



PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND WITH VREV. JOHN PIERCE

Day 1 – Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Meals: Dinner

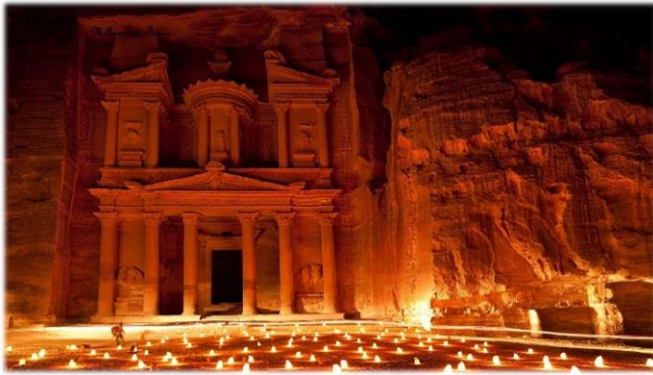
Arrival to the Queen Alia International Airport (Airport code AMM), **Amman** (Rabath Ammon of Deuteronomy 3), Jordan. Transfer to the hotel. Check-in at the hotel. In the evening: welcome dinner and orientation. *In case early arrivals: a tour of the UNESCO area of the desert Castles may be offer as an option*



Day 2 – Thursday, April 24, 2025

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

The first visit of the day will be to **Mt. Nebo**. The law-giver Moses observed the Promised Land (**Deut. 34**) from this mountain, and this is the closest he ever got to the place where he so much desired to be. For lunch, we will return to **Madaba** (Numb. 21:30 & Joshue 13:9) - a little village housing Byzantine Churches with very important mosaics, among them, one depicting the map of the Holy Land as it would appear to the pilgrims in the sixth century. Our last stop of the day will be at **Mukawir** – site of Herod's palace, where the sorrowful events (**Matt 14:1-12, Mark 6:14-27, Luke 9:9**) of the end days of St. John the Baptist most likely took place (According to Josephus Flavius). From here we will transfer to the "rose city" of Petra for dinner and overnight.



Day 3 - Friday, April 25, 2025

Meals: Breakfast, and Dinner

Petra (Biblical Sela mentioned in **Isaiah 16:1** and the burial place of Aaron, the brother of Moses (**Numbers 20:22-29**)) is the most intriguing Nabatean city carved in rock cliffs. This is a historical monument really “one of its kind anywhere in the world.” We will spend most of the day exploring ancient ruins and temples, fortifications, theater, and other buildings carved into the rock. In the morning, prior to our main visit of the day, we will explore the site of Little Petra, located just

some miles away from its more famous neighbor. For dinner and overnight we will remain in Petra.

Day 4 – Saturday, April 26, 2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner. This morning, we will leave Petra and will be re-tracking our way back to **Madaba**. Along the way, we will stop to see **Shobak Castle** which was originally called Krak de Montreal or Mons Regalis and was the first Crusader outpost beyond the Jordan River. King Baldwin I of Jerusalem built this mighty castle to guard the road from Egypt to Damascus. It resisted many sieges, but in 1189, it fell to Saladin's troops. The towers and walls are well preserved and decorated with carved Islamic inscriptions dating back to the 14th century. From here we will transfer to the deserted Byzantine camp-settlement of **Um Rassas (Mephaat in Jeremiah 48:21)**, with the remains of an important monastic complex where probably the only surviving column of an ascetic (stylite) still stands. For dinner and overnight we will arrive to the Russian Orthodox Pilgrim house by the Jordan River.



Day 5 – Sunday, April 27, 2025

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

We will start our day with **Divine Liturgy**. After breakfast, we will visit the site that recently was identified as the most probable place of “**Bethany beyond Jordan**” (**John 1:28 and John 10:40**) – the place of our Lord’s baptism (**Matthew 3:13–17, Mark 1:9–11, Luke 3:21–22, John 1:29–34**), also not far from the hill from where according to tradition **St. Prophet Elias ascended** to Heaven in a fiery chariot (**2Kings 2:1-12**). The area is historically very significant and marked with many Byzantine ruins. The vicinity of the site is also closely associated with the **Venerable Mary of Egypt** and her cult is very prominent among local Christians. Our next stop will be at the city of **Jerash**. This city is the location of the largest and better-preserved ruins of one of the major cities of the historical and biblical **Decapolis** (**Matthew 4:25; Mark 5:20; 7:31**). For its state of preservation, this archeological park has gained the nickname of “**Pompeii of the East**”. Transfer to the



border, crossing of the border with Israel. Check-in at the hotel in **Nazareth**. Dinner and overnight in Nazareth

Day 6 – Monday, April 28, 2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Today we will visit the sites around the “sea” of Galilee. The first visit of the day will be to **Magdala** (Luke 8:2) to see the recently uncovered synagogue from the time of our Lord; then onto Genosar to see “Jesus’ boat”. From here on to **Tabgha** (Luke 9:10-17) to pray at the place of the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes. In the afternoon, we will visit the ruins of **Capernaum**, the very town the Gospel writer calls “His own city” (Matt 9:1) to see the remains of Peter’s house and the synagogue where He preached. Adjacent to the ruins that are in custody of the Franciscans, there is a beautiful church of the twelve Apostles that we plan to visit as well. Our last visit of the day will be to **Kursi** (Luke 8:35), the place where Lord healed the Gadarine demoniacs and where the herd of swine rushed into the sea and drowned. Overnight: **Nazareth**



Day 7 – Tuesday, April 29, 2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Today we’ll start in the town of **Nazareth**, where the good news to the World were announced by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary and where Christ spent his young years with His Most-Holy Mother and the righteous Joseph. There are two important churches in town that share the glory and importance of the event. One is an Orthodox Church built over a well with a spring where according to local tradition the Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-38). Another shrine is the much larger Catholic foundation that is built over the remains of the house of the carpenter Joseph. Just before lunch, we will ascend to **Mt. Tabor** (Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8, Luke 9:28–36 and 2 Peter 1:16–18), the place of

the Lord’s glorious and wondrous Transfiguration. From Mt. Tabor we will proceed to the small town of Lod, ancient Lydda, to pray at the tomb of the **Holy Great Martyr and Warrior George**. After some prayers and the anointing at the tomb of the Holy Martyr we will start or ascend toward the Holy City, Jerusalem. The last stop of our day will be at **Emmaus Nikopolis** (Luke 24:13–35), an ancient site believed to be the place of the apparition of the Risen Lord to His disciples upon His glorious Resurrection.

Day 8 – Wednesday, 04/30/2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Today we will visit the **Holy city** to pray at the sites associated with our Lord’ passion. Our first stop will be at the **church of the Holy Sepulcher**, a large ecclesiastical complex, that among other wondrous things, encompasses some of the most important places of the Christendom: **the Golgotha** (Matthew 27:33, Mark 15:22, Luke 23:33, John 19:17), the stone of anointing and the Tomb of the Lord (Mark





15:46 and John 19:41), place of His Glorious Resurrection. After our visit to the Church of the Resurrection, we will explore other sites associated with **Lord's Passion**: The Judgement gate, the Prison, **Lithostrotos** (John 19:13), and the sheep's pool or "**Bethesda**" – site where our Lord **healed the paralytic** (John 5). Dinner and overnight at the hotel in **Jerusalem**.

Day 9 – Thursday, May 1, 2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

After breakfast we will ascend to the **Monastery of our Lord's Ascension** on **Mt. of Olives** and to the place of **Lord's Ascension** (Luke 24:51 and Acts 1:1–9). We will

continue our day by descending Mount of Olives, to the **Valley of Kedron** following the Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem and His Saving Passion. Our first stop will be at the "**Tomb of the Prophets**" an interesting underground catacomb like structure, known as one of the earliest places for the Christian worship in the Jerusalem area. Just down the road, there is a site known as "**Dominus Flevit**" or "**Lord wept**" (John 11:35). From here the most beautiful

panorama of the Holy City unfolds before your eyes and it is here that our Savior wept over the city and its inhabitants that so terrifyingly rejected their salvation.

Convent of St. Mary Magdalene – a Russian Imperial foundation that houses the remains of the martyred grand Duchess Elisabeth. Practically adjacent to the site is the **Garden of Gethsemane** (Mark 14:32-41), the beginning point of Christ's Passions with splendid Basilica of Agony. After a late lunch by the Old City we will visit an engaging and educational exhibit dedicated to the Lord's Shroud and will discuss the passion and burial practices of Antiquity. Moving on we will stop to visit **Monastery of the Cross**, one of the oldest and most impressive in all of Jerusalem. Overnight: **Jerusalem**. Hotel: Ramat Rachel.



Day 10 - Friday, May 2, 2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner



Today we will start in **Bethany**, one of the sites not too far from Jerusalem that Lord loved to visit because his friends Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus lived there. Here we will visit **Tomb of Lazarus** (John 11:17–44) and **Russian Ecclesiastical school** for Palestinian girls which has its own holy site (John 11.17-26). On our way toward the Dead Sea we will stop at the **Museum of the "Good Samaritan"** built on the spot of the Ottoman inn and the ruins of the Byzantine Monastery where the event mentioned by Christ have taken place (Luke 10:25-37). Collection of the museum provides an interesting insight into the history of the Byzantine monks of the Judean desert and the Samaritans. From here we will travel to visit **monastery of St. Gerasimos of Jordan**, and the city

of **Jericho**, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the World. Overnight: **Jerusalem**. Hotel: Ramat Rachel.

Day 11 – Saturday, May 3, 2025

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Today we will start our day with a **Liturgy** and a visit to the **Basilica of Nativity in Bethlehem** (Matthew 1:18-2:23 and Luke 1:26-2:40), founded on the spot of the birth of our Savior. From here we will proceed to the **Shepherd's Field**, to a Greek monastery that is marking traditional spot of the apparition of Angels that brought good news about the Birth of Messiah to simple, but pious shepherds (Luke 2:8-20). Later on we will travel to Hebron, to visit **Machpelah** (Genesis 23:1–20), or the cave of the Patriarchs. It is impossible to enter the cave itself, but we could visit an imposing structure built by Herod the Great above the spot of the burial of the Patriarchs. Our last stop of the day will be at **Migdal Oz**, an active archeological site associated with Acts 8 that describe miraculous meeting and the **baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch** by the apostle Phillip. Dinner and overnight at the hotel in Jerusalem. Hotel: Ramat Rachel.



Day 12 - Sunday, May 4, 2025



Meals: Breakfast and Dinner.

Early in the morning, we will arrive to the Tomb of the Theotokos in Gethsemane for Sunday morning office that includes Matins and Divine Liturgy. Service will last till about 8:00am.

The rest of your **day will be at leisure.**

Alternatively, we'll be happy to invite you for a unique **Archeological journey through Jerusalem** that will include visits to the excavations of the City of David with the dry tunnel, Pool of Siloam, Davidson archeological Park that surrounds the Temple mount, Jewish quarter of Jerusalem with Roman cardo and ancient fortifications of pre-Babylonian Jerusalem. After lunch we will visit the **National Museum of Israel**. It is the largest historical Museum of Israel that

houses very interesting scale model of Jerusalem (as of 1 century AD) and spectacular collection of Antiquities covering all the Biblical periods. Dinner and overnight at the hotel in **Jerusalem**. Hotel: Ramat Rachel.

Day 13 - Monday, May 5, 2025

Departure back home from the **Ben Gurion International airport** (Airport code TLV) in Tel Aviv, Israel



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOUR:

Price includes:

- Accommodation in good Tourist-Class Hotels on half board basis (Buffet Breakfast and Dinner daily), several extra meals
- Deluxe air-conditioned motorcoach for the transfers all along the tour, according to the program
- Road and local taxes for the tourist bus
- Tours as per the itinerary above
- Entrance tickets to the museums and donations for the entrance to the churches and monasteries as per itinerary
- Border expenses, crossing from Jordan to Israel
- Whisper sets in Israel and in Jordan

** Please note that the level of accommodation and services may be different from the expectations of similarly rated hotels in Western Europe or North America.*

Price does NOT include:

- Air Fare
- Personal medical/travel insurance
- Meals other than specified
- Beverages during meals
- Entrance fees other than specified
- Tips for drivers, guides and hotel staff: \$10 (per traveler/per day, to be collected by an appointed group member)
- Anything not specifically mentioned in "Price includes"

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

The current cost of the trip is \$3400 per person, based on double occupancy in a group of at least 26 paying members. Single accommodation: additional \$1200 (total in single accommodation: \$4600) and subject to availability. Please factor that the final price may fluctuate due to the actual number of participants or due to significant difference in exchange rate of shekel/Jordanian dinar vs. the US dollar at the time of the final payment. In case of need for financial adjustment you'll be informed right away.

All payments should be made by check to: "Palomnik, LLC", and mailed to 668 Pittsburg Road, Butler, PA 16002. Any returned checks are subject to a \$25 fee. If you'd like to register online and to pay via the credit card, you can do so via this link: <https://tri.ps/YRzy>. Please beware of the extra credit card fees that are charged by the banking institutions. If you'd like to pay by Zelle, please use

ortours@gmail.com e-mail address. If you'd like to make a bank deposit or need info for a banking wire, please contact us directly.

REGISTRATION:

A \$800 deposit is required when you sign up for the trip. The deposit is non-refundable, unless is cancelled by the organizers due to lack of participation or other valid and unforeseen circumstances. The deadline for signing up for the trip is February 23, 2025. The entire amount is on February 23, 2025. Failure to pay in full by February 23, 2025, without written notice of explanation may lead to the cancellation of your participation, with no refund of any previously committed funds. To avoid any money loss, emergency/travel cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. If you decide to join the pilgrimage after the deadline, please contact the tour coordinator regarding the availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

If you need to cancel after you signed up, please note the schedule of charges in addition to the amount of non-refundable deposit:

- 25% of the tour cost, 91 to 60 days prior to the departure
- 50% of the tour cost, 60 to 30 days prior to the departure
- 100% of the tour cost 30 or fewer days prior to the departure

All cancellations must be done in writing as well and sent directly to agent/coordinator - Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky and must be received for reimbursement by the dates shown in the cancellation schedule. We also have to add that should cancellation or alteration of the program occur due to COVID and associated emergencies, civil disturbances, acts of terrorism, war, natural disaster, and other events of force majeure or acts of God (including threat or fear of same), refunds will be made only to the extent that they are recoverable, and that such cancellation or alteration may result in the total loss of funds paid by participants. It is assumed each participant has reviewed the same with respect to their own comfort level of risk and personal safety. A decision to withdraw from the trip for these reasons or any others will be bound by the same terms of cancellation.

SPECIAL REQUESTS:

All special requests, concerns and suggestions must be submitted in writing to Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky no later

than the date of the final payment (February 23, 2025).

ALTERATIONS TO ITINERARY:

Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky reserves the right to alter, modify or withdraw the itinerary if air schedules and/or events beyond his control deem it necessary. In the event it becomes necessary for the comfort or well-being of the travelers to alter or modify the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty to the tour operator and are not grounds for cancellation with refund. Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky assumes no responsibility over any consequences because of any participant deviating from the group tour. Because of the difference in language and customs, it is expected that the traveler will always follow the directions of the Tour Director. The Tour Director reserves the right to restrict a person's participation in the group's activities, including exclusion from the group, when, in the opinion of the Director, such action is necessary.

REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

A passport with validity for at least six months beyond end of stay, along with any visas required by host countries.

Like many other countries, Israel is now implementing an online application system to be filled out 72 hours before boarding the flight. A 25 NIS (\$7) [info for year 2024] entry fee will also be associated with this.

<https://israel-entry.piba.gov.il/learn-about/>

IT IS STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT YOU:

- Obtain insurance covering medical needs and coverage of personal property, possible quarantine and/or hospitalization and treatment
- Be aware that financial coverage for all emergency medical and other emergency needs will be your sole responsibility. We will provide all possible logistical and personal assistance, but the financial aspect is your responsibility.
- Act in a manner consistent with the surrounding environment
- Make arrangements to have access to sufficient funds to cover personal needs and unexpected events
- Be aware that the places that we will be visiting may not have the same amenities that you are accustomed to. Medical facilities in some areas may be limited.

This agreement becomes effective upon acceptance into the tour by Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky

HINTS AND TIPS FOR YOUR TRAVEL:

Security: Israel and Jordan generally are safe countries despite the abundance of news about domestic disturbance. Even in Palestine ("the West Bank") tourists are not considered to be targets. In Israel, you should be careful around any conservative religious quarters of Muslims and Jews alike. Petty street crime such as pick pocketing is quite widely spread, especially in large cities and in and around "tourist traps". Don't keep all your cash in one place and carry important documents (like your passport) with you in a hidden pocket or secure bag. You don't want to be in a foreign land without money or travel documents. Expensive jewelry and fancy clothes are best left at home.

Medication:

Israel and Jordan have very good health systems and drugs are widely available at many pharmacies. Most of the clerks at the pharmacies speak fluent English. However, we still would recommend you to bring whatever medications that you think you may need, and especially prescription drugs. Please check with your doctor if you need any vaccinations when traveling to that part of the world. Please bring anti-allergen remedies if you have a history of pollen allergy. It is very easy to become dehydrated on a trip like this because the climate is hot and dry. Make sure to drink lots of liquids (pure water is the best choice) and don't take your chances with heat and sun. In Israel, it is safe to drink tap water, unless noted otherwise. In Jordan it is advisable to use only bottled water for drinking and brushing of teeth.

Church and services:

We are going to visit a lot of churches and cathedrals. While the dress code is generally loose, I want to encourage all to show moderation and respect. People in shorts and open-shouldered outfits most likely won't be allowed in most monasteries and churches. Monastic and clergy will treat tourists and pilgrims very differently. While I understand your desire to wear shorts and something cool in a hot climate, I encourage you not to spoil the visit for the rest of the group. Several services are scheduled during the pilgrimage. However, at this time I'm not giving the exact time or place of all of the services as that all is flexible and can change. The pattern of our days may be changed to fit the services in. Services are open to all who want to attend but are not mandatory. Those Orthodox travelers who would like to receive Holy Communion during the Divine Liturgy should attend Confession (if such is your practice before receiving Holy Communion) before the pilgrimage as opportunities to hear your

confession during the pilgrimage by clergy members of the group may be limited.

Member of the International Association of Travel Agents Network (IATAN)

Currency:

Many of the stores in Israel and Jordan accept credit cards (mostly Visa or MasterCard, no Discover or American Express). However, if you plan to shop at the markets or at the souvenir stands you will need cash. Dollars and Euros are very widely accepted. However, if you feel that you need local currency, the easiest way to obtain it is to use the ATM machine. For ATMs use your debit card because you won't be charged any interest on cash withdrawals. On your credit card purchase or with your debit card cash withdrawal you get the best exchange rate, that of the day. It is a good idea to let your bank or credit company (the one that you'll be using a card) know that you are traveling overseas. Without such a notice, some companies may "freeze" your account in an attempt to prevent foreign card fraud. Whenever you shop, especially at the markets and in the Arab stores, make sure to bargain. As a rule, you can reduce the price by about 30-50% and often you can make even a much better deal. Be persistent and pay no attention to emotion – that's part of the culture and the way of conducting trade business.

Dress code:

Although you will see a lot of tourists wearing shorts and sleeveless t-shirts, in parts of Israel and Jordan such outfits may be considered offensive. Light, but longer pants and dresses are appreciated and buy more respect. Open sandals may be rather uncomfortable on the uneven terrain of the Archeological sites.

Be sure to bring:

An alarm clock; alcohol-based hand sanitizer or wet wipes; Kleenex; memory cards and extra batteries for your camera (at the tourist places they are widely available but significantly more expensive); comfortable shoes for a lot of walking (do not start the trip with new shoes). An electric outlet adapter is necessary if you plan to use any electric gadgets from the US. A hat or a head cover, sun protection lotion and a bottle of water (can be purchased along the way) are absolutely "must have" things on this trip.

**REGISTRATION FORM:
ORTHODOX PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND
DATES: April 23 – May 5, 2025**

*To register please complete this registration form and return it along with your deposit check (\$800.00) made to **PALOMNIK, LLC.***

Please write "Holy Land April 2025" on the memo line.

Please mail this form and your deposit check to:

Palomnik, LLC, P.O. Box 1618, Cranberry Township, PA 16066

Full Name:

Date of Birth (day/month/year):

Passport #

Issue and expirations date (day/month/year):

Address:

City, State, Zip/Postal Code

Home phone:

Alt. phone and Email:

Emergency Contact Information (Name, Phone, Relation):

Medical restrictions:

Dietary restrictions:

Would you prefer single accommodation at additional costs specified in the itinerary?

Please let us know if there is anything else that we should know to make your travel experience more comfortable and pleasant:

Your signature below confirms that you have read the itinerary and agree to abide by Terms and Conditions that accompany the itinerary.

NAME/SIGNATURE:

DATE: