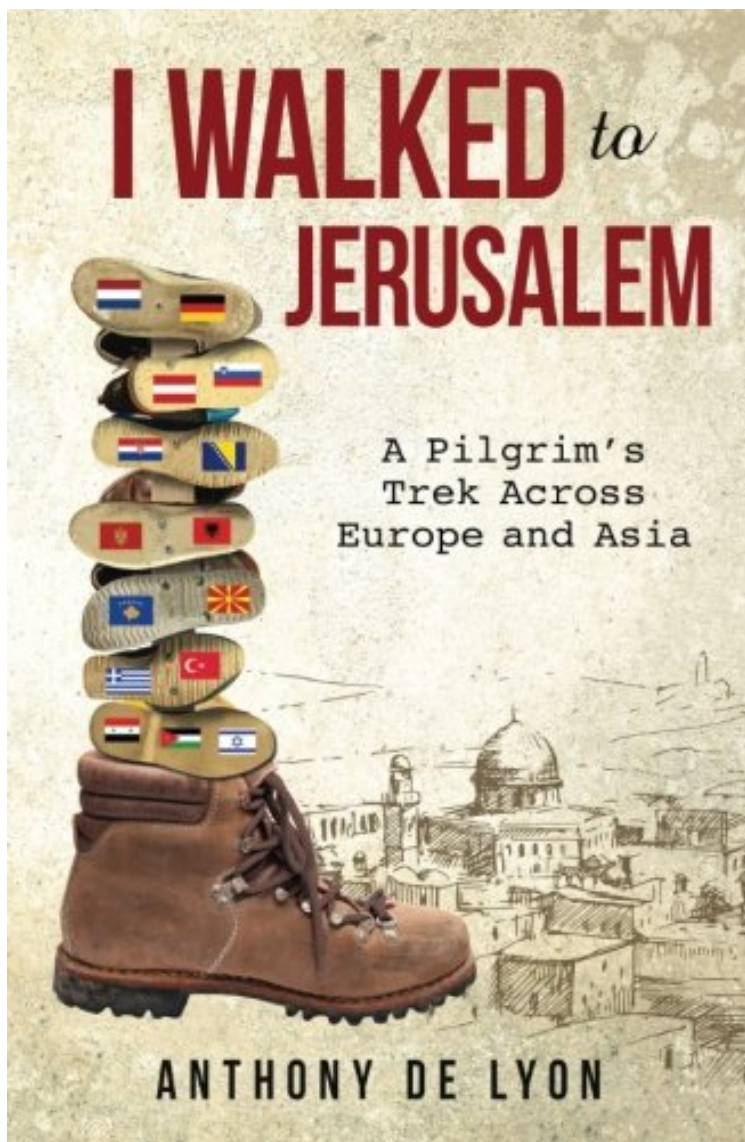


(Download pdf) I Walked to Jerusalem: A Pilgrim's Trek Across Europe and Asia

I Walked to Jerusalem: A Pilgrim's Trek Across Europe and Asia

Anthony de Lyon

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Anthony de Lyon : I Walked to Jerusalem: A Pilgrim's Trek Across Europe and Asia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Walked to Jerusalem: A Pilgrim's Trek Across Europe and Asia:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Inspiring Journey.By JWI can't imagine how difficult it would be to walk from Holland to Jerusalem. This book follows the author's journey and I read the story with wonder and awe. Each chapter covers a country and the adventures, challenges and people that Anthony encounters on the way. The

author not only talks about his journey, but views of the countryside and the history of each country. Very interesting as some countries I had barely heard of. I found the story inspiring and encouraging, especially the kindness of strangers who were willing to help a stranger. The book is certainly not boring as each country and chapter tells a different story. This journey is a pilgrimage and has inspirational scriptures scattered through as Anthony has felt a word spoken or learned along the way. Well written and at times cryptic I highly recommend this inspiring story. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. dreaming of Jerusalem By Rosalie This novice begins with no preparation other than gathering what he thinks he might need and he fails due to his blistered feet. His second try is more realistic but there are still many surprises to come. His determination to walk across the fragmented Yugoslavia has him constantly on edge, but friendly people are in the most unexpected places and except for one instance where he is chased at night, he manages quite well. That he would travel through Jordan to reach Israel is truly a masterpiece of bluffing his way. Well written and thoroughly enjoyable. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great storyteller and great story to tell By Rachael Great storyteller and great story to tell. Absolute novice dares to think he can walk from the Netherlands to Israel...and he doesn't take the easiest route either. Beautiful combination of suspense, description, humour, insight, desperation, observation, travelogue....

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"While well-written throughout, and loaded with fascinating details, colorful characters, and dialogue and anecdotes both harrowing and amusing, the chapter on Syria is a standout and almost impossible to put down ... anyone interested in making the world a better place might want to pick up this book." ~24th Annual Writer's Digest Self-Published Book Awards From the Author One of the many reasons I wrote this book was to correct the falsehoods we hold about others. Surprisingly, it wasn't only adults who provided these lessons. "You are welcome in Syria!" she cried. Della was 5 years old when I met her and her family in the village of Zgreen on Syria's Mediterranean coast. It was another chance encounter as I slowly made my way on foot towards Jerusalem. By then, I'd been walking for seven months, could pitch a soggy tent in a force 9 gale, and wasn't averse to eating things lying on the ground. Remarkably, I'd even received hospitality from the Russian mafia--and I never expected that. My trek to the Holy Land was the stuff of campfire tales. I set off in the winter of 2006, a wide-eyed novice with a mountainous rucksack and a bucketful of hope. My induction into the pilgrim life was swift. I was soon leaning into sheets of icy rain that dribbled down my neck. Then along came the blizzards, the 40-degree heat, aggressive mongrel dogs, biblical clouds of flies that battered my tent with insane fury, and blisters that would have put Vesuvius in the shade. Through it all, it was the people that were the real surprise. Pious-looking Christians who I felt certain would help, failed to. More than once, I had priestly doors slammed in my face. More than most, I discovered what it felt like to abandon the safety of home, aim for a distant star, and gamble for acceptance in the unpredictable hearts of strangers. I still consider it miraculous that the gamble mostly paid off. My road to Jerusalem from The Netherlands was a long one--6,000 kilometres of meandering asphalt, hazy meadows, primordial German forests arrowing the sky, a jungle canyon that would have looked great in "Jurassic Park," and the yellow wheat stubble of Turkey's vast Anatolian plains, shimmering like sand. Into this path stepped whatever saints or sinners God placed before me. The saints appeared in many guises. I felt elated when an elderly Dutch couple invited me to stay with them. On another occasion, a child with a lop-sided grin handed me a partially crushed pear. And in Germany I was astonished when a beekeeper drove to his house and returned with a basket full of food. By the time I reached Turkey, I was receiving up to 7 gifts a day. I never knew humility could bite so deep. On the Syrian border at Kassab, I gambled again. I had no choice. Without a visa, I couldn't continue walking to Jerusalem. Even here, though, God still seemed to favour my enterprise, for after paying the fee, excessive or not, I was granted 15 days. I considered myself blessed. There were more blessings in Zgreen. Here I met Momdoh Hrez outside his butcher's shop. I explained that I was looking for somewhere to camp, but he would hear none of it. Within minutes, he was leading me through the apple-red pomegranate trees to his house. I sat gratefully on the balcony with a plate of fries and a cup of lemonade. His family quickly joined us: a demure wife in a silk headscarf, a boy of about seven with unruly hair, and Della seated on a cushion, clutching a glass. "Della has a small glass," Momdoh said, with a smile he couldn't hide. He looked down at his daughter's upturned face and brushed a strand of hair from her eyes. We ate on. Eventually, in what had become a rite of passage, the family signed my walking stick. I told them I considered the Arabic script beautiful, and it was. But in truth, it was these simple moments of sharing that held the real beauty. Years later, such events continue to remind me that all over the world there are people rich and poor, great and small, eager to do good. Despite the gloomy news that constantly assails us, these people do exist. They also speak volumes about our common humanity. When I travelled through Syria I often received hospitality. Nearly all was provided by Muslims. The fact that I was a Christian was irrelevant. The oft-touted differences between us proved to be illusory. Do we not all breathe the same air? Do we all not stand on the same patch of dirt? My pilgrimage revealed to me that we do. Their unsolicited gifts of food and drink were a mirror to their souls,

a reflection of their higher selves. The question, for me, surely begs. As the current war in Syria drags on, and refugees seek our help, will we in the developed world not mirror their kindness in return? Today, the Syria I knew is a dark place. The world of then has become the world of now. In Europe, and across the Middle East, walls and fences are going up--and not all are physical. I'll say flat out I don't have a convenient answer to that. Though the aid agencies continue to lobby, opening up the borders to all and sundry can never be the whole solution. Politicians must look at the bigger picture. Their shoulders need to be broader; their decisions, harsher. Those that lead--whether in the White House or on the battlefield--cannot allow themselves to be unduly influenced by sentiment. That's always been the run of things. Deep down, it's what we, the voters, expect. And yet the private citizen, unburdened by the weight of office, dares to hope that in our collective mirror we might see compassion staring back. If I met Della today she would be 15 years old. Sometimes, when I read the news, I wonder if she and her family still live in Zgreen, or whether they languish in a Turkish refugee camp, waiting for a new life that will never be offered. There is no way for me to know. There is only the memory of that strange time when I was a pilgrim walking to Jerusalem. Those 9 months when I gambled on the unpredictable hearts of strangers. And that moment when a 5-year-old child lifted up her glass. "You are welcome in Syria!" she cried. About the Author Following travels in Turkey, Anthony de Lyon knows well the thrill that being chased by a man on a donkey can bring. But his life wasn't always that exciting. Once a sober, blue-tied civil servant, he's since reinvented himself as an IT consultant, a charity fundraiser, a travel novelist and latterly as a typesetter dabbling in unusual end-of-line hyphenations. Somewhere on this journey he "found God" and decided to walk to Jerusalem. When not obliterating walking boots on big treks, he now appraises author manuscripts and runs a website for long-distance walkers, trekkers and pilgrims. Pick up the trail at iwalkedtojerusalem.com.