

TMS Israel Trip FAQ'S

Will I need a passport and visa?

A current passport IS REQUIRED and must not expire until six months after our return date. If you don't already have a valid passport or have one that will expire less than six months after our return date, Please apply immediately, as it may take several weeks to process. Don't delay in applying for your passport!! A visa, however, is not required.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>

Are there any vaccinations required for this trip?

No vaccinations, except the COVID vaccination, are required. For more details, consult the "Trip Details" file. You can access it through a link on the main trip website page.

What should I bring with me on the trip?

After the trip roster is settled, Dr. Grisanti will email a file that provides some guidance on what to bring and what to expect for weather.

I live outside of California. May I travel directly to Israel, or do I need to join the group at LAX?

You can contact our travel agent (his contact info found in the trip details file) if you wish to arrive earlier or depart later than the group. You are also free to use your own agent or book your own flight. Since our flight this year is non-stop, there are no midpoints where you can join those travelling on our group itinerary. If you do travel on your own and there are scheduling conflicts or late flights, you will need to "roll with the punches". If you do travel on your own to Israel, the land-only cost of the trip is \$3250.00 (for TMS students (and spouses) or \$3700.00 for TMS alumni and non-TMS participants. See the trip details for more information about connecting with the group in Israel.

Itinerary details are provided on this website, so you can make accurate flight plans if you choose to make your own flight arrangements.

In light of the current conflicts in the Middle East, how safe is it to travel to Israel?

Helpful website: <https://waynestiles.com/is-it-safe-to-travel-to-israel/>

Rest assured that TMS does not want to put you in harm's way. We would not have you travel to Israel if we were convinced it is not safe. We do not go near Gaza during our trip, we do not hang around border crossings, and we do not match the profile that terrorists pursue (people in uniform).

In every part of the world, we cannot avoid random events over which we have absolutely no control. Nevertheless, Israel is an amazingly safe place to be. Dr. Grisanti has been to Israel over 30 times and has never felt unsafe. Events like those that are reported in US media are not commonplace at all. In the end, we trust God's providence and we are in continuous communication with people who know the status of travel in Israel.

Is there a way I can study and prepare for the teaching on this trip?

As the trip roster gets settled, **Dr. Grisanti will send by email several study suggestions to the group participants directly.** These resources will help those interested in laying some groundwork for what we hope

to learn during our time together. Once the first main payment deadline passes, Dr. Grisanti will mail to each person participating in the TMS trip a copy of a great resource, the *Satellite Bible Atlas*. You will carry that around during the trip, esp. on the days we are travelling outside of Jerusalem. He will also provide links to other helpful resources.

Can I get baptized during the TMS trip?

This question deserves more time than I (Dr. G) can give in this setting. The short answer is “No”. As the trip leader, this is my decision. On the one hand, having a full schedule and limited time on the day when it might have happened is a genuine factor. On the other hand, I firmly believe that the NT presents baptism as a local church ordinance, to be witnessed by the brethren who will hold that person accountable to pursuing the life proclaimed by their baptism. To be clear, I am not condemning other trip leaders (that include friends of mine) who perform baptisms during their trips. I must live by my biblical beliefs and conscience.

What happens if TMS decides to cancel the TMS Israel trip (never happened except last year)?

Short answer: Get trip insurance as a wise precaution.

This only happened once—last year—due to COVID shutdowns. Regardless, if we decide to cancel the F&F trip *before the money is paid to the land and air vendors*, we will fully refund the deposit or whatever a person has paid. However, after the full payment is made and that money goes to the airline and the land vendors, the money is out of our hands. If things get so bad at that point that we make the painful decision to cancel the trip (which I do not at all expect), **we have no access to that money**. *That is where the travel insurance kicks in*. That is why we are encouraging concerned people to buy the travel insurance—*making sure they understand the parameters of the policy they choose*.

What happens if there is another outbreak of COVID and our trip is cancelled?

In March 2020, I led a Family and Friends trip to Israel and we made it to Israel just as people were talking about COVID and we were one of the last trips to depart the country before Israel shut down. The normal policy for airlines and travel insurance companies was not to refund travel that was cancelled by “an act of God”. Because of the widespread nature of the impact of COVID all airlines and most travel insurance companies issued refunds.

Every indication is that COVID will be less of a problem and vaccines will be available by May 2021. In the end, we do not know for sure what the near future holds. I am trusting for the best and planning accordingly. I cannot and am not promising that all funds will be refunded. We will have to take things as they come. However, if it becomes apparent that we need to refund the money paid to TMS (before we send money to our vendors) we will refund it. After that, it will depend on the decisions made by airlines and travel insurance companies.

We will look at the situation very carefully before the money is sent off to the air and land vendors. I am very, very hopeful/confident that we will be able to do this trip. My contacts in the travel world, esp. in Israel, have the same idea. Regardless, we will seek to be wise. If we cancel the trip before we send the money to the air and land vendors (after the main payment is due), we will refund that deposit and main payment. I would encourage you, if you are interested in travelling with me to Israel this month, sign up and make plans. Rest assured, I will draw on the wisdom of others when we approach the time to make a final decision.