February 2024 | Israel & Christians Today Adar I – Adar II 5784





## Israel Needs Our Help

Following our expedition in Nov/Dec, we learned a lot about the situation on the ground in Israel. Tourism stopped immediately, leaving many without income. Travelling around Israel we became acutely aware of just how isolated, how lonely most Israelis are feeling, as much of the world has turned its back on Israel, preferring instead the twisted narrative being pushed by the opposition, one that makes the criminal attackers somehow the victims.

Israelis are fighting for their survival, with over a hundred thousand Israelis —Jewish, Arab, Druze, Bedouin etc—unable to return to their homes. In many cases this is because their homes are severely damaged or destroyed.

Never before in history has it been so important that we stand with Israel. But not just with token words, by being prepared to actually stand.

## **Israel is Fighting Back**

In 1917, Australian and New Zealand soldiers won an incredible victory against the Ottoman Empire—who controlled the entire Middle East and had done so for 400 years. In spite of staggering odds, the 'Egyptian Expeditionary Force' attacked and captured Beersheba, the first victory in the 'Southern Palestine Offensive' that ultimately saw the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, the period of the British Mandate, and ultimately the restoration of the Israel.

Within days the New Zealand and Australian forces were in battle again, this time separately, and the enormous bravery and sacrifice of our countrymen is honoured in Israel to this day.

As Israel once again faces an extremist Islamic threat, there are those who would ignore that sacrifice and just hand the land over.

## We Will Stand with Israel

In Nov/Dec last year I went there. With two colleagues, we travelled to a war zone, to help. We mostly worked in a soup kitchen in Jerusalem—far away from the war. We cleaned and repaired all sorts of equipment, we met all kinds of people who were struggling and desperate for the food and the encouragement that we were able to help bring. We visited survivors, people who had lost friends and family, 'ordinary Israelis', all deeply affected by the events of 7 Oct. and the subsequent war. We filmed interviews and helped share their stories with our people back home. But the greatest impact we made was the one I badly underestimated as we hurriedly prepared to travel: the joy we were able to bring by just being there. Meeting Israelis who would ask where we were from, only to stand in shock— or burst into tears—to hear that we had come a long way just to let them know we cared, was incredibly powerful.

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## **ANZAC Solidarity Tour**

This is not a study tour, nor a souvenir shopping trip (although there will be opportunity!)—this tour is about now. We will fly to Israel once again united in the spirit of ANZAC, to stand in the land our forefathers fought so gallantly for. We will visit a few special places, and we will meet all kinds of Israelis and learn how Hamas horrendous actions have changed peoples' lives. We will take the opportunity to serve our Israeli brothers and sisters, and we will stand together with them. WE will let them know they are not alone.

There are opportunities for those who wish to extend their stay, I will most likely be continuing on for a while after the tour. Please feel free to contact us if you are interested. Whilst obviously we will not be taking any ridiculous risks, I cannot completely promise that this trip will be uneventful. But I can promise you that it will be an adventure, and you will see God at work in His land.

Each activity on this ANZAC Solidarity tour will play a crucial role in comforting and supporting Israel. You will be volunteering side by side with Israelis and our C4I friends in regions bordering Gaza, Jerusalem, the Galilee and the Golan Heights in the north of Israel. Highlights include:

- Volunteer at Kibbutzim and farms, help cook meals for soldiers and volunteer at an army base
- · Walk across the fields of the Nova Music Festival
- Tour the city of Sderot and visit one of our C4I projects
- Visit Keren Hayesod (Jewish Agency) and get updates on how C4I donations are making a difference
- Visit Magen David Adom (Ambulance HQ), see the situation room and hear paramedics stories of what happened on 7 October. There will also be an opportunity to donate blood
- Special Shabbat dinner at Hineni Soup Kitchen
- Visit the Mount of Olives, Western Wall, Garden Tomb for prayer worship and communion in Jerusalem.
- Visit Hippos, an ancient city of light overlooking galilee
- Guest speakers & briefings; plus much more Itinerary subject to change

#### **Prices Include:**

- 8 nights accommodation\* based on 3-Star hotels
- Breakfasts and dinners
- Entrance fees, touring and transport to all activities
- 9 days with experienced licensed tour guide
- Whisperer headsets

#### **Prices Exclude:**

- Airfares and departure taxes. Contact Olive Tree Travel to book your return flights.
- Travel insurance (required)
- Tips and gratuities for drivers, guides and hotels (allow about \$US 12 a day)
- Lunches (allow US\$15 a day)
- Special Shabbat dinner at Hineni Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem (allow US\$30 ea)

There may be opportunities to stay on and volunteer longer after the tour, please contact us for information.

### LAND ONLY PRICE

# NZD \$3550

per person twin share or double bed room Single supplement: NZD \$1275

\*\*Tour subject to minimum numbers and conditions.



For full itinerary details, enquiries and bookings please contact:



Olive Tree Travel | info@olivetreetravel.com.au
Toll Free 0800 874 867 www.olivetreetravel.com.au