



Biblical Study Trip with Pastor George DeJong

I am thrilled that you are joining us on our journey to the lands of the Bible in order to see the text in its context. Our theme is Ezekiel 40:4, "See with your eyes, hear with your ears, and set your hearts on everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Then tell the house of Israel everything you see."

This experience is far more than a "vacation." I believe that our journey to the Lands of the Bible is God's investment in you and me to equip and grow us as passionate followers of our Messiah and Lord, Jesus. This is more than a tour of the ancient land. We will learn from the land and its people with our feet, our senses, and most importantly God's Word. We will experience the places where great men and women of the Bible grew in their understanding and relationship with God. We will see and walk in the context of Jesus' entire life and ministry. Our journey will bring God's Word alive in fascinating new ways as we look at it in its geographical and cultural context.

Philips Brooks, a great American preacher of the 19th century, wrote this in his journal after returning from a trip much like ours,

*"I cannot tell you how personal He has become to me. I know Him and He knows me.
He is the realest thing in the world to me."*

My hope and prayer for us is that as we experience the land, the culture, and the text together, Philips Brooks' confession will be ours as well!

Rev. George DeJong

Shema

With great confidence I can say that there was never a day in the life of Jesus, our Messiah, when He did not lift His hands toward heaven and declare to the Father Deuteronomy 6:4&5,

Shema Israel, Adonai elohenu, Adonai echad,
Ve'ahavta et Adonai eloeikah,
B'khol levavkah,
Uve'khol naphshekah,
Uve'khol m'odekah

Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord Alone
Love the Lord your God
With all your heart,
With all your soul,
And with all your might!

**Please start hiding this prayer away in your heart in Hebrew and English.
We will be using this prayer daily throughout our experience.**

Check www.underthefigtree.org for an audio version

Typical Day

A normal day is as follows:

Wake Up: 6:00AM

Breakfast: 6:30AM

Devotions: 7:00AM (at the bus)

In order to accomplish what God sets out for us to experience, the majority of our days involve vigorous hiking. We travel to our various sites by motor coach where our hikes begin. It is at these locations where God's Word is studied in its context through on-site faith lessons.

Lunch is provided and will be served on location. Time will vary depending on the day. It is highly suggested to bring snacks with you. We will arrive at our hotel in the late evening for a wonderful dinner and welcomed sleep.

Clothing

Quality Hiking Boots are essential...

You will need a good, sturdy pair of boots that provide good ankle support. Obtain them well in advance and break them in thoroughly before your departure. Having a high quality, well broken in pair of boots is essential in benefiting the most from this experience.

What to bring

- Wicking hiking socks
- Zip-off pants
- Shorts – lightweight, wicking material
- Lightweight shirts – no sleeveless or tank tops allowed
- Hat or visor
- Three to four changes of clothes for hiking, one or two casual outfits for evenings. Dinner is often eaten in hiking clothes
- Sweatshirt for Sinai
- Water shoes – not flip flops, needs straps
- Bandanas – optional

Modesty kit

Women – Shoulders and legs must be covered. Can wear pants, capri, or long skirts.

Men – Shirts that cover shoulders, long pants

Physical Preparations

As you get ready for your trip to Egypt, Jordan, and Israel, you should prepare for 6 to 10 miles of vigorous to strenuous hiking/climbing/walking each day of the trip. You will profit greatly by training long before departure for these physical fitness requirements. The trip will be more meaningful, educational and fun if you prepare in advance for the activity level you will experience.

Helpful types of training:

- Hiking stairs for at least 30-45 minutes (with your boots) is most beneficial
- Daily walking/running 3-6 miles
- Walking on a treadmill with an incline (4 or higher)

You should consult your physician concerning these requirements and any medications or conditions that may have an impact on your ability to participate fully. Prescription drugs you anticipate using during the trip should be packed with some in your suitcase and some in your carry on. We suggest you bring along a written prescription as well, it can be filled if needed. Please contact your health provider to check your coverage when traveling outside the United States. Traveling to the lands of the Bible requires no immunizations though you'll want to be sure your tetanus shot is current.

Dehydration and Food Intake

The weather will be hot!

Dehydration develops from an excessive loss of water from the body. Heat, humidity, and lack of wind increase fluid loss. It is critical to keep hydrated before, during, and after our daily excursions.

A steady intake of fluid is most beneficial. Consuming a large amount of fluid in a short period of time is not the cure for dehydration and is stressful to the body. It is recommended to limit caffeine intake before and during the trip.

Eating small snacks throughout the day is best for keeping energy stores up in the body, especially since most days we will have a late lunch. Recommended snack: trail mix, granola bars, protein/energy bars. Sufficient water will be provided for all daytime excursions. Plan to bring along electrolyte replacement powders to add to your water or gels/sport beans.

Recommended Supplies

Provided by GTI

- Tour Bible
- Camelback style back pack
- Inflatable pillow for travel
- Name tag, luggage tag
- Flashlight

- Sunglasses with neck cord
- Small bottle of laundry soap (done in sink or tub)
- Zip lock bags for snacks, collectibles, disposing of personal items (pack it in, pack it out)
- Plastic drain stopper (not in all hotels)
- Personal hygiene products
- Tissue packs or portable bathroom tissue rolls
- Snacks
- Electrolyte replenishment items
- 2 prong electrical adapter for electronics
- Converter (most hotels have them) for irons/dryer
- Highlighters/pens, notebook
- Camera with extra batteries or charger
- Internet is provided at some locations (free or for a charge) Personal computer is optional.
- Bathing suit
- Small alarm clock
- Small bills (singles and fives)
- Walking stick, lightweight, fold-up (optional)

Suggested Medical Supplies

- Band Aids – normal and blister types
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Sleeping aids (for travel & first couple nights)
- Pain Relievers
- Mole skin
- Foot powder
- Alcohol rubs
- **Sunscreen**
- Hand sanitizer/wet ones – travel size to put in packs. Clean hands is a must
- Any prescription drugs

Tips

- Train for strenuous climbing – stair stepping, lunges, walking, running, hiking
- Drink water frequently
- Apply sunscreen frequently
- Wear boots everyday (unless George says otherwise)
- Hand wash clothes is most convenient
- Organize clothes and packs each evening
- Keep toilet paper handy (some bathrooms are made by the hand of God)
- Pack a set of hiking clothes in carry-on luggage as well as boots.

DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSPORT

KEEP A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT IN YOUR LUGGAGE

Gadgets & Gear

Please think about bringing minimal electronic gear and gadgets. Please do not use cell phones during the day unless it's for picture taking purposes. All personal items are completely safe on the bus. If you bring a personal laptop, some hotels have internet for free or for a small charge.

Sorry, no electronic recording of faith lessons permitted for copyright purposes.

Recommended Reading List

- **The Text:** Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Matthew
- **The Source,** by James Michener
- **DO NOT** watch Ray Vander Laan's DVD's before experience
- **BE SURE TO** watch Ray's DVD's AFTER our experience

Prayer Team

Essential for this trip is to ask five to ten people to be a part of your prayer team. Make sure they receive a copy of our itinerary and among the things

- For travel safety to, from and within Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. Psalm 43:3
- For health and strength for participants to make the most of this gift. 1 Samuel 25:6, Nehemiah 8:10, John 17:21
- For the leaders of the group, for good choices, good communication, for sensitivity, and patience. Galatians 5:25
- For all of us to grow in our understanding of the Bible and to deepen our faith in Jesus Christ, our Messiah. Psalm 119:34-36, Deuteronomy 6:5
- For us to be faithful witnesses during this trip wherever we go. 2 Timothy 4:2
- For the glory of God in all of this. Psalm 34:3

If you have further questions please visit our website at www.underthefigtree.org or contact Janie at GTI Tours in Holland, MI – 1.800.829.8234 or Janie@gtitours.net at any time.