the rack and have what you need to use on the plane ready to put in your seat. This saves forgetting items when others are pushing past you and you become flustered. (Or am I the only one that has this problem?)

ONE SPECIAL TIP – The earplugs they give you on the plane make it almost impossible to hear the sound track of the film you are watching. To overcome this, purchase a set of “Sony Ear Plugs with Noise Cancelling Headphones – MDR-NC13 (or equivalent). They also have the extra connection to attach to your audio plug in the plane seat. They are not cheap, around \$90, but worth every cent. (Just a suggestion)

AIRPORT SECURITY:

For international flights – tourists have to be at the airport for the security check 2-3 hours prior to departure.

MEETING UP AT THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

Simply book yourself in when you arrive at the airport **AND BOOK FULLY THROUGH TO AMMAN - Jordan.** (On your way home book through to your Australian destination) This way you don't have to worry about your luggage in Dubai for the change over of planes. **DON'T WAIT FOR OTHERS** because if they are late it can cause you to stress out and that is the last thing we need.

VERY IMPORTANT – TAKE ON YOUR PERSON ONTO THE PLANE

Either add to your phone using the “Notes” app (assuming it will be on your person on the plane and not in a bag in the rack) or on a piece of paper you keep in your pocket, details of the following, as this saves getting up to collect your bag to find the information when you have to fill in an arrivals card.

- Your passport number and expiry date
- The numbers of the flights you are on into Dubai and into Amman and then the reverse as you head back to Australia

AND OF COURSE A PEN. – You need to fill in the departure slip that is in your folder BEFORE you go through customs.

BEFORE WE CROSS THE BORDER

TOILETS WHEN WE REACH JORDAN (5.30 am)

After we exit the plane, we congregate together (re-group) and then head off to get our cases **TOGETHER** etc, making a toilet stop on the way. Please don't just go off on your own without letting Bp John or Fr Max know you are heading somewhere different to the rest of the group. **WE NEED TO BE THERE TOGETHER TO ARRANGE OUR VISA'S.**

Once we are on the bus we head for the Israel border. IMPORTANT –IMPORTANT – IMPORTANT

To make your life, and the rest of us, easier, when we go through the two check points (Israel and Jordan) please do the following PRIOR to leaving the bus. (We change buses here)

Put the following in your backpack or carry on luggage. The secret to an easy entrance is to have your hands free of bits and pieces OTHER THAN your passport.

- Place anything on your person that will likely trigger the airport security – this includes watches, wallet, purse, biros, camera (You are not allowed to take photos anyway) and anything metal into your small case or backpack. Empty your pockets also so all you have is • Case • Carry on case • Backpack • Passport (You will need to take out a computer/ipad or similar if you take one with you).

Fr Max had a bad experience in February with a group he conducted then and the above should make this crossing much easier, although nothing is guaranteed. Being carted off to the little room is not a pleasant experience.

ONCE WE ARRIVE AT TIBERIUS & THE TOUR STARTS

THIS IS A GROUP TOUR – NOT AN INDIVIDUAL TOUR

It is important that the group as a whole is considered whilst we are away. We need to keep together and not just go off on our own or drag behind.

If you get lost and can't find the group (nor make phone contact), you will be on your own and you may need the hotel card with address in your wallet to get back to the hotel.

- If you want to go off and not continue with the tour on any day, let the Bp John or Fr Max know. There is no problem with people doing their own thing provided we know about it and don't waste time looking or waiting for you – This also applies to toilets
- When given a time it is important that this is respected and people return at the time allocated.
- Be aware of who is sitting in the seat opposite and in front of you. Makes it easier to know who is missing.
- If you end up lost and (after a time) can't find the group, then you should have the business size card that has the hotel details with you. You will have to find your own way back.

ON ARRIVAL AT THE HOTEL

Hotel staff will collect your luggage (from under the bus) and leave in foyer. Once you have been allocated your room number, it is best to add your room number to your case and then it will be brought to your room. You can go direct to your room once I give you the key.

RECORDING ROOM NUMBERS WHEN WE ARRIVE AT OUR HOTEL

Each new hotel we stay at, Fr Max will announce the room numbers we will be allocated and (if you wish) you can note these in this book where listed. The reason for this is that at times it is handy to know where others are should you need to make contact with them.

WHEN WE LEAVE A HOTEL to move on to the next location.

You will be told when you need to have your cases out the front of your room and these will be taken down into the foyer for you. Cases **WILL NOT** be loaded onto the bus until you have identified your case to the driver, ready to be placed on-board. This way we can be sure no cases are left behind.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

BOTTLE FOR BAPTISM WATER FROM JORDAN

An empty bottle is included that we will fill from the River Jordan to use for baptism re-newal. It can be re-filled to bring home with you.

BANK HOURS:

Most banks are open between 8:30 am – 12:00 noon daily; a few banks open again in the afternoons from 4:00 -5:30 pm. On Fridays and Saturdays all banks are closed.

WEATHER: June – Mostly around 28-30 degrees, but hotter in the desert. Normally sunny during the day and very cold at night.

Jerusalem and the Golan Heights are approx. 3°centigrade colder and desert is usually 3°centigrade warmer.

GRATUITIES:

Gratuities are not obligatory however hotel staff always appreciate a “thank you tip” i.e. porter, chambermaid and dining room staff; as well as drivers and guides. Having ample US \$1’s available makes this task much easier.

TIPPING: Small tips (10 %) are appreciated in inexpensive establishment. In luxury hotels and restaurants, tip 10% to 15%. 1.50 per bag. For taxi drivers, don't tip, just round the fare upwards to a convenient amount. On our tour, tips for baggage handlers and dining staff are included in the price of your tour. Customarily, many tour participants wish to say a special "thank you" to the tour driver and guide. This is a matter for you personally.

WATER:

Tap water is ok but most tourists prefer to drink filtered or mineral water. You can get water on the bus for \$1 US.

TAXIS:

If taking taxis, be sure to ask the driver to use the meter. If he/she does not want to do so, then look for another driver who will. All licensed taxi drivers use white cars with a green “taxi sign” and have their name and license number inside the car.

JEWISH SABBETH - Shabbat (Saturday)

All buses and trains stop operating an hour before sunset on Friday through until sunset on Saturday. Some lifts automatically stop every floor. Very limited meals this day. No tea/Coffee etc. Dairy only and no meat in morning. Reverse at night.

DOING YOUR OWN THING ANY DAY

This is perfectly Ok so long as you inform Bp John or Fr Max you won't be joining us. For a meal or an outing. We don't want to waste other people's time in waiting for someone who is not joining us.

RINGING HOME

We have arranged free 10 minute calls home in both Tiberius and Jerusalem, even free drinks in Tiberius. However you will have free wi fi in your rooms and on the bus and you could use face time (apple) or skype or imessage for others.

HOLY SEPULCHRE CHURCH

Fr Max will hand you a long votive candle when we arrive here that you can place in the sand candle stand at the grave site.



HEZEKIAH'S TUNNEL

If you plan to do this walk through the water in the tunnel, thongs are a good idea for your feet and a miniature torch. (Miniature ones available to purchase on the day). Alternatively you could consider bringing a head torch. One that straps on your head to keep your hands free. Useful to have a microfiber drying towel to dry yourself at the end if doing the water walk.

They are really compact and light but most effective. Also a hat to help with the low roof in parts.

SPECIAL NOTE

A very thin backpack (for shoes, towel etc) or similar would be useful to keep your hands free. Larger backpacks not suitable.

SHABBAT (Saturdays – Jewish Holy Day)

On these days there is limited food in the dining room – No toasters etc and ‘shabbat’ elevators stop at every floor automatically.

SITTING ON THE BUS

Please don't hog any particular seat and give every-one a chance to sit in the first few seats. Move around the bus each day as this gives you a chance to be opposite a different person to chat with and get to know.

BUS TOILET

There is no such thing on any buses in Israel because of the short distances we travel. We regularly access toilets on route.

INTERNET

All of the hotels we are staying at will have WI FI access. Some will allow you to access WI FI in your room (free or a charge), whilst others allow free access in the foyer. Also, WI FI is available on the bus we will be using.

RESERVING A PLACE AT THE MEAL TABLE

It is always embarrassing returning to your table only to find someone else in the spot you had chosen OR taking another's spot without knowing. The best way is to cross your cutlery and then we know that spot has been taken.

LIGHT RAIL IN JERUSALEM

To go into the city choose “Mt Hairzi” line. Returning to the hotel choose Heil Ha-Auir. Station to get off coming home is “Shivtei Israel” . If you want to get to the “New Gate” get off the rail at “City Hall” and walk back to the “New Gate” If you are looking for a reject type shop in the New City, take the light rail to “Ha-Davidha” stop and the shop is immediately opposite. If you want a food market that had everything and fascinating, get off at “Mahane Yehuda”.

MILK FOR A CUPPA

Hotels don't provide milk (only powdered milk) so suggest you take a few plastic cups/jug with you to get milk in the mornings to put in the fridge in your room. No milk available at night as not kosher. You can't have meat and dairy together.

SUGGESTED CHECK LIST (Basics)

Plane Tickets

- Tours booklets (Both copies)
- Bottle for re-renewal of baptism vows
- Credit card size details of hotels we will be staying in. (Card)
- Travel Insurance Papers
- Tour Booklets (1 with itinerary etc and 1 called 'Bible Readings)
- Mobile phone and charger (if required)
- Laptop (If required)
- Camera, extra lens, camera cord (USB one end) to download photos etc (if required)
- Camera battery charger.
- Name Tag
- Money pouch or similar to strap around your middle under a jumper(Passports, Money etc)
Guys could use a wallet that has a chain attached so it can clip on your belt.
- Biro(s)
- Sun Glasses
- Bible – We are using the CEV version, but any version you are comfortable with is fine. A light weight one would be ideal. Most of the readings we will use are in the “Readings Booklet” but there are other passages we refer to that are not included and a bible would be good for that extra background.
- Expandable/stretchy clothesline and pegs to hang washing up in shower
- Small amount of washing powder to keep you going
- Nail Brush & velvet soap to wash clothes
- Togs/Bathers/Swimmers (or what ever you call them) – You never know (Be prepared)
- Label and ribbon we have provided you with to be placed on your cases
- Slippers for plane (if required) – Pack in carry on luggage
- Thongs or old sandals if walking along Hezekiah’s tunnel (Thongs lighter)
- Miniature torch or hands free headlamp for Hezekiah’s tunnel
- Microfibre Drying Towel
- Small fold up umbrella (if required and just in case for sun or rain)
- Tube(s) of vegemite (if required) – Pack this in your case **NOT** carry on.
- Sony Headphones for plane (if required) – Pack in carry on luggage (MDR-NC13)
- Good book/activities (crossword etc) [on plane] – Pack in carry on luggage
- iPad or similar if you use one of these. Great to keep books on and use for WI FI
- Charger for computer or iPad
- 2 round prong European style adapter plugs – 3 square ones for Jordan
- Prescription for glasses (if required)
- Proof from Doctor of any prescriptions you are taking with you
- Copies of any injections you may have had prior to departure
- A sense of humour – Pack in 'carry on luggage' or carry on your person
(If lost before you depart, please return home to find it before boarding)