

TODAY'S TOPIC: COMMUNICATION

Pre-trip communication is one of the most important things we can do to have a successful group trip! Get involved, ask questions, and get to know your fellow travelers.

- **We will connect and get to know each other, share information, make decisions, and prepare for the things we need to do to be ready to travel.**
- **It is important that we all stay informed and do what is asked of you. We have a lot of people & moving parts so your involvement & responses are important.**



Essential information will be emailed to you. Keep an email folder with the things you need to know, documents, flight information, receipts, etc.



WhatsApp will be our primary communication method while traveling. It's a text & calling app that is free while on wi-fi. You can send pictures, videos, and call others if they also have WhatsApp. Be sure that anyone you will need to call while traveling is also on WhatsApp. Put the icon on your phone's home screen.

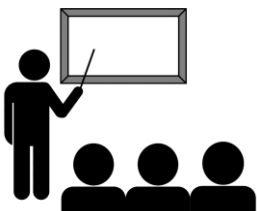


Facebook for Friends & Family to follow our journey: Join this group and invite them to also:

[Holy Land 2024 for friends & family to follow our journey! | Facebook](#)



Use your smartphone! Set up a folder to put screenshots or photos of your flight info & documents you need for your trip. Wifi is available on busses and in hotels + many of the sites. More info on international phone plans will follow.



We will have social gathering this summer to help everyone get connected and a meeting before the trip to answer any questions you may have and discuss how our trips run.

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Prayers, Devotions, & Scripture Reading



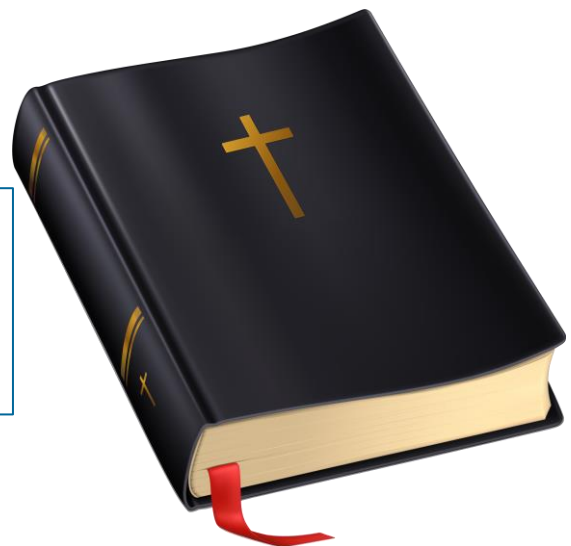
We will start each tour day with a prayer on the bus and, in Israel, anyone that wants to can read Scripture about the sites we visit and/or do a devotion as well. Please use the Google docs links below to note your name in the column to sign up for Prayers or Scripture readings and/or Devotions.

[Prayers 2024 - Google Docs](#)

[Scripture Reading & Devotions 2024 - Google Docs](#)

You do not need to save this document as it will update and be ready for the next person's input.

We will read from the Bible, not our phones, as is preferred in the Holy Land. You are welcome to bring yours (small format recommended) or use one provided.



Our guides in each country are different religions and practice the customs of their countries.

Greece – Greek Orthodox Christian

Israel – Jewish (but knows Old & New Testament well)

Jordan – Catholic believer

Egypt – Muslim but respects Christian beliefs

We get a good sampling of other religions on this trip!

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Walking!!!

Why NO METAL in your water shoes?

The salts in the Dead Sea will eat away at any metal you wear!

HIKING!

Egypt – Mt. Sinai Optional

We leave at midnight & return about 8am, hiking or riding a camel part-way to the top for sunrise. It can be cool/cold going up & hot going down but it is amazing. Moderate + level hike, rocky trail. Extra fees (budget \$30) apply and go to Bedouins.

Israel – Masada

Hike 45 minutes up the Snake Trail (or take the gondola) for sunrise here too. Everyone goes! Moderate hike up, dirt trail, gondola down.

Jordan – Petra

Walk 1.5 miles to the Treasury or further if you wish. Easy walk on dirt trail except for slight uphill on return last ¼ mile. Optional golf cart (\$250 for 5 people) or horse for part of return. Amazing site!

Greece

NO true hikes but up/down hills in many places.



We walk 2-4 miles each day but each country & terrain is unique. It could be *indoors, outdoors, on gravel, concrete, asphalt, sand, or dirt, in water or through water, uphill or downhill, on slippery or stable ground*. There are no ADA paths of travel.

Be sure your shoes have a **good tread** and that you have both closed toe shoes (trail shoes are good) and walking sandals without metal that can go in water. Break in the shoes before the trip! Make sure they are comfortable, breathe, and are lightweight.

We keep a moderate pace but we can't speed up or slow down much. If you need to start walking now to build endurance, find a program or a buddy and get started. Though you can rest on the bus or in the hotel, we want everyone to experience everything on this journey and not miss out!

Shoes

Suggestions:
Trail shoe (low)
Water/walking sandal (no metal)



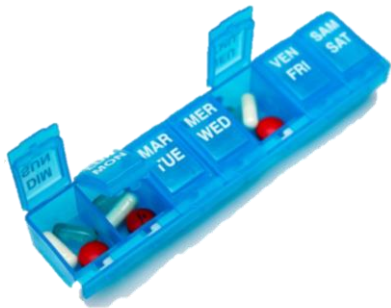
These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Vaccines, medicines, and aids while traveling

MEDICATIONS

- Keep it organized & labeled!
- Take a photo of all your pill bottles showing doctor's name/#, drug name/mg/scrip#. Keep this photo on your phone or give to Debbie in case it's needed in an emergency.
- You do not need to take full bottles – put it in labeled pill storage organizers like below.
- Consider ordering [PillPacks](#) but plan ahead.
- Keep meds on the plane with you – not in a checked bag!!



VACCINES

NO vaccines are required but these are recommended by CDC: Chickenpox, DTP, flue, MMR, polio, shingles, COVID-19, tetanus.

CDC RECOMMENDATIONS:

[Greece](#) [Israel](#)
[Jordan](#) [Egypt](#)

You can take walking sticks, canes, sleep apnea machines, etc. ON the plane as medical devices and they do not count as luggage. See TSA's rules here: [TSA Medical](#) but also check with your airline.



- Talk to your doctor about what vaccines he/she recommends before traveling. Have them print a medications list if possible.
- Be sure to get enough meds in advance to last the duration of your trip + a week.
- Get a new copy of prescriptions while traveling if meds are lost. Tour guides can help with this if we have the prescription.
- If you are prone to diarrhea or don't want to listen to guidelines about what to eat or not eat in Egypt, ask your doctor for a strong anti-diarrheal medicine to take with you (Egypt only). Recommended for everyone going to Egypt!

TODAY'S TOPIC: Packing for the trip!

PACK LIGHT!! Set out everything you want to take and put half away! If you won't wear it at least twice, don't take it! You won't regret this! Try to pack in one rolling duffel or suitcase (<20-22" per your airline's carry-on allowance + one backpack or tote (with sleeve to fit over carry-on handle) + one foldable tote to pack IN your suitcase for all the extra things you bring home. Packing cubes are helpful for organizing and compressing clothes. You must limit liquid/aerosol/cream toiletries to one quart-size clear bag as sine airlines are very strict about this.

If you have to pack in checked (under plane) luggage, be sure to pack extra clothes in your backpack or tote to keep with you in case your luggage is lost. Travelers on our trips have been without for the whole trip!

LUGGAGE

Hard or soft sided luggage (or a combo) is OK. Be sure the main piece has 4 good wheels, a handle & is lightweight. We suggest putting a luggage strap around the luggage in case the zipper breaks. TJ Maxx, Marshalls, & Ross have good deals on luggage. You can buy expensive luggage but it will get dinged up. I like [eBags](#) and hard-side but find what you like.



We provide luggage tags for you to use!

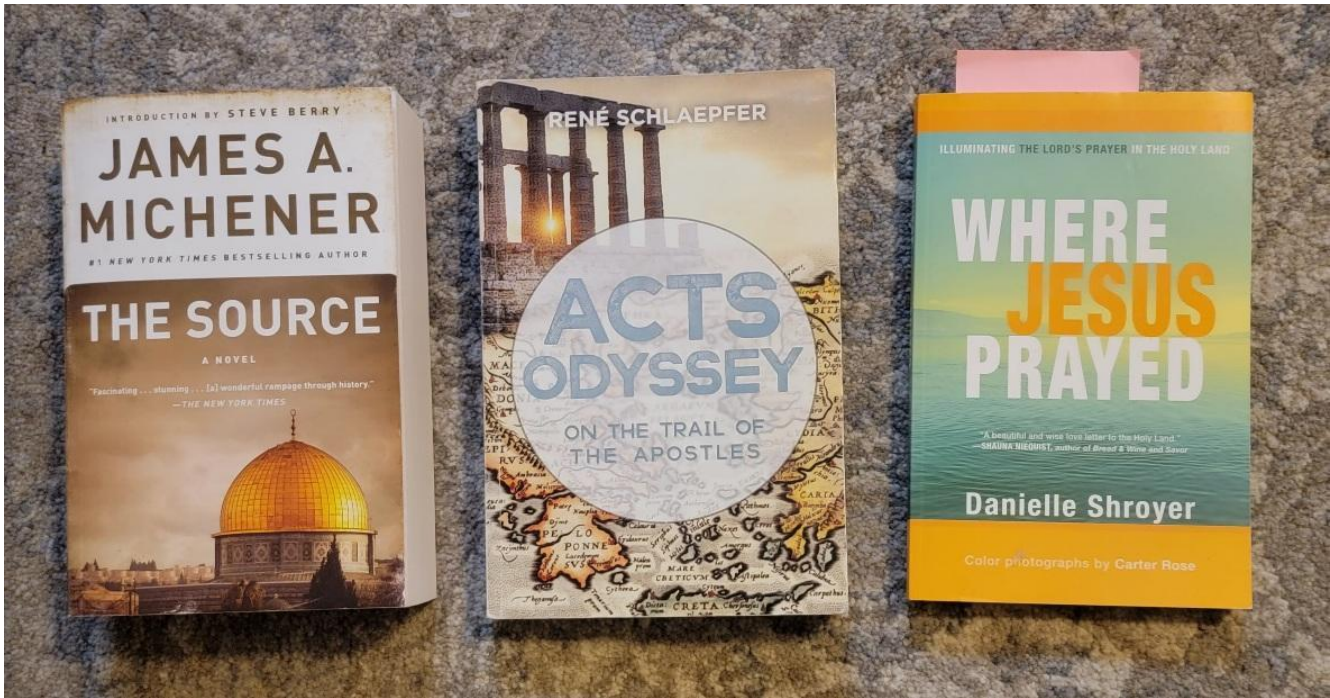
Our Packing List and amazon wish list are on the website here: [Packing list, suggested clothing, amazon wish list, & suggested items](#)

Oct/Nov Temps	Day Avg	Night Avg
Greece	65	53
Israel	77	60
Jordan	67	59
Egypt	76	55

In the Fall season, we expect very comfortable weather but could face hotter or cooler than average. You will need a jacket and pants for the Mt. Sinai hike in Egypt (maybe gloves & hat) and for nights in Jerusalem.

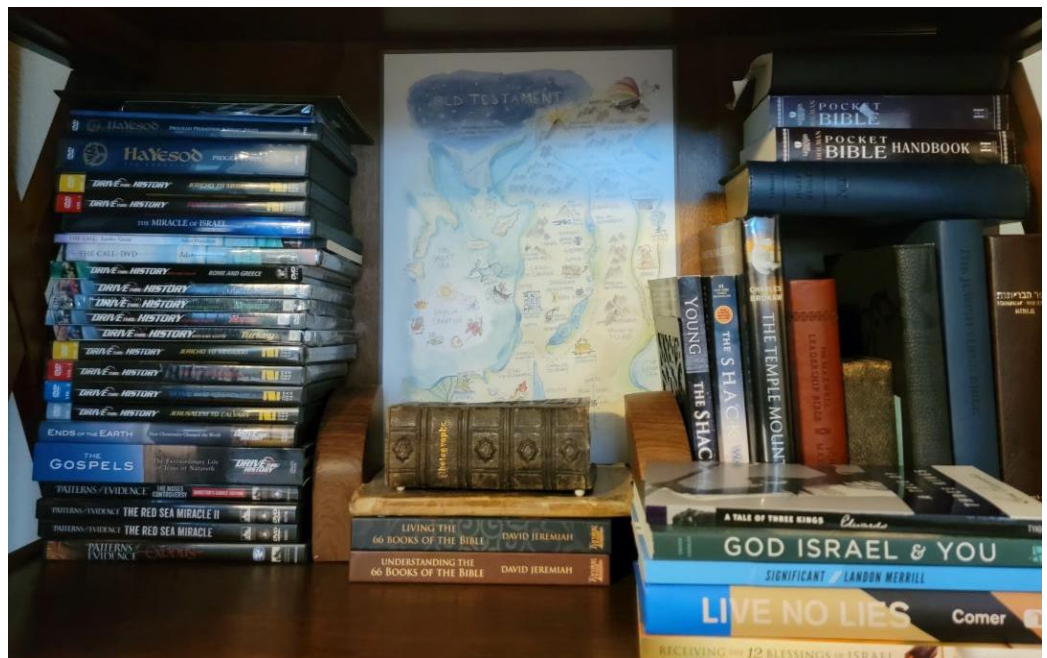
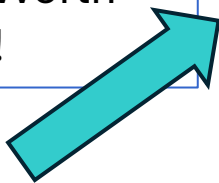
TODAY'S TOPIC: Resources page 1

Reading about the Holy Land is so much different than being there, but it helps to become familiar in advance. These books & DVDs are available to borrow. Please return before the trip. Zoom in on the pics!!



These books are “must read” for Israel (The Source) and Greece (Acts Odyssey). Where Jesus Prayed is an easy preview of where you’ll be.

The 12 Drive-Thru History DVDs are incredible (and funny) narrations of different parts of Israel. Worth watching!



These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website. Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Resources page 4



These two are new and I haven't read them yet but they look interesting!



These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website. Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Airline Apps

If you know how to use the airline apps on your phone, disregard this information.

If you don't have your airline app(s) on your phone, follow along Contact Debbie if you need help.

1. Once you have decided on and booked a flight, go to that airline's mileage program and be sure you are signed up to earn miles. Your mileage program # must be in your itinerary. You can add it through the app or by calling. We fly a long way and you should earn miles for these trips.
2. Download the airline app(s) to your phone, set up a login, and be sure your trip is loaded in the My Trips, Find a Flight, Find Trip, My United (or similar) section. You may need to input the booking or confirmation # from your flight booking.
3. If you haven't already done so, you can select your SEATS from the app easily. I check the app often and adjust my seats as I find ones I prefer. You can also upgrade your seats (recommend higher than basic economy) and/or pre-pay for BAGS (recommend this for Aegean for Greece to Israel).
4. Your airline will have a section to Prepare for Travel. Be sure your passport # and all other required information is provided. You will probably not be able to check in online but will need to show your passport at the airport on travel day.
5. The app will notify you via text or email (you set that; I suggest text) if your flight changes or if you they have updates.
6. Each traveler is responsible for being ready to fly. If you have questions, please ask. **I'm happy to help!**



TODAY'S TOPIC: Money



- You can use US dollars everywhere except Greece where Euros are much preferred.
- You can get currency for the different countries at the ATMs in each country, but I suggest you get it before you go. We won't have much time to stop and it's more expensive to do so there. It's fun to use local currency if you want the challenge!
- Ask your bank to order foreign currency for you if you wish, at least 3 weeks before departure. You can return excess at your bank when you return home.
- We collect minimal tips from you with your final invoice, but you may wish to tip extra in the local currency in our "thank you" cards.
- Organize your currency in envelopes +1 for receipts (for customs & VAT refunds)



KEEP IT SAFE!	Greece – Euros	Israeli Shekel	Jordanian Dinar	Egyptian pound
Do you need to take this currency?	YES. Greece prefers Euros.	No. Israel will take shekels or dollars.	No. Jordan will take dinar or dollars.	No. Egypt will take pounds or dollars.
What will you need cash for?	Lunch \$12-15/day Snacks? Street shopping Extra tips	Lunch \$12-15/day Bottled water is \$25/tour or \$1/bottle Snacks? Shopping in markets Extra tips Baptism/camel	Lunch \$12-15/day Snacks ?? Shopping @ Petra & travel center Snorkeling/camel/Petra golf cart Extra tips	Lunch \$10-15/day Snacks ?? Street shopping Extra tips Bathrooms Mt. Sinai/camel
Can you use a credit card?	Yes, in stores but prefer euros for small purchases/lunch	Yes, in stores but not in markets	Yes, in stores	Yes, in stores
It's better to take more than run short of cash but we help each other out!				
How much should you take? It really depends on how you spend!	\$500 ? There is more shopping in Greece than other countries.	\$400 ?	\$150 ?	\$120 ?
Exchange rate as of 7/15/24 \$1 = x foreign. Changes often!	.92 5 euro = \$4.60	3.63 5 shekels = \$1.37	.71 5 dinar = \$7.04	47.94 5 pound = \$.10

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Hotels

Click on the links to see all of our gorgeous and well-located hotels!

GREECE

Celestyal Cruises

(4 nights)

Athens – Titiana Hotel

(3 nights)

Athens Hotel Greece | Titania Hotel in
the Heart of the City

Thessaloniki – Mediterranean Palace

(2 nights)

Hotels Thessaloniki | 5 star Hotel |
Mediterranean Palace Hotel |
(mediterranean-palace.gr)

ISRAEL

Tel Aviv - Herod's (1-2 nights)

<https://www.herods-hotels.com/herods-hotels/herods-tel-aviv/>

Sea of Galilee – Magdala (3 nights)

<https://www.magdalahotel.com/>

Dead Sea – Herod's (1 night)

<https://www.herods-hotels.com/herods-hotels/herods-dead-sea/>

Jerusalem – Leonardo Boutique (5 nights) or Herbert Samuel (TBD)

<https://herbertsamuel.com/en/herbert-samuel-jerusalem-hotel/>
Walk to the City Center!

JORDAN

Amman – Crowne Plaza Amman (2 nights)

https://www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels/gb/en/amman/ammhb/hoteldetail?cm_mmc=BingMaps_-CP_-JO_-AMMHB

Aqaba – Aqaba Kempinski (2 nights)

<https://www.kempinski.com/en/aqaba/hotel-aqaba/>

**The most beautiful hotel we've ever
stayed in! You will love it!**

EGYPT

Mt. Sinai – Morgenland (1 night)

<http://morgenland-village.net/>

A simple place to sleep.

Cairo – Steigenberger Hotel (3 nights)

<https://www.steigenberger.com/en/hotels/all-hotels/egypt/cairo/steigenberger-pyramids-cairo>

**The Pyramids and Grand Museum are
across the street!**

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Food



Schwarma, schnitzel, or falafel for lunch!

Best hummus!



In Egypt, we must be careful what we consume! We will talk about this.



Quiz: Do Israeli Jews eat this? Will you? Let me know!



Israeli coffee is amazing but who will find a Starbucks?

Water bottles are available on all busses!



FOOD!
Food fuels our days and you will find so much variety in every country!
Whether you want to just eat familiar American-type foods, explore local cuisine, have dietary restrictions, or want to stick to salads, you will find an amazing array of options everywhere we go. Mediterranean food is delicious & healthy! Desserts are plentiful and many are made without milk – try to guess which ones! Lunch is a quick stop (your expense) during our days, but breakfast & dinner are abundant buffet offerings & included. Take snacks from breakfast if you wish. Beer/wine is available but is not included.



You can take spices & foods from Israeli markets home!!

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: Traveler & Bus Etiquette

We have a wonderful group of travelers but it's always helpful to have some guidelines for the trip. Kindness and respect is key when we spend so much time with others. Some are new to international travel so let's teach them how great it is!

Be ON TIME.

Debbie's nightly WhatsApp text will tell you times and details for the next day. Please be on time so we can keep to our busy schedule. Our days are full and many activities are time sensitive. Set your alarms early if needed to be on time in the morning, back from lunch, or free time.

Help each other.

Everyone needs to be self-sufficient but there are times when we can all be helpful with luggage, navigating paths, reminders, finding a lunch buddy, & more.

Listen!

Please LISTEN to your guides & drivers. They have so much to teach us and we don't want to talk over them so that others can't hear. We'll have headsets in many areas but, if you need to get close to the guide to hear, please do.

WhatsApp

Use the group message for group issues but please message privately for 1:1 questions that aren't relevant to the whole group.

Bus Seating

Except for the front row, seating is unassigned. Though there are no "best seats", please be flexible and not expect your favorite seat to be available or "saved" for you. We also want you to meet new people so move around!

Luggage

We will provide luggage identification & tags. We will explain the plan for luggage on & off the bus at hotels but we need to help each other get luggage at airports.

Tour Pace

We keep a moderate pace and can't speed up or slow down for individual preferences. Take rest breaks on the bus if needed.

Sherutim: What does it mean? You will need it!

Bathroom Breaks

We will have many! Please use each opportunity and don't wait until you're late for the bus departure! You will see signs for bathrooms at every site.

Take a Buddy!

If you go off from the group or out at night, please take a buddy with you for safety and to be sure you get back to where you need to be. Most people will want to explore with you!

Photos

We will take some group pics and people will be taking lots of photos. If you don't want to be in them, you must opt out. Please offer to take pictures of others so everyone gets some of themselves.

Colossians 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy & beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, & patience.

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.

TODAY'S TOPIC: International wireless & WIFI



- We will have WIFI at airports, on some busses, at hotels, and at some sites. Some coverage is spotty. Onboard Greece cruise is terrible.
- WhatsApp is FREE on WIFI or when using an international plan for talk, text, & data.
- If you need to have service ALL the time, you will need an international plan.
- If you do not buy an international plan and do not want to pay ROAMING fees, be sure to **turn off ROAMING** in your phone settings.

Here's a good article about international plan options:

[International phone plans](#)

International Plans (as of 4/16/24)	AT&T	T-Mobile	Verizon
Name of plan	International Day Pass	Roaming with T-Mobile	TravelPass
How it works	Contact AT&T to have it turned on, no need to turn off – just leave it on for the next trip	215 countries and destinations at no extra charge, while voice calls are \$0.25/minute. Contact T-Mobile to confirm your plan.	Fee per day or Pay as you go. Contact Verizon to turn on.
Cost	\$12 per 24 hour period, only charged when used	None	\$10 per day
Details	Unlimited data, talk, text	215 countries and destinations at no extra charge, while voice calls are \$0.25/minute.	Unlimited talk, text, data

These updates are posted in the Registered Travelers section of our website.

Password is **godisgood**.