



Israel and Jordan Tour

A Shores Study Tours Itinerary

September 11-18, 2025

Tour hosted by Rev. Andrew Corke



In the steps of the ancient people of Israel and Jesus the Messiah, we'll travel up to Jerusalem to explore Israel's ancient capital. We'll visit Bethlehem and the Desert fortresses of Masada and Ein Gedi followed by a dip in the Dead Sea. Then after five nights staying inside the Old City of Jerusalem, we'll travel along the ancient Way of the Sea to the heartland of Israel to explore the land of Galilee, staying on the Lake itself. We will then travel across the River Jordan to explore the fascinating sights of the other part of the Holy Land, the kingdom of Jordan, including a whole day in Petra.

This tour is designed both for those who are new to Israel and Jordan and those who have been before and includes optional excursions for returning travelers giving the opportunity to explore different parts of Jerusalem and the Land of Israel.

Day 1 Thursday, September 11, 2025

ARRIVAL IN THE LAND OF PROMISE

We fly out of Luton on an El Al scheduled flight to arrive at Ben Gurion about 15.00. We meet our guide (Elin Elkouby) and travel to Jerusalem where we will be staying for the next five nights at Christchurch Guesthouse, right inside the **Old City**. After dinner those who wish can take a short, guided walk over the rooftops of the **Old City**.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 2 Friday, September 12

OPTIONS FOR THE MORNING, AFTERNOON IN BETHLEHEM

In the morning there are two options. We can visit the **City of David**, the place where it all begun and take a walk through Hezekiah's tunnel to the **Pool of Siloam**. The other option is to travel to **Yad Vashem**, the Israel Memorial Museum to the Holocaust. Here we examine the spiritual and theological roots of the most notorious genocide in history and the connection between the Church, Jesus and the Jewish people.

In the afternoon, we take the short drive to **Bethlehem**, where we will visit the Church of the Nativity, which marks the probable side of the birth of Jesus, and the "**Shepherd's Field's**" where the angels heralded the advent of Messiah. We will also visit a gift shop owned by local Christians which is great for shopping.

Evening - after dinner we will join in worship and hear about the work of CMJ

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City Jerusalem

Day 3 Saturday, September 13

IN THE STEPS OF JESUS –CRUCIFIXION, DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION



Today we focus on sites related to the Biblical passages concerning Jesus' last week in Jerusalem. Our goal is to understand why He was crucified, how He was buried, and what it meant to the Jewish people of the First Century that He was raised from the dead. We begin our day with the famous panorama of Jerusalem from the **Mount of Olives**, the site of Jesus, coming. After viewing a **tomb from the time of Jesus**, we will walk down the Mount of Olives', the site of Jesus 'lives to **Gethsemane**.

Next, we cross the **Kidron Valley** and enter the Old City through **Stephen's Gate**, stopping to examine the remains of the **Pool of Bethesda** and **St Anne's church** (known as "the singing church" because of its stunning acoustics). From here we walk up the **Via Dolorosa** (the traditional walk taken by Jesus to his crucifixion) to the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, the most likely site of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. After lunch in the Old City we end our tour with a reflective time at a site that wonderfully illustrates Jesus' burial and resurrection, the peaceful **Garden Tomb** where we will share communion. The rest of the afternoon is free though there will be an optional walk down to the peaceful garden of the Austrian Convent for tea and *Sachertorte* (Viennese chocolate cake).

In the evening, we will expand our understanding of the role of the Lamb of God by celebrating a **Jewish Passover Seder meal** together, led by Ralph making Biblical connection to the "last supper" that Jesus shared with his disciples.

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 4 Sunday, September 14

JERUSALEM AT THE TIME OF JESUS –THE TEMPLE AT THE CENTRE

Today will be devoted to learning about Jerusalem in Jesus' day, when the Temple in Jerusalem was the centre of Jewish life. We will study how worship was performed in the temple, the Sadducees and Jesus' attitude towards them, and generally enrich our insight into many important events in the gospels and book of Acts. An early start will take us up to the **Temple Mount** (conditions permitting), where we'll consider some of Jesus' activities there, as well as the claim of



Islam. After a visit to the **Western Wall** place of prayer, Judaism's most holy site, we will take a trip to the subterranean **Western Wall Tunnels** to walk at what was street level in the time of Jesus. We visit the excavations near the base of the Temple Mount and discuss Pentecost on the **Southern Steps** where Jesus walked. After lunch in the Old City, we then make our way through the **Jewish Quarter** to see the **Herodian Villas**, the palatial mansions that were the home to the Sadducees, the ruling priesthood at the time of Jesus. The rest of the afternoon is free. However, for those who wish there will be the opportunity to take the short walk to the church of **St Peter in Gallicantu**, reputedly the site of the house of Caiaphas, high priest at the time of the Jesus, with its atmospheric cistern in which Jesus may have been imprisoned overnight before his trial.

For those who have been to Jerusalem before there is an alternative itinerary for the day with the option to visit sites in West Jerusalem. We will drive to the **Knesset**, the Israeli Parliament for a tour of the building providing a fascinating insight into the history of the State of Israel. We will drive to the **Shrine of the Book** (housing the Dead Sea Scrolls) and look at the famous

model of Jerusalem in the First Century and the **Israel Museum** containing thousands of biblical artifacts. We will then enjoy a walking tour of West Jerusalem taking in the **Ben Yehuda market** and **Mea Shearim**, the ultra-orthodox district of West Jerusalem before returning to Christchurch.

After dinner there will be the opportunity to join the congregation at Christ Church for their Sunday evening English language service. Then we will take the short walk over to the Tower of David Museum (opposite Christ Church) for the “*Night Spectacular*” Sound and Light show.
Overnight : Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 5 Monday, September 15

DOWN THE JORDAN VALLEY -SEEKING REFUGE IN THE WILDERNESS



Our theme today is the Wilderness and what it signified to the ancient Israelites and to believers in the time of Jesus. We travel down the Jordan Valley and visit the **Baptismal Site** at Bethany beyond the Jordan, the most likely site of Jesus’ baptism, where there will be an opportunity to reaffirm our baptism. We then drive on to the **Dead Sea**, the lowest place on earth. Most of us will visit **Masada**, Herod the Great’s magnificent fortress palace in the desert, and the last stand of the Zealots, a Jewish revolutionary group at the time of Jesus. For those who have visited Masada before, there will be an alternative option of taking a walk up the beautiful **Wadi David at Ein Gedi**, where David sought refuge from Saul. In the afternoon we’ll take a dip in the waters of the Dead Sea at a spa on the shores of the Lake before returning to Jerusalem only 45 minutes away. (If time permits, we will also call into **Qumran**, the location of the most exciting archaeological discovery ever made in Israel, the **Dead Sea Scrolls**). On returning to Christ Church, we will join for dinner for our last night in Jerusalem at the “*Panorama Restaurant*” with its spectacular views over the Old City

Overnight: Christ Church Guesthouse, Old City, Jerusalem

Day 6 Tuesday, September 16

A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS -JEWS, GENTILES AND THE MESSIAH

We drive along the route of the ancient **Via Maris** to the fabulous ruins of the Herodian city of **Caesarea Maritima**, the site of the conversion of Cornelius and where Paul set sail on his journey to Rome. We move on to **Mount Carmel**, with its spectacular view over the North of Israel, where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. Our final stop of the day is Nazareth where we hope to visit the **Convent of the Sisters of Nazareth (the possible site of Jesus’ childhood home)**, the **Basilica of the Annunciation**, the **Synagogue Church** and the **Greek Catholic Church** (our driver Bishara’s home church) We’ll conclude with a visit to Bishara’s favourite baklava shop! Our hotel overnight is right on north shore of the **Sea of Galilee**. There should be time for a dip in the Lake before dinner.

Overnight: Nof Ginosar Hotel, by the Sea of Galilee

Day 7 Wednesday, September 17

AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE -DAILY LIFE AND RELIGION IN THE TIME OF JESUS

Today will be spent visiting various sites around the Sea of Galilee as we try to picture daily life and religion in the First Century and seek to understand better the miracles and teachings of Jesus in His original Jewish context. We will start the day at the **Mount of Beatitudes**, the traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount, where we will consider the Kingdom of God in Jesus' teachings. We will then visit the **Katzrin Museum of rural life** which recreates a typical Galilean village, where we will study village life, Jewish religion, and the Pharisees. We will then have the opportunity to purchase a lunch of "St Peter's Fish" at one of the fish restaurants beside the Sea. After lunch a short drive takes us to **Capernaum**, the town where Jesus lived during the majority of His ministry. If time permits, we will stop off at lovely **Tabgha**, with its famous mosaic which commemorates the multiplication of loaves and fish, and near to where Jesus met the disciples after the resurrection.



Later in the afternoon we will return to Kibbutz Ginosar where we will see the famous "**Jesus Boat**", a Galilean fishing boat from the First Century. From here we will set sail on a **boat ride on the Lake** to enjoy the views and some worship and share communion. After dinner we will meet with a local believer.

Overnight: Nof Ginosar Hotel, by the Sea of Galilee

Day 8 Thursday, September 18

CROSSING THE JORDAN AND THE DESERT HIGHWAY

Those not travelling to Jordan will depart for Ben Gurion airport after breakfast. We will visit the ancient port of **Jaffa**, the point from which Jonah tried to escape his calling to warn the people of Nineveh and the location of Simon the Tanner's house for a stroll around the ancient port. If possible, we will visit Beit Immanuel CMJ's guesthouse in Jaffa) for lunch.

From there it is just a short ride from **Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv** for a late afternoon flight.

For those travelling on to Jordan

CROSSING THE JORDAN

We take an early morning journey to the Jordanian border and cross the King Hussein Bridge. We meet our guide and then drive to the spectacular **Wadi Rum** (where "*Lawrence of Arabia*" was filmed) where we will experience a **jeep safari** and drink Bedouin tea in a desert tent (there may also be the opportunity for a camel ride time permitting). We then travel on to **Petra** for the night.

Overnight: Hyatt Zeman, Petra

Day 9 Friday, September 19

'THE ROSE RED CITY, HALF AS OLD AS TIME'

Today is devoted to exploring **Petra**, one of the most remarkable places on earth. We'll discuss the mysteries of the Nabataean traders and their strategic location along the silk and spice trade routes between the east and west. We enter the city through the Siq, a narrow slit in the mountains, with walls towering 80 meters on each side. We will spend the whole day walking around the twists and turns of this magnificent gorge city, including the famous **Treasury**, the **Monastery**, the **Temple** and **early church remains** and the spectacular **rock tombs** of the **Nabatean** civilisation.



Overnight : Hyatt Zeman, Petra

Day 10 Saturday, September 20

THE DESERT HIGHWAY

Saying goodbye to Petra, we turn north up the Desert Highway parallel to the Israelites' route when they made their wilderness journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. We stop first at the magnificent Crusader castle of **Karak**, built on the location of the ancient Moabite capital, Kir Hareseth. We continue to **Madaba**, known as the City of Mosaics dating to the Byzantine and Umayyad eras and home to the **famous 6th century mosaic map** of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. After the opportunity to enjoy lunch at a traditional Jordanian restaurant, we will stop at **Mt. Nebo**, burial site of Moses overlooking the Jordan Valley with spectacular views towards Jerusalem.

Overnight: Movenpick, Amman

Day 11 Sunday, September 21

"TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH"

We say farewell to **Jordan** and return back over the border via the Allenby Bridge, descending through the mountains of Judea to the coast. We will visit the ancient port of **Jaffa**, the point from which Jonah tried to escape his calling to warn the people of Nineveh and the location of **Simon the Tanner's house** for a stroll round the ancient port. If time permits, we will visit Beith Immanuel (CMJ) 'guesthouse in Jaffa).

From there it is just a short ride from **Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv** for a late afternoon flight back to Luton.

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE:

- *Most days on this itinerary involve a regular amount of walking. Therefore, this trip cannot generally accommodate those who have significant difficulty with climbing stairs or walking half a mile at a time. Please be in contact with the trip leaders if you have any concerns about this.*
 - *Itinerary and accommodation subject to change if conditions necessitate.*
- It is mandatory for each participant to have travel insurance to cover medical costs or trip cancellations.*

As of August 1, 2024, all international travellers from visa-exempt countries must have a valid ETA-IL prior to departing for Israel. The ETA-IL is an online authorization system designed to simplify the entry process to Israel.

Here's what you need to know about the ETA - IL:

- Eligible visitors can stay up to 90 days (about 3 months) upon receipt of approval through the ETA-IL system.
- Approval remains valid for up to two years or until the passport expires. No need for repeated applications during this period.
- In case of passport renewal or changes in personal information, a new travel permit is required.
- International travellers who require a valid visa to visit Israel do not need to apply for the ETA-IL as well.
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The cost of ETA-IL is NIS 25 (This was the price set in July 2024, but is not guaranteed going forward.)

Upon arriving in the country, ETA-IL holders will be able to use the electronic check-in machines previously available only to Israeli citizens and residents to complete their entry process. This should help visitors get through customs more quickly than ever.

The new ETA-IL (Electronic Travel Authorisation) system offers several benefits for visitors to the country. Firstly, it streamlines the entry process by allowing travellers to complete the necessary formalities online before their arrival. This saves valuable time and reduces potential delays. The check-in process for ETA-IL holders is designed to be simple and convenient.

For ETA-IL applications, visit: <https://israel-entry.piba.gov.il/>.