

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 for US citizens. If you have a passport from another country, find out if you need a visa before arriving in Israel.

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

****For the first time, one our 2023 Israel trip participant, an African D.Min. student with a passport from his country, received a 2-week visa rather than the 3-week visa the rest of us received. What I was told that many Africans who travel to Israel stay in Israel illegally long after their visa expires. Israel's response is to give Africans very limited visas. If you are African with a passport from an African country, I have been told how to avoid this problem with an official letter from the seminary.**

Are there any vaccinations required for this trip?

No vaccinations are required.

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 arrive in Israel earlier or depart later than the group. You need to use your own agent or book your own flight. If you do travel on your own and there are scheduling conflicts or late flights, you will need to "roll with the punches" and find your own transportation to Jerusalem or to the airport at the end of the trip. If you choose the land-only option, the cost of the trip is \$3395.00 for TMS students (and spouses) or \$3945.00 for TMS alumni and non-TMS participants. See the trip details page on the trip website for more information about connecting with the group in Israel.

Flight itinerary details are provided on the TMS trip website, so you can make accurate flight plans if you choose to make your own flight arrangements. If you want to ride on the bus provided as part of the trip for bus transfers at either end of the trip, you need to arrive and depart later than the group reservation.

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

This website has a helpful article on the topic.

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 40 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.

***I (Dr. G) realize that there are still challenges Israel is facing. I am in contact with people who are closer to that situation than any of us. Make your plans as if we are going to Israel. If things change, we will refund deposits as needed.

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 includes 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 2020, 2021, and 2024)?

Short answer: Get trip insurance as a wise precaution.

Cancelling a TMS Israel trip only happened three times—2020 and 2021—due to COVID shutdowns, and 2024 because of Israel's battle with the Hamas to the West and Hezbollah to the North. Regardless, if we decide to cancel the TMS 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 after money is sent to air and land vendors (*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.*

**If we had to cancel, we would try to make that decision before money was sent to air and land vendors.