

## Preparation for the Trip

Here is a list of details to help you prepare for the tour:

**Passport:** This is very important! Your Passport expiration date must be at least 6 months **after** your scheduled date of return home. No one can legally enter another country without a passport that is valid six months after the return date from that country. For example, if you expect to return on March 1, your Passport expiration date must be **after** September 1.

Before you leave home, make two copies of your passport and put them in different bags. Also take a copy of your travel insurance information that was sent to you.

**Schedule:** We have people traveling from several places, and arriving in Israel on different dates. We will help each of you coordinate your schedules. This is how I will use your cell phone number and email address. You should carry my information as well. I'll give that to everyone before the travel date.

**Airline Luggage limits:** Most airlines allow one checked piece of luggage, not to exceed 50 pounds. (There is usually a \$230.00 charge for an extra checked bag.) You are allowed one carry-on bag, but it has to fit in the overhead compartment. You can also carry a personal item, such as a purse or briefcase. You are limited on the amount of liquid you can carry onto the airplane. Check your airline website for details of what is allowed.

**Bus Luggage limits:** The bus driver in Israel says, "one bag not to exceed 45 pounds." The airline is absolutely strict about their 50 lbs, but the bus driver might fudge a bit on his 45 lbs.

**Weather:** **February** is cool and rainy in Israel. During the day, the temperature is in the low-to-mid 70s. But the evening temperatures could drop down into the 40s. So take a jacket or sweater for those evening walks. In **April to mid-June** and in **September-October**, the weather is nearly perfect. Days are warm - not too hot - and nights are comfortable.

**Electrical Current in Israel:** The electrical current in Israel is 220 volts AC, single phase, 50 cycles. Check your electrical equipment and make sure it can handle this. If not, you need to bring a small converter kit. The same is true for things you recharge, like computers, camera, and phones. Make sure they can handle 220. Radio Shack has conversion kits for about \$30. You may know people who have bought these for their travels; so before you buy one, ask friends if you can borrow theirs.

**Set your clocks:** Israel is 7 hours ahead of the US Eastern time zone, and 8 hours ahead of the Central time zone.

**Flight over:** Most flights to Israel are about 10 hours long. Here is how you will spend that time. The takeoff procedure takes about an hour. They then serve a meal. There goes another hour. You'll settle in for a two-hour movie. Near the end of the movie is when you'll realize you're getting sleepy. You better sleep fast because the flight attendants have to serve breakfast before you land – another hour. You land in Tel Aviv thinking it is morning, but in reality, it is afternoon. As you walk out into the main terminal, on the right there is a small replica of the Temple mound. That is where our group will gather until everyone is through the entry process. Feel free to slip over to the counter and exchange some money as you wait.

**Cell Phone in Israel:** I will give you the phone number I'll be using in Israel. You can give this to family members to use if there is an emergency and they need for you to call them. Have them call me, and I will give you the message.

If you don't plan to use your cell phone in Israel, you should still bring it so you will have it when you arrive back in the US airport. Make sure you turn it off in Israel. Of course you may want to use your smart phone for photos.

**Food we'll be eating:** Breakfast is a big meal. The buffet table won't have all of the following, but this is a list of the type of foods you can expect: hummus, eggplant salad, yogurt, cucumbers, olives, several kinds of cheese, onions, green peppers, tomatoes, cheese salad, couscous, carrot salad, asparagus, various cereals, breads, tehina, fruit, labaneh, oranges, grapefruit, baba ghanouj, shakshouka, pickled sardines, herring, etc. Well, ok. They know we're from America, so they may (grudgingly) provide eggs, toast, and oatmeal. The evening meals are not much different than breakfast, except they don't offer eggs, toast, and oatmeal. Instead, they offer more meat and desserts.

Lunch is provided on this tour, but will be a lighter meal. Our bus will take us to some "fast food" locations. The two main fast foods are falafel and shawarma. (Yum...these are so good!)

**Money exchange:** A dollar will buy less than four Israeli new shekels. The actual exchange (changes daily) is around 3.60 Israeli new shekels per dollar.

If you plan to use credit cards in Israel, call your credit card company before you leave and tell them you will be in Israel and using their card.

**Exchanging money:** How much you'll spend in Israel is totally up to you, and most of it can be done with credit cards. Plus, many vendors will gladly take dollars. Still, I suggest you start your trip by exchanging \$200 per person at the Tel Aviv airport. You may find that will be enough for the entire trip. You'll use shekels for those few situations where the people don't take dollars – like buying your daily supply of drinking water, etc. By the way, your dollars need to be fairly new and somewhat crisp. Don't carry old faded wrinkled bills. Your bank will help you with this. Also, vendors will have small bottles of water available for \$1 or \$2. But there is another option. Once you're in Israel, go to the corner grocery store and buy a six-pack of large bottles of drinking water for about six shekels.

**Hotel Rooms:** Bring your own hair dryer. Not all hotels have them. Be sure it is 220 v. Your rooms have soap (very small bars), towels, sheets, and blankets. Bring a washcloth if you want one since not all hotels provide them. Most rooms don't have coffee pots. If you want coffee when you are first waking up, maybe you should bring some packets of instant coffee. Hotels usually have showers instead of bathtubs. Israel goes by the European standard of having a comforter instead of a top sheet and blanket.

**Tips:** The cost of the Seminar includes all tips.

**Shoes:** Plan to wear comfortable shoes. Don't bring dress up shoes or hiking boots. Save your space. Instead, wear the most comfortable walking shoes you have. Some folks find they are most comfortable when they are wearing tennis shoes.

**Modest clothing:** We will be going into churches that are built over Biblical sites. Because of this, you will not be allowed to enter unless you are dressed in conservative way. Pants and skirts need to be below the knees. Women should plan to wear a shirt (or blouse) that has sleeves (long or short). If you wear sleeveless, carry a shawl with you each day.

**Dead Sea:** We will be in the Dead Sea area for one day. It will be the warmest day of the entire trip. Therefore, plan to dress as cool as possible. We won't be visiting any churches, so shorts, sleeveless, and beach/water shoes (flip flops stick in the mud easily) are acceptable – possibly preferred. Oh, also include a swimming suit if you plan to float in the Dead Sea – and you should definitely plan to float in the Dead Sea. Towels can be rented at the site. You may also bring your own towel. Changing rooms are available.

**Laundry:** Some of our hotels may provide laundry facilities, and there are also small shops that will take care of it for you. Another option is to pack a small Ziploc bag of laundry detergent. Then bring clothes that can easily dry overnight. By the way, make sure you double bag the detergent.

**Baptismal site:** One of our sites will be the “Jordan River Baptismal site”. This provides an opportunity for those who want to be baptized in the Jordan River. We have ordained pastors traveling with us on this tour. Feel free to ask one of them to help you with your baptism. Beach/water shoes are better than flip flops in the water. Towels and robes can be purchased (not rented) at the site. You may also bring your own towel. Changing rooms are available.

**Day Off:** You will have a free day in the middle of the tour. There will be many options for that day. Many people choose to simply walk around Jerusalem.

**Bible preparation:** The best way to prepare for this trip is to read “All the Stories of the Bible.” If you haven’t started yet, go to [www.BibleTelling.org](http://www.BibleTelling.org), click on “Free Download.” The entire book is divided into 5 parts for ease of downloading.

---

## Cultural Awareness

It is often said that a person gains more Bible knowledge on a twelve-day tour of Israel than a student learns in two years at a Bible college. Still, this trip isn’t just about academics and Bible knowledge. You will also gain a better understanding of the two great cultures that live in the Holy Land.

### Two Great Cultures:

Both of these cultures go back in history for thousands of years. Both are steeped in family and national traditions. We will refer to them as “Jews” and “Arabs” even though there is a high level of diversity in Israel. There are many people groups, and some would argue they do not fit into these two generalized groupings. Still, everyone knows what is meant by these titles, so we are using them to make things simple.

**Jews** refer to themselves as “prickly pears – harsh on the outside, sweet on the inside.” This means they are hard to get to know and appear harsh and unfriendly, but once you get to know them, they are wonderful people.

**Arabs** are friendly, generous, and hospitable. They are easy to get to know and love. Their hospitality is second to none. Because of this, you will probably meet and interact with more Arabs than Jews.

This worksheet is an attempt to familiarize you with these two cultures so you can prepare to interact with them. I trust you won’t feel intimidated by what is written here. You

don’t have to worry about violating the rules of these two cultures. Jews and Arabs know Americans, and tourism is their number one industry. They host around two million tourists each year, and they allow Americans “a lot of slack.” That’s because they are convinced we’re “clueless.” (They won’t openly tell you this.) They are amazed that such people can be a super power and have the number one economy of the world.

Still, being “clueless” has its advantages. The people of Israel take no offense at your “breaking the rules.” They simply smile, shake their heads and say, “Well, that’s just the way they are.”

This little guide is your way to “catch them off guard.” They expect you to act like all other tourists. They will be amazed that you act (at least a little) as if you do have a clue. It is not the goal of this guide to make you feel intimidated, but to help you enjoy the richness of these two great cultures.

### Geography:

You’ll be amazed at how small Israel is. It is about the size of New Jersey. The Negev Desert covers the south. In the west, low coastal plains run along the Mediterranean Sea. The Jordan valley forms the eastern border. Mountains rise between the two in the central region.

Many picture the **Jordan River** to be like the mighty Mississippi. Instead it is more like the Mackinaw River. If you're not from Central Illinois, you haven't heard of the Mackinaw River. That's my point. It is small and unknown. The Jordan is not known because of its size. It is known because it separates nations, and is referred to throughout the Bible. It stretches 200 miles from Mount Hermon in the north, and empties into the Dead Sea. Well, it doesn't actually empty into the Dead Sea any more, but it used to. The water doesn't make it that far today because of irrigation along the Jordan valley.

The **Dead Sea** is a lake 1,300 feet below sea level – the lowest spot on earth. The flow of water only goes into it, not out of it – except by evaporation. Still, the lake continues to decrease in size every year. The lake is so salty that it's hard to walk in it. You will enjoy floating on top of its waters – an experience you can't have anywhere else in the world. You can actually float standing upright. Make sure you don't put your face down in the water. If you do, your eyes will sting for some time. Many tourists go to Israel strictly for the resorts and health spas near the Dead Sea.

The **Sea of Galilee** is the largest freshwater lake in Israel and provides much of its drinking water. You would have to walk 33 miles to walk around it. It is 13 miles long and 8 miles across its widest spot. The Sea of Galilee is also below sea level by 700 feet. This makes it the second lowest lake in the world after the Dead Sea. But it has its own record. It is the lowest freshwater lake in the world. It is also very deep – going down about 141 feet!

The Jordan River flows through the Sea of Galilee, coming down from the north as a white water river. It flows through the sea and exits to the south, continuing down to the Dead Sea – zig zagging back and forth. This is a drop of 600 feet within 100 miles.

### **Israeli culture in general:**

Hebrew is the official language in Israel, with Arabic the official language among the Arabs. English is required in school in both Jewish and Arab schools. So, Jewish children learn Hebrew and English. Arab children learn Hebrew, Arabic, and English. Even so, don't expect everyone to speak English, or understand it.

There are a few things about both cultures you might not notice unless they are pointed out to you. For instance, people shake hands at the beginning and end of a visit. Their handshakes will last longer and will not be as firm as we are used to. So don't grip too firmly when shaking hands. Both cultures tend to express emotions in a more forceful fashion. Also they have more physical contact during a conversation (except with a person of the opposite sex). Both cultures tend to carry on a conversation standing closer to each other than Americans are comfortable with. Still, it can be offensive to step back or lean away.

It is common for them to maintain long and direct eye contact during discussions. Men staring at other men is not considered rude. They feel that lack of eye contact conveys, "What you're saying is not important to me." By the way, it's not proper to point at someone.

**Taking a walk:** At first, you might feel uncomfortable walking along the streets in Israel. But generally it is more safe there than in the US. The crime rate is low. This is because both cultures place a high value on the family. Still, it is best to walk the streets of Israel in small groups. Oh, one crime is very high – pickpocketing. Watch your billfold. Unfortunately, smoking is very common in Israel. A large percentage of Jewish and Arab men smoke, as well as Jewish women. It's almost impossible to get away from it. Also people in Israel have no problem with throwing trash on the ground. You'll be surprised at how much litter is lying around.

**People in conflict:** Both Arabs and Jews have deep feelings concerning the other group. Both cultures see the other as the aggressor in their situation. Be very careful not to be drawn into a discussion about this – just listen and try to understand. Often an Arab and a Jew will become friends with one another, or have a business relationship. Still both will maintain their difficulties with the other person's nationality. There are powerful social taboos against intermarriage in both cultures.

**Ask questions:** It is **always** better to ask questions about any subject, and then listen, truly listen. Americans are thought to be arrogant, feeling they "know-it-all." The people of Israel are more familiar with your culture than you are with theirs. Asking questions and listening is a great way to increase the value of this trip. Be careful about talking about American politics. People in Israel have very strong feelings about our political elections.

If someone asks you about it (I guarantee they will), try to reflect the question back to them. It could go something like this. "Oh, do you follow our politics?" Let them answer. Then ask, "What do you think of it?" Usually they will take it from there. Don't argue with them or try to "straighten them out."

**Shopping anyone?** Of course you'll plan to go shopping while you're in Israel. In certain stores, prices are set and not negotiable. But generally, dickering over the price is expected. It is almost insulting to accept the first price given. It indicates you are naïve, or you are bragging about how rich you are.

**Dress standards:** Except in Tel Aviv, men and women in Israel generally dress in a conservative, modest way. Plan to do the same. This is especially important if you visit a mosque, synagogue or accept hospitality into a home.

As strange as it seems, people in Israel do not know Bible stories as well as you might think they should. Still, they love to hear them when they are told without extra interpretation.

**Humor:** Being funny doesn't translate from one culture to another. Telling a joke or trying to be funny rarely works. They may laugh politely, but that doesn't mean they see the humor in what was said.

## **People Groups:**

Arabs are broken into several groups.

**Israeli Arabs:** These are Arabs who are citizens of Israel. Generally they don't want to be a separate nation. Still, they are sympathetic to the Palestinian cause. Most of them admit that Arabs are treated better in Israel than any Arab country. Still, they are not treated as well as the Jewish population. Therefore they want equal rights under Israeli rule.

**Palestinians:** These are people who live in the West Bank and Gaza. They want to be a separate nation from Israel.

**Druze Israelis:** These are Arabs who are more loyal to the Jews than they are to the Palestinians. They fought on the Jewish side in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Since then, they are the only Arab group allowed to serve in the Israeli army.

Not all "Arabs" are of Arab descent. Many have a heritage that comes from a variety of different cultures and nationalities. Still, the large percent of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs are descendants from Middle Eastern cultures.

## **Religious Differences:**

There are three weekly holy days in Israel.

- Muslims – Friday
- Jews – Saturday
- Christians – Sunday

Jews and Muslims start their holy days at sunset the previous evening.

Arabs usually consider themselves to be either Muslim or Christian.

**Muslims:** This is the major religion of both Israeli Arabs and Palestinians. Jerusalem is the third holiest site in Islam.

**Christians:** This group traces their heritage all the way back to 1st century Christians. Unfortunately, they are rapidly decreasing in Israel. This is because they are generally more affluent and better able to leave.

Be careful when talking about religion. You don't want to accidentally violate someone's faith. Avoid abusing an Arabic newspaper. They usually have some reference to Allah and some Muslims could be insulted in how the printed name of Allah is treated. Still, people in Israel show tourists a large amount of tolerance in these areas.

While in Israel, you will hear their "call to prayer" five times a day.

- just before sunrise
- just after noon
- in the middle of the afternoon
- just after sunset
- once it is dark

When visiting a mosque:

- Take off your shoes
- Do not wear shorts
- Women don't wear short sleeves or sleeveless dresses
- No loud talking
- Don't take pictures
- Women wear a scarf. One will usually be provided if you don't have one.

Both Nazareth and Bethlehem have a large population of Arab Christians – the largest number being found in Nazareth.

## Judaism

The Jews in Israel came from many different nations and therefore they have diverse cultural backgrounds. Many of them consider themselves Secular Jews, which means they

were born into a Jewish home and identify themselves as "Jewish," but don't follow that religion.

Judaism subdivides into several groups:

- Orthodox
- Conservative
- Reform
- Reconstructionist
- Messianic

The Orthodox Jews want Israel to follow their religion more strictly. They don't consider the other branches to be fully Jewish since they don't strictly follow all the religious laws.

## Jewish culture:

Jewish people greet others with "Shalom" and then a handshake. Shalom is also used as a casual greeting when two people pass each other. Orthodox Jewish men are not supposed to shake hands with a woman, but will often extend a hand when they are introduced to an American woman.

Israelis Jews are very informal in social interactions. Their actions would be considered rude in many other countries. For example, store clerks do not acknowledge a customer's presence until the customer approaches. They rarely say "please" and "thank you." When you go into a Jewish shop or hotel, you will think you have insulted them. That is just the way it is. Try not let it bother you.

All Jewish citizens, men and women, are required to serve in the armed forces.

- Unmarried women are required to serve two years of active, non-combat duty. They usually do not achieve high-ranking positions.
- Men are required to serve a minimum of four years.
- Each soldier is assigned a gun when he/she is enlisted. If it's lost, that person immediately goes to prison for two years. No trial is needed.

## **Jewish Family Life:**

Clothing is an indication of religious or political affiliation for Israeli Jews. Some men wear skullcaps for prayer. More observant men wear them at all times. Conservative Jewish men wear black hats, whereas liberal Jews wear white crocheted caps. In the strictest Orthodox communities, men dress in black and have long sidelocks, and women keep their heads covered. Traditionally, after marriage, they shave their heads and wear wigs. Secular Jews comprise the majority of the population and wear Western-style clothes.

Orthodox men and women live very separate lives. Women are considered inferior and are excluded from many traditional activities. But most of Israeli society is more progressive, and women are generally accorded equal status to men, both legally and socially.

This does not apply to the area of divorce. Divorce is legal, but Orthodox Jewish law applies. According to this statute, men have the power to prevent their ex-wives from remarrying. If the woman enters into another relationship, the courts refuse to recognize it. Children from such a union are considered illegitimate and cannot marry in the State of Israel.

In Israel, it is illegal for a Jew to marry a non-Jew. Those who do so must go to another country for the ceremony. It is even unusual for a "very observant Jew" to marry a secular Jew.

The Jewish faith has a set of dietary laws. Among other restrictions, they are not to eat pork and shellfish. They are not to eat meat and milk products at the same meal. Not all Israelis observe these rules, but many restaurants do. You may even notice the separation of meat and milk in how a mall's food court is laid out.

Most Jewish stores and restaurants are closed on Saturday. This includes parks and tourist sites.

## **Kibbutz:**

The Jews that came to Palestine in the early 1900s set up a living system called a kibbutz. It was based on a socialist theory that believed the community should own everything. They set up cooperative farms in which property is collectively owned and the residents share chores. Instead of a salary, they receive housing, medical care, education, and other necessities.

In the original kibbutz system, parents lived in separate quarters from their children, who were housed with other young people. Some still operate this way, but now it is more common for children to live with their parents, although their days are still spent separately.

Other communities set up a system called moshav. This is a farming community in which each family owns its own house and is responsible for its own land. But other functions are done collectively, such as selling their products.

## **Arab culture:**

Most Arabs wear Western-style clothes. Still, you will see many Arabs wearing the old style traditional clothes. For men, this is traditional Arab headdress (called a keffiyeh) and long robes. For women, this is a long robe that covers the head and the entire body.

Arabs greet one another by shaking right hands – with their left hands on each other's shoulders. Then come the kisses, one for each cheek. Still, they'll greet you in a more Western style.

It is acceptable in the Middle East for men to display affection with their male friends. You may even see them walk along together holding hands. You should not initiate this type of affection with them. Still, consider it an honor if they give you a full body hug.

Men generally don't shake hands with an Arab woman unless she offers her hand first. Men are not to touch, hug or talk

in private with women. They don't even talk to a woman in public unless they have been formally introduced. It's rude for a man to maintain eye contact with a woman. Generally a man doesn't ask other man about his wife or other female members of his family.

**Ah, Arab coffee!** Arab coffee is very strong and is served in small cups. When you are at a meal or in someone's office, a hot drink is offered as an expression of friendship and esteem. It is considered rude to refuse this offer.

This is not true when you are out in public or in the market place. It is common for an Arab to offer you a cup of coffee. It is acceptable if you want to say yes, but remember that accepting a cup of coffee in the market place is the beginning of a long visit. Therefore, it is also acceptable to turn it down.

**Arab Time:** Time (and being on time) is less rigid than in the US. Their approach to time is much more relaxed. They feel this attitude helps them cultivate their love for creative speech. This is the basis for their love of stories and poetry. They don't apologize for being late unless it is well over an hour.

**Arab Hospitality:** During our trip, you have the opportunity to visit an Arab home and have a meal with their family. If you accept, here are a few things to know.

- Hospitality is very important in the Arab culture.
- Once you're in the home, the man of the house will protect you to his own death.
- It is customary to remove your shoes before entering the home.
- It is proper to take a gift to the home. Alcohol is not acceptable. Something that represents your state would be nice. It is best to wrap the gift.

Gift ideas: Hand made items, decoration for the wall, chocolate (or other candy) fruit (we are not allowed to take fresh fruit into Israel). If there are younger children in the family, you could take some coloring books. In the past (since I'm from Illinois), I have taken an Illinois Photo coffee-table (Photo) book.

- Plan to spend twice the amount of time in "meeting and greeting."
- Courtesy is of the highest importance.
- The bottom of the foot or shoe is offensive. When sitting, don't cross your legs with the bottom of your shoe facing anyone. It means, "You're beneath my feet."
- It is not proper to discuss political issues, religion, alcohol, and male-female relations over dinner or tea.
- The left hand is considered to be unclean.
  - Only use the right hand when eating and drinking.
  - Only use the right hand to pass food at the table.
  - Be careful in touching someone with the left hand.
  - Use your right hand to accept anything that is given to you. (Ok. Don't worry too much about the "left hand" thing. It is not a part of our culture and they know it. Many of them are also getting away from it.)
- It is considered a compliment if you don't eat everything on your plate. It is a sign of wealth when an Arab can afford to leave food behind.
- The dinner is often the climax of conversation and entertainment. Therefore guests usually leave shortly after dinner. Be flexible here because this is not always the case.
- Be careful about looking at your watch. This suggests to the family that they are not worthy of your time.
- Never take a photo without permission.
- You may be offered a gift at the end of your time together. Sometimes they prefer you not open it in front of them. So don't open it unless they ask you to.

Some of you will conclude that the highlight of your trip was the evening you spent in an Arab home. But this goes both ways, many of the families you visit will talk about it for years to come. They are a generous people and will love getting to know you.

Arab hand gestures: Each country in the world has its own set of hand gestures.

Here are a few in the Arab culture:

- The sign for respect is placing a hand over their heart along with a slight bow. This is usually done during greeting.
- The hand gesture for "thank you" is placing the palm of

the right hand on the chest, bowing the head a little, and closing the eyes.

- In the US, we motion someone to come by holding out our hand, palm up, and bring it up and back. In Israel, they hold the hand out, palm down, and bring it down and back.
- A positive gesture in the US is the "A-ok" sign (putting the tips of the index finger and thumb together with other fingers up). In the Middle East, it symbolizes the "the evil eye," and is used as an insult. A "thumbs up" is the "A-ok" sign in Israel and many other countries.

**Photos:** Be careful taking photos of people or what they own. You may see an opportunity to take a picture of a camel with a beautiful background. Before you take it, work out a deal with the owner. A deal before is less expensive than a deal afterwards.

Arab children are photogenic and love to have their pictures taken – for a price. If you click the shutters first, they won't be happy with what you offer them, they'll always ask for more. Work the deal first, and then snap the photo.

Most Arabs have little contact with Americans, so they think of us as cowboys, crude, arrogant, immoral, and rich. Most American tourists who visit Israel have very little contact with the Arab community. Therefore, there is little opportunity for them to think differently of us. You have the opportunity to give a much better impression as you have interaction with their culture.

## **Arab Family Life:**

Arabs are considered an "honor" people, which mean they will defend and protect their honor at all cost. The opposite is "shame," which means insults and criticism are taken very seriously. Even "constructive criticism" can be taken as an insult.

They are also a strong "family and community" people. Therefore, family pride and honor is more important than individual rights.

Arabs believe in the power of words. They avoid speaking in

an unpleasant way because it may bring an unpleasant result. They do not hold to the motto, "Speak the truth even if it hurts." It is more important to make others feel "comfortable" in a conversation. They don't feel "being 100% truthful" has anything to do with a person's honor, and it is an insult to claim differently.

There are many affluent Arab families in Israel. But generally, Palestinians and Israeli Arabs do not have access to good education, as do Israeli Jews. Therefore there is a large number of people who are less skilled in their professions and don't have highly paid positions in their companies. Even the highly educated are forced to take jobs of low status, and many are unemployed.

Here are a few more interesting facts about the Arab family life:

- Arranged marriages still exist in the Arab world, but both partners must consent to the marriage.
- Most Arab families have a patriarchal family structure (man is the head of the house).
- The grandfather is the head of the clan. If he dies, the grandmother takes over that role.
- A father will often adapt a name that means, "the father of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the oldest son)".
- The elderly are honored in the Arab culture. Grey hair is respected.
- Often homes leave their flat roof in a condition where more levels can be added. This is for family members when they get married.
- For Arabs, it is considered polite to refuse a meal when it is first offered. It can be accepted after that. You are not expected to follow this tradition.
- Muslims are not to eat pork or drink alcohol. Not everyone follows these rules.

While we're together in Israel, you will enjoy listening to the stories of the Bible. You will also learn about the culture of Biblical times. Hopefully, this worksheet will help you enjoy the richness of the two great cultures that live in Israel today. As I have mentioned, they are gracious people and understand that Americans don't know some of these "rules." Still, they are honored if you adapt to them.