

A GUIDE TO
RELIGION
AND FAITH
IN JORDAN

Ahlan Wa Sahlan

أهلاً وسهلاً في الأردن



Welcome to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, founded by King Abdullah I, and currently ruled by King Abdullah II son of the late King Hussein. Over the years, Jordan has grown into a stable, peaceful and modern country.

While Jordan is known for the ancient Nabataean city of Petra,

carved from rock over 2000 years ago, it also offers much more for the modern traveller, from the Jordan Valley, fertile and ever changing, to the remote desert canyons, immense and still. Whether you are a thrill seeker, a historian, or you just want to relax, Jordan is the place for you.

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Jordan Tourism Board:

Is open Sunday to Thursday (08:00-17:00).

BIBLICAL JORDAN



Aaron's Tomb

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has proven home to some of the most influential Biblical leaders of the past; Abraham, Job, Moses, Ruth, Elijah, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and Paul, to name a few. As the only area within the Holy Land visited by all of these great individuals, Jordan breathes with the histories recorded in the Holy Bible.

Through the words of the prophets Abraham, Job, and Moses in the Bible's Old Testament, this land is where God first manifested Himself to man. Here, Adam and Eve may have stood in the former Garden of Eden, in an area along the northwest bank of the River Jordan, now known as Beysan (Beth-shean). When Cain killed his brother Abel and was banished by God to the area "east of Eden", he may well have sought shelter at one of the three sites east of the River Jordan, which later become known as the 'Cities of Refuge'.

It was in Jordan where the prophet Moses journeyed with the Israelites, where John the Baptist heralded in the New Testament of the Christian

faith, and where Jesus Christ thrived. This spiritual area was known as the "Plains of Moab" in the Old Testament and "Peraea" in the New Testament. It spans a wide reach, from the East beyond the famous baptismal river to the West on the shores of the Dead Sea.



Baptism Site

Truly, the history Jordan holds is immense. This is where Jacob wrestled with the Angel of God, where Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt, where Job was tested and rewarded for his faith, and where Elijah ascended to heaven. This is the land through which Moses led the Israelites on their flight from Egypt, where he delivered God's Law, the site of Jesus' baptism, the gathering grounds of the first disciples, and where the Holy Trinity - the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - manifested itself.

It is the land of miracles, where God appeared to the prophets in the form of whirlwinds, a cloud of light, an angel, or a voice that commanded them to do His will. Here is where Jesus began his final journey to Jerusalem.



DID YOU KNOW?

In the Book of Genesis, God refers to the Jordan River Valley around the Dead Sea as the "Garden of the Lord," and it is believed to be the location of the Garden of Eden.

Jordan boasts some of the world's earliest churches, including the 2nd or 3rd century 'prayer hall' at Bethany Beyond the Jordan, the 4th century church at Umm Qays, and the remains of what is believed to be the oldest purpose-built church in the world in Aqaba. The 6th century Byzantine church of St. George in Madaba, is home to the world renowned mosaic floor map of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Most of the Holy sites in Jordan have been identified and excavated, and are easily accessible to visitors.

BETHANY BEYOND THE JORDAN



Bethany Beyond the Jordan

The site, acknowledged both in the Bible and Byzantine and Medieval texts, has been identified to extend from Tell al-Kharrar (Elijah's Hill / Tall Mar Elias in Arabic) to the John the Baptist Church area, on the eastern bank of the River Jordan. Tell al-Kharrar is the same place from which Elijah is believed to have ascended to heaven in a whirlwind on a chariot of fire.

Though Jesus Christ's divinity was acknowledged before his birth, he didn't launch his public ministry at Bethany Beyond the Jordan until the age of 30. During his three-day stay at Bethany, Jesus prayed to God for the first time and gathered his first disciples – Simon, Peter, Andrew, Philip, and Nathanael.

Bethany formed part of the early Christian pilgrimage route between Jerusalem, the Jordan River, and Mount Nebo. Today, the area's Arabic name is al-Maghtas – The Place of Baptism. In 1996, stunning archaeological discoveries identified this as the exact site where John had been living and carrying out his baptisms. Pottery, coins, stone objects, and architectural remains confirm the site was used in the early 1st century AD, during the time of Jesus and John.



Churches at Bethany

The 3rd century Roman building, decorated with mosaics, is believed to be an early Christian 'Prayer Hall' – probably the earliest building for this specific use to have been identified anywhere in the world.

Closer to the Jordan River are the remains of five memorial churches built by early believers. Records of such churches remained throughout the Islamic periods - a sign of continued Christian-Muslim coexistence in Jordan. Pope John Paul II visited Bethany Beyond the Jordan during his March 2000 pilgrimage to Jordan and the Holy Land, and it was designated as a Jubilee Year 2000 pilgrimage site by the Catholic Church in the Middle East, along with Mount Nebo, Mukawir, Tall Mar Elias and Anjara

Directions

Take the Dead Sea Highway. When you reach the Suwaymeh Intersection, take a right turn northbound, following the signs to the site. Bethany is around 45 minutes away from Amman.

For further details please refer to: www.baptismsite.com

MADABA



Mosaic Detail in Madaba

Known in the Old Testament as Medeba, Madaba and its hinterlands are located in central Jordan. These lands were featured in narratives related to Moses and the Exodus, David's war against the Moabites, Isaiah's oracle against Moab, and King Mesha of Moab's rebellion against Israel.

Some of the finest art of the early Christian centuries can still be seen in Madaba and its surrounding regions. Between the 4th and 7th centuries AD, the prosperous ecclesiastical center of Madaba produced one of the world's richest collections of Byzantine mosaics, many of which are well-preserved. Several church floor mosaics can still be seen in their original locations, while others are displayed in the Madaba Archaeological Park. The park houses Jordan's oldest mosaic – a 1st century BC floor from the Herodian palace-fortress at Machaerus.



Saint George church

But Madaba's real masterpiece, located in the Orthodox Church of Saint George, is the 6th century AD mosaic map of Jerusalem and the Holy Land – the earliest religious map of the Holy Land in any form to survive from antiquity. Accordingly, Madaba is dubbed “The City of Mosaics”.

Directions

Take the Airport Highway south from Amman. After about 20 km, turn westward following the signs. Madaba is 45 minutes away from Amman.



DID YOU KNOW?

In keeping with Jordan's commitment to restore and preserve its mosaic masterpieces, Madaba's extensive Archaeological Park and Museum complex encompasses the remains of several Byzantine churches, including the outstanding mosaics of the Church of the Virgin and the Hyppolytus Hall, part of a 6th century mansion.

MOUNT NEBO



Serpentine Cross

Mount Nebo, just ten minutes west of Madaba by car, was the final station in Moses' historic flight from Egypt to the Holy Land. Moses and his people camped "in the valley near Bethpeor", a place long associated with the site known today as Ayun Musa (Springs of Moses).

Mount Nebo's windswept promontory overlooks the Dead Sea, the Jordan River Valley, Jericho, and the distant hills of Jerusalem. From here, Moses viewed the Holy Land of Canaan that he would never enter. He died and was buried in Moab, "in the valley opposite Beth-peor" but his tomb remains unknown. After consulting the Oracle, Jeremiah reportedly hid the Ark of the Covenant, the Tent, and the Altar of Incense at Mount Nebo.

Joshua, Moses' successor, crossed the Jordan River with his people at a point directly opposite Jericho. Today, this ford is known as Bethabara, or Beit 'Abarah (house of the crossing). It is believed this may be the same ford known in the Bible as Beth-barah, Beth-arabah and Bethany-Beyond-the-Jordan. This has long been identified as the place where, centuries later, the prophets Elijah and Elisha divided the Jordan's waters "to right and to left" and crossed to the eastern bank of the river.

Mount Nebo became a place of pilgrimage for early Christians from Jerusalem, and a small church was built there in the 4th century to commemorate the end of Moses' life. Though the church was expanded in the 5th and 6th centuries, some of the original stones remain.

*Historical Display**Mosaic Detail*

The Serpentine Cross, which stands just outside the sanctuary, is symbolic of the bronze (or brazen) serpent taken by Moses into the desert, as well as the cross upon which Jesus was crucified. The curative serpent wrapped around a pole, designated to spare the Israelite followers from death, would later become the symbol of the pharmaceutical industry.

In the year 2000, the late Pope John Paul II commemorated the beginning of the new millennium with a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land, starting his visit with prayers in the basilica at Mount Nebo. The viewing platform erected for Pope John Paul's visit remains and is used by pilgrims to enjoy the same panoramic scene.

Mount Nebo was designated as a Jubilee Year 2000 pilgrimage site by the Catholic Church in the Middle East, along with Bethany Beyond the Jordan, Mukawir, Tall Mar Elias and Anjara.

Directions

Take the Airport Highway directly to Madaba; road signs will lead you westward from Madaba to Mount Nebo, which is about 10 minutes away.

MUKAWIR



MUKAWIR

The 1st Century AD Roman-Jewish historian, Josephus, identified the awe-inspiring site of Machaerus (modern-day Mukawir) as the palace-fortress of Herod Antipas, the Roman-appointed regional ruler during the life of Jesus Christ. It was here, at this hilltop fortified palace overlooking the Dead Sea region and the distant hills of Palestine and Israel that Herod imprisoned and beheaded John the Baptist; “He was beheaded after Salome’s fateful dance” Matthew 14:3-11.

Like its sister site, Masada, on the opposite side of the Dead Sea, Machaerus was also the scene of a Roman siege during the first Jewish revolt against Rome. The site is easily reached by car from Madaba.

Mukawir is also one of the designated pilgrimage sites for the year 2000. The top of Mountain of Mukawir overlooks a breathtaking view of the Dead Sea. The summit can be reached after climbing a winding staircase up the mountain.

Directions

Mukawir is about 45km away from Madaba, an hour on the King’s Highway.

TALL MAR ELIAS, ANJARA



Tall Mar Elias



Anjara Church

ANJARA

The ancient town of Anjara is located in the hills of Gilead, east of the Jordan Valley. The Bible makes mention of this town as a place where Jesus, his mother Mary and his disciples passed through and rested in a nearby cave.

The cave, which has long been a Holy place for pilgrims, has now been commemorated with the Church of Our Lady of the Mountain. The cave was also designated by the Catholic Churches of the Middle East as one of the five

TALL MAR ELIAS

Associated with the Prophet Elijah, Tall Mar Elias is very close to the ruins of a village known as Listib. It is believed that this place was formerly Tishbi, the home of Elijah, a native of Giliad in Transjordan (2Kings 17:1). The presence of two churches, built on the Tall (hilltop) at the end of the Byzantine period, substantiates the fact that this was a religious site.

It is believed that Elijah's ascension to Heaven in a chariot of fire took place at Wadi Al Kharrar, in Bethany Beyond the Jordan. Referred to in the Bible as 'Barreya' in Arabic, 'Perea' in French, and 'the desert' in English, many scholars believe this to be the Holy place that was visited by Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. The site at Tall Mar Elias includes extensive architectural remains, scattered across the summit of the hill that rises above Listib, to the southeast.

Directions

Tell Mar Elias is approximately 80km northwest of Amman and approximately 15km northwest of Ajlun.



DID YOU KNOW?

Pella is known to have been inhabited for most of the past 6,000 years, mainly due to its strategic location at the junction of north-south and east-west trade routes. It was named 'Pella' during the Hellenistic period when the soldiers of Alexander the Great named their settlements after their leader's Macedonian birthplace.

pilgrimage sites for the Year 2000. The others were Mount Nebo, Machaerus, Tall Mar Elias near Ajlun, and Bethany Beyond the Jordan.

Directions

Take the Jerash Irbid Highway north from Amman. At the entrance to Jerash, just before the ruins, follow the signs indicating the road westward to Anjara. Anjara is 30 minutes away from Jerash.

PELLA, AS-SALT



Pella



As-Salt

PELLA

Some of the most important events in the lives of Isaac's twin sons, Jacob and Esau, took place in ancient Jordan.

The sites of Penuel (modern-day Pella) and Mahanaim were where Jacob stopped during his flight from Mesopotamia to Canaan. They have long been identified with two sites in north-central Jordan: Telul ed-Dahab al-Gharbi and Telul ed-Dahab al-Sharqi (the eastern and western hills of gold).

A massive Bronze and Iron Age temple recently discovered at Pella is thought to be the best-preserved temple from Old Testament times anywhere in the Holy Land. The discovery strongly indicates that Pella is the site of ancient Penuel.

In Islamic times, Pella, then known as Tabaqet Fahl, witnessed a decisive battle between Muslims and Christian Romans.

Directions

Take the Jordan Valley Road northbound, reached either by Dead Sea Highway through Naur, or the Arda route through Salt (this route is shorter), 1.5 hour away from Amman.

AS-SALT

Job is one of the earliest patriarchal figures in the Bible, whose book is one of the world's great masterpieces of religious literature. The City of As-Salt, northwest of Jordan's capital, Amman, houses the tomb/shrine of Job. The story of Job, who endured great hardships, is regarded as one of the oldest in the Bible.

As-Salt is also the location of the tomb/shrine of the prophet Jethro, who was Moses' father-in-law. Furthermore, it is the site of the tombs of Jacob's sons Jad and Asher.

Directions

Drive 20km to the northwest of Amman, about 25 minutes, following the signs.

Umm Qays



Umm Qays

A rare five-aisled basilica from the 4th century was recently discovered and excavated at Umm Qays. From the interior church, one can spy a Roman-Byzantine tomb over which the church was built. Such a distinctive architectural arrangement strongly indicates that it was built to commemorate the very spot where the Byzantine faithful believed that Jesus performed his miracle.

A visitor standing at the junction of Syria, Israel and Jordan can enjoy a stunning view of Lake Tiberius and The Golan Heights.

Umm Qays

Umm Qays is a spectacular destination, a combination of Ancient Graeco-Roman ruins intertwined with houses of an Ottoman village. Many of the structures of Umm Qays are built with black basalt stone, giving the city a grand and unique feel.

During the time of the New Testament, northern Jordan was the region of the Roman Decapolis (meaning 'ten cities' in Greek). This is the place where Jesus taught the people about the Kingdom of God and performed his miracles.

The old Decapolis city of Gadara (modern-day Umm Qays) boasts spectacular panoramic views overlooking the Sea of Galilee. It is here that Jesus performed the miracle of the Gadarene swine, casting spirits out of a demented man and into a herd of pigs, which then ran down the hill into the waters of the Sea of Galilee and drowned.



DID YOU KNOW?

Evidence of the Nabataeans at Petra was already dwindling and when Christianity spread across the Byzantine Empire, Petra became the seat of a bishopric and a monument was converted to a church - the Urn Tomb. Recent excavations have exposed three churches, one of them paved with coloured mosaics.

Directions

Take the Jerash-Irbid Highway north from Amman. Upon reaching the city of Irbid (an hour drive), follow the signs that will take you to Umm Qays. Umm Qays is around 60 minutes away from Irbid.

UMM AR-RASAS



Mosaic Detail

UMM AR-RASAS

This rectangular walled city is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. It was fortified by the Romans, and subsequently embellished by local Christians with Byzantine-style mosaics over 100 years into the start of the Muslim Umayyad rule. Most of the city now lies in ruins, but there are several structures in its eastern part that have been excavated and restored.

Just outside the city walls is the recently unearthed Church of Saint Stephen. Its perfectly-preserved outstanding mosaic floor is the largest of its kind to be discovered in Jordan; second only to the world-famous mosaic map at Madaba. The mosaic depicts the images of 27 Old and New Testament cities of the Holy Land, both east and west of the River Jordan.

Just 2km north of Umm Ar-Rasas is the highest standing ancient tower in Jordan, rising 15m high with no door or inner staircase. Believed to have been used as a place of solitude by early Christian monks, today it is inhabited only by flocks of birds.

Directions

South of Madaba, in the town of Dhiban, a road leading east takes you to the site. Alternatively, you can leave Amman on the Desert Highway, passing Qastal and Jiza, and turn west shortly after Dab'a.

JERASH



Hadrian's Gate

JERASH

Jerash, formerly known as Gerasa, is indisputably the most complete and best-preserved Graeco-Roman city in the Middle East, noted in the Bible as the “region of the Garasenes” (Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26).

In a large ecclesiastical complex within the city, there is a fountain where Byzantine citizens once annually celebrated Jesus’ miracle of turning water into wine. Today, the “Fountain Court” within Jerash is a popular destination for modern pilgrims who want to re-enact the travels and teachings of Christ.

The colonnaded streets, plazas, temples, paved pathways, theatres and fifteen Byzantine churches make Jerash the second most important historical destination for tourists in Jordan, after Petra.



DID YOU KNOW?

As they were leaving the burning city of Sodom, Lot’s wife disobeyed God’s order not to look back and was turned into a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). Lot and his two daughters survived and fled to a cave near the small town of Zoar (modern-day Safi). In the Book of Genesis, God refers to the Jordan River Valley around the Dead Sea, as the “Garden of the Lord,” and it is believed to be the location of the Garden of Eden.

Directions

Take the northbound Amman-Jerash Highway. Follow the signs. Jerash is just 45 minutes away from Amman.

PETRA



Ad Deir (The Monastery)

were built on the summit of the mountain, which today attracts pilgrims from all over the world. Aaron is best remembered for the beautiful blessing that God commanded him to give people:

Later, Petra was almost certainly the last staging post of the three kings, who took frankincense, gold and myrrh to honor the baby Jesus in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-12). The King Aretas, mentioned in Corinthians 11:32, was a Nabataean king who ruled Petra.

PETRA

During the time of Jesus and the Apostles, one of the Eastern Mediterranean's greatest trading centers was located in the southern city of Petra. This extensive rock-cut capital of the Nabataean Kingdom flourished during Nabataean rule from the 3rd century BC to the early 2nd century AD, when it was occupied by the Roman Emperor, Trajan.

The Bible's Old Testament seems to make mention of Petra under several possible names, including Sela and Joktheel (2 Kings 14:7).

During the Exodus, Moses and the Israelites passed through the Petra area in Edom. Moses was never allowed to enter the Holy Land, as he disobeyed God's commands to speak to a rock to bring forth water, choosing to strike it instead (Numbers 20:10-24). Local tradition says that the spring at Wadi Musa (Valley of Moses), just outside Petra, is this same place.

Aaron, the first High Priest of the Bible and the brother of Moses and Miriam, died in Jordan and was buried in Petra at Mount Hor, now called Jabal Harun in Arabic (Mount Aaron). A Byzantine church, and later an Islamic shrine/tomb,

Directions

Take the Desert Highway southbound. After 200km, turn right, following the signs indicating the route to the city. Petra is about 3 hours from away Amman.

HISBAN



Cave at Hisban

HISBAN

Hisban is located on the edge of the highland plateau, overlooking the northern tip of the Dead Sea and the Lower Jordan Valley.

Modern-day Hisban is widely identified with one of the Cities of the Plain, Heshbon, due to the similarity in their names (Numbers 21:26). Formerly ruled by the Amorite King Sihon, this region of central Jordan was referenced in the Song of Solomon 7:5, "...your eyes are like pools in Heshbon".

Later fortified in the Roman-Byzantine period, Hisban, also called Ebus, was an important station on early Christian pilgrims' route from Jerusalem to Mount Nebo via the Jordan River.

Modern Hisban village is the first major antiquities site on the King's Highway south of Amman. Some scholars



DID YOU KNOW?

Six tombs, from different periods, have been found hollowed out of the rock beneath the mosaic-covered floor of the Moses Memorial Church at Mount Nebo. In the present presbytery you can see remnants of mosaics, the earliest of which is a panel with a braided cross. The Serpentine Cross, which stands just outside the sanctuary, is symbolic of the brass serpent taken by Moses into the desert and the cross upon which Jesus was crucified.

believe that the nearby Tell Jalul is a better candidate for ancient Heshbon. Both sites, only 20 minutes by car from Amman, have been excavated and can be easily visited. Tell of Hisban has been equipped with signs and walkways, that allow visitors to appreciate its many ancient remains from the Iron Age, Graeco-Roman, Byzantine, and medieval Islamic periods.

Directions

Take the Naur Road from the Dead Sea Highway; Hisban is approximately 30 minutes away from Amman.

THE DEAD SEA & LOT'S CAVE



Salt Formations

THE DEAD SEA & LOT'S CAVE

The Dead Sea is one of the most dramatic places on Earth, with its stunning natural environment equally matched by its powerful spiritual symbolism. The Bible variously calls it the “Sea of Arabah”, the “Salt Sea”, or the “Eastern Sea”. Mediaeval texts refer to it as “the Devil’s Sea”, but the Arab people have always known it as Bahr Lut (Lot’s Sea).

The infamous Sodom and Gomorrah and other cities of the Dead Sea Plain were subject to some of the most dramatic and enduring Old Testament stories. In Genesis, God said he would destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the inhabitant’s wicked and arrogant ways. But Abraham successfully argued with God that Lot and any other righteous people should be spared.

Lot and his two daughters survived and fled, seeking refuge in a cave on a hillside near the small town of Zoar (modern-day Safi). Here, around this same cave, Byzantine Christians built a church and monastery dedicated to Saint Lot. The monastery complex has been excavated and can easily be visited today.

However, as they were leaving the burning city of Sodom, Lot’s wife disobeyed God’s order not to look back and was turned into a pillar of salt. (Genesis 19:26). A rock formation stands near the Dead Sea, said to be the remains of the salt pillar that was Lot’s wife.

*Lot's Cave**Salt Pillars*

The events in the lives of Abraham and Lot probably took place during the Early or Middle Bronze Age (around 2500-1500 BC). Although not confirmed, the remains of the ancient walled towns of Bab ed-Dhra' and Numeira, in the southeastern Dead Sea central plain, are believed to be the sites of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. They both still show evidence of destruction by a fire which took place in the Early Bronze Age, after which they were never re-inhabited. The three other Cities of the Plain were 'Admah, Zeboiim and Bela (that is Zoar)' (Genesis 14:2). The remains of these places are still buried somewhere around the Dead Sea.

By the 6th century AD in the early Christian era - more than 2000 years after the events from Genesis - the land of Jordan was dotted with Christian monasteries and churches.



DID YOU KNOW?

During the 1st millennium BC, the Kings' Highway linked the kingdoms of Edom, Moab and Ammon. Several centuries later, the Nabateans used this road as a trade route for luxury goods such as frankincense and spices coming from the southern Arabian peninsula. When the Romans took over the area, they remodeled the road to meet Roman standards for troop transport, and renamed it the Via Nova Traiana. The highway has long been an important pilgrimage route for both Christians and Muslims alike.

The entire length of the Dead Sea's eastern shore, from the River Jordan in the North to the broad plain of salt formations at the southern end, is easily accessible on fine roads from central and southern Jordan.

Directions

Take the Airport Highway until you see the Dead Sea sign. Take a right and follow the signs. Lot's Cave is around 1.5 hours away from the Dead Sea.

AMMAN



Citadel

AMMAN

The Jordanian capital, Amman, is mentioned in the Bible by the name of Rabath Ammon in the story of King Og, an Ammonite King famed for being a giant of a man (Deuteronomy 3:11).

The city was also known as Philadelphia, named so in the 3rd century BC after the Ptolemic ruler Philadelphus.

Amman today boasts a number of important ruins, including the Roman Theatre, a Roman temple and several Byzantine churches. The archeological museum situated in the Citadel owns one of the finest collections of ancient artifacts in the Middle East, including some of the Copper Dead Sea scrolls.

The modern capital is well-known for its excellent infrastructure, museums, fascinating shops, gourmet restaurants, luxurious hotels and recreational facilities.

AQABA



Oldest Purpose-Built Church in the World

AQABA

The first site in southern Jordan mentioned in the Exodus is Eziongeber (Number 33-35). Ezion-geber and Elath (or Eloth) were port towns located at, or near, the Red Sea port of Aqaba. They are best known for their roles during the Iron Age, a few hundred years after the time of the Exodus. These locations are associated with both King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (Deuteronomy 2:8), as well as The Chronic Wars between the kings of Judah and Edom (1 Kings 9:26, 2 Kings 14:22).

In recent years, what is believed to be the oldest purpose-built church in the world has been discovered in Aqaba.



DID YOU KNOW?

Herod Antipas became governor of Machaerus after marrying a Nabataean princess, believed to be the daughter of King Aretus IV (9BC – 40AD), in order to cement a Herodian-Nabataean alliance.

However, he also married his sister-in-law, Herodia - a relationship that was strongly opposed by John the Baptist. As a result, Herod imprisoned and beheaded John at Machaerus (Mark 6: 14-29).

The forces of King Aretus later defeated Herod Antipas' army in 36 AD. This was subsequently interpreted by many as divine retribution for the death of John the Baptist.

THE KING'S HIGHWAY



THE KING'S HIGHWAY

The King's Highway is the world's oldest continuously used communication route. It used to link ancient Bashan, Giliad, and Ammon in the North with Moab, Edom, Paran, and Midian in the South.

Abraham, a common patriarch of Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike, would certainly have used this route on his journey from Mesopotamia to Canaan.

In the Bible, The King's Highway is first mentioned by name in Numbers 20:17, when Moses led the Exodus through southern Jordan. Moses asked the King of Edom if he and his people could "go along the King's Highway" during their journey to Canaan, but his request was denied.

The King's Highway is also referenced in an earlier story in Genesis 14:5-8, in relation to the four Kings from the North. They attacked Sodom and Gomorrah and the three other Cities of the Plain - Heshbon (Hisban), Medaba (Madaba) and Kir Moab (Karak) – taking Lot hostage, only to be chased and beaten by Abraham.

Today, this scenic route is a fine paved road that winds, dips, twists, and rambles through the heart of the Jordanian highlands, passing through the country's most stunning landscapes and some of its most important ancient sites.

Letters of Acknowledgement

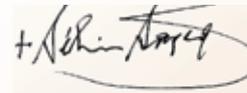
“Your Royal Highness,

Determining Jesus Christ’s baptism site is not an easy task today, but we are taking guidance from the verses of the Holy Book, as well as the history and holy tradition of the Orthodox Church...we can identify that the baptism area of the Lord Jesus Christ, the place where John the Baptist baptized Him in Transjordan, is on the east bank of the river facing Jericho and about seven miles from the watercourse flow of the river in the Dead Sea. From this, we show that the Baptism Site of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ lies in the lands of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, exactly on the east bank of the river.”

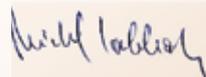
*Erinious I
Patriarch of the Holy City*

“We are overwhelmed with joy for the generous granting of continuous and endless attention with the objective of shedding light upon the Baptismal Site, the virtuous place in which Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, and the Holy Site which embodies the magnanimous life, the place is the dwelling of the Spirit eternally bestowed thus giving life to the believers in Jesus Christ throughout the ages. This site has become the meeting place of God and the human being, in which interpenetrate the past with the present and the future, transforming all periods of history into spiritual breaths of faith which become deep-rooted in the hearts of the faithful throughout ages and generations... The antiquities which were recently discovered in the Jordanian territory date back to the first Christian tradition and give it historic value.”

*Bishop Salim Sayegh
Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General for Jordan*



*Michel Sabbagh
Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem*



BIBLICAL ITINERARIES

One Day Itinerary:

Day 1: Amman City Tour, Madaba, Mount Nebo, and Bethany Beyond the Jordan

5 Day Itinerary:

Day 1. Umm Qays, Jerash - Overnight in Amman

Day 2. Bethany Beyond the Jordan, Madaba, Mount Nebo - Overnight in Amman

Day 3. Mukawir, Umm Ar-Rasas, Karak - Overnight Petra

Day 4. Petra, Sila', and Lot's Cave - Overnight in Amman

Day 5. Amman Citadel, Roman Theatre, Museums

8 Day Itinerary:

Day 1. Jerash, Ajlun, Pella, and Umm Qays - Overnight in Amman

Day 2. Amman City Tour and Desert Castles - Overnight in Amman

Day 3. Madaba, Mount Nebo, and Karak - Overnight in Petra

Day 4. Petra - Overnight in Petra

Day 5. Wadi Rum - Overnight in Wadi Rum

Day 6. Aqaba - Overnight in Aqaba

Day 7. Lot's Cave, Lot's Wife and the Dead Sea - Overnight at the Dead Sea

Day 8. Bethany Beyond the Jordan - Return to Amman

For more itineraries, please check our website:

www.VisitJordan.com



Mukawir



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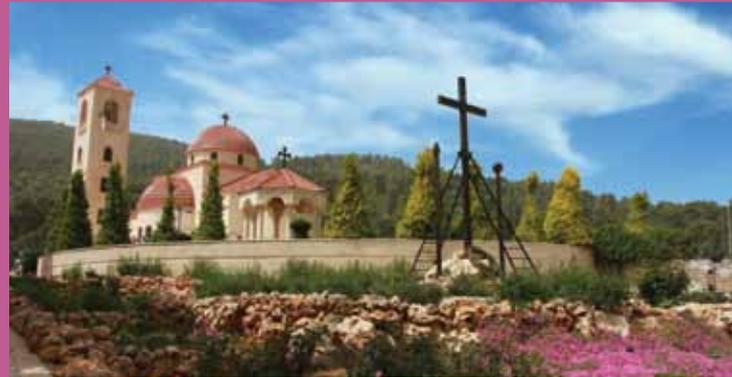
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