



## **The Disappearing River That Separates Palestine From Jordan**

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**Dimitri Lascaris (DL):** Good day, this is Dimitri Lascaris, coming to you for Reason2Resist on October 25th, 2025. I am currently standing beside a highway that runs from Amman, Jordan to the Allenby Bridge and the Jordan River which separates Jordan from occupied Palestine. Behind me, off in the distance beyond these dry hills, is the occupied West Bank. I can more or less make out in the distance, although you won't be able to see it in the video, what I believe to be the Palestinian city of Nablus. But that is the general area that lies behind me, the area of Nablus. I'm going to continue down this road towards the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. I'm going to stop at the site of the baptism of Jesus, or what is reputed to be the site of the baptism of Jesus, and then go down to the Jordan River, where Christians go to be baptized from time to time. And then I'm going to drive northward along the Jordan River towards the Golan Heights. And I don't have any particular objective here other than to see what is happening along the border between occupied Palestine and Jordan. I'll report back soon.

I'm now at what is reputed to be the site of the baptism of Jesus of Nazareth, and I'm starting my visit here in the Visitors Center, which recounts the history of this ancient place. And I'll share with you a little bit of what I can see and what I've been able to glean about this area from these exhibitions.

Excuse me. What city is that? Is that Nablus?

**Guide:** No, Jericho.

**DL:** Over there?

**Guide:** Yes.

**DL:** That's Jericho.

**Guide:** This is the parking where we continue to walk but please go together and back. We said this is a military area.

**DL:** So as you just saw when I departed the visitors center and started walking towards the baptismal site by the Jordan River, it became clear that I couldn't actually walk there. It was necessary to take a shuttle bus with a guide. And you saw him speaking briefly on the shuttle bus. It's I would say about three or four kilometers from the visitor center. And on the shuttle bus he repeatedly stressed that this is a military area and cautioned us repeatedly that we have to walk together with him leading the procession down from the point where we disembarked from the shuttle bus to the baptismal site. It's about a one kilometer walk. It's right by the Jordan River. Apparently we're going to go right up to the bank. In this area, in the 1967 war, the Jordan River north of the Dead Sea essentially became the front line and it was heavily mined by the Zionists, potentially also by the Jordanian military. And it was as I understand it pretty much off limits from the time that the 1967 war concluded up until 1994 when Jordan did a peace deal with the Israeli entity. And after that, the area was demined and this site was developed for visitors to come and partake in celebration of the baptism of Jesus. So we are now approaching the baptismal site.

**DL:** Excuse me. So is Palestine just on the other side of this river?

**Guide:** Yes.

**DL:** So we're right at the Jordan River and literally a stone's throw from here is Palestine?

**Guide:** Yes, now the river is the border. The river is the river border, but the river is changing, yes? Behind the corner, left. But here is the river border. Okay, players. This is the first stop at the river Jordan. I told you it's a national border river. But we have another spot where the people touch, baptize, and we see the river again. We go to the church. See where the Golden Church is? That in Jordan because, you know, the river changes. The river doesn't go straight. In Aramaic they call it "Yardenit" river, they mean "meandered". And behind the corner it goes left, right? And look how many meters dry. I told you where you stop. [Inaudible]. Now I want to take you where the old church is. [Inaudible].

**DL:** You can see the Jordanian flag right here and right across the flag of the genocidal Israeli entity, even though that is not Israel. That is occupied Palestine. And these mass murderers have no lawful or moral right to control the borders of occupied Palestine, something they use, their control, to keep people like myself out at a time when they are committing genocide against the indigenous peoples of this region. That's Palestine, just steps away.

So I've completed my visit to the eastern bank of the Jordan River and am now standing outside the tour shop waiting for the people who were part of our group, the people who came on my shuttle, to do whatever shopping they gotta do. And I was reflecting on what I just saw – there's been multiple reports over the years about water scarcity in this area and the receding shoreline of the Dead Sea. And you can see from this image just how narrow the

Jordan River is. Our guide mentioned climate change several times in the discussion, in his presentation, as we were driving down here from the visitors center. And it occurred to me that the combination of climate change and the massive influx of water pigs from North America and Europe – particularly North America – and here I'm of course referring to the illegal settlers in the West Bank. There's been this huge influx, there's now something like 800.000 of these people, and they are notorious for having the gluttonous water habits of North Americans to the detriment of the indigenous Palestinian population. But the combination of these things, overdevelopment of this area which already has limited water resources and climate change is going to pose an increasing military quandary for the genocidal entity because the Jordan River and the dead sea are becoming less and less of a natural barrier to the occupied West Bank and to the 1948 territory of Israel. And so, it occurs to me – I'm sure that Israel's military planners are keenly aware of this long-term quandary and therefore, this, I think, adds to their incentive to confiscate land on the eastern bank of the Jordan River, sort of to build themselves a buffer zone, and also to give themselves the ability to use the increasingly scarce water volume of the Jordan River entirely for themselves, to deprive Jordanians of access to it. So, again, I can't imagine that this is a long-term strategic challenge to which Israel's political and military leaders haven't given much thought. They'll never discuss it openly, of course, at least no sane person would if they have designs on this bank of the Jordan River. But one thing is clear: their expansionist project continues. I'm now going to go back to my vehicle and start driving up the eastern bank of the Northern River towards the Golan Heights.

Shukran! So I just tried to drive north past the Allenby Bridge along the eastern bank of the Jordan River and I came to a military checkpoint and the soldier, the young soldier, would not let me pass through. So now I have to go back south, then go east and get on a highway and head north again. And I just happened to come across this large parking lot with all these trucks – I don't know if those trucks are meant to carry humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza. So I'm now about two-thirds of the way from the Allenby Bridge border crossing to the base of the Golan Heights in Northeastern Jordan. I've been travelling all along just parallel to the Jordan River from the time I left the area of the Allenby Bridge, or more precisely the reputed baptism site of Jesus of Nazareth. And this village I'm going through, this must be the seventh or eighth village I've gone through while travelling northward towards the Golan Heights. It's very typical of the other villages I have seen. You can tell the buildings are quite worn down. They look like they are quite older. The architecture is unimpressive, they're basically utilitarian. They are there simply to provide accommodation or serve as the premises for a business. But my overall impression, and it's always in every village I've gone through, there was a significant amount of garbage in the streets. Vehicles are old and also run down. The overall impression I have is that there is a fairly low quality of life in this country. This area outside of Amman I would imagine is the most affluent part of the country because of the agricultural industry. Most of this country is extremely arid. This is by far the most productive part of the country agriculturally. So you would think that the people here relative to other parts of the country are prosperous, but that's not the overall impression I have. And recall that the country is led by a monarch who is undoubtedly extremely wealthy. Right over there you can see occupied Palestine off in the distance. So, I'm going to continue

driving until I get to the base of the Golan Heights. I plan to stop in a village called, if I'm pronouncing it correctly, Umm Qais, and I expect to be there in about 30 minutes. Here you're looking at the Jordanian side of the Jordan River. In any case I'll report back to you shortly.

Well, I've come to the end of my journey to northeastern Jordan. I'm now standing in the foothills of the Golan Heights, not far, in fact, from the Syrian border. Behind me in this valley is northern occupied Palestine, and you probably won't be able to see it, but I can see from here the southern tip of Lake Tiberias, and somewhere behind me should be the predominantly Palestinian town of Nazareth, which lies within the 1948 boundaries of what they call Israel. And further on now I'm panning to the south, you may be able to see from here if you look carefully at the northern edge of the occupied West Bank.

In any case, the Golan Heights, the Syrian Golan Heights remain occupied by Israel since 1967. And I've now seen the Syrian Golan Heights from three vantage points – from South Lebanon, from southern Syria, and now from northeastern Jordan. And it's easy to understand, even if you're not a military expert, and I certainly am not, why the Israelis refuse to return that land to its rightful owner. It dominates areas of all three of these countries in significant and populated and resourceful areas, areas that have significant agricultural value, namely South Lebanon, southern Syria, and northeastern Jordan and the Jordan Valley. Only one country I know of has actually recognized Israel's illegal annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights. There may be a smattering of others, but the vast majority of the international community denounces it as a violation of international law, as has the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly repeatedly. And that one major country that legitimized Israel's theft of the Syrian Golan Heights is of course the United States, and that was under the first Trump administration. I was told by Laith Marouf, who actually lived for a number of years in Jordan, that the Golan Heights is almost entirely bereft of forestation. And a major reason for that, according to Laith, the executive director of Free Palestine TV, who's a frequent guest on Reason2Resist, is that the Israelis in the 1967 war made extensive use of Napalm. And you may recall at that time that that's precisely what its principal backer, the United States was doing with horrific effect in the Vietnam War.

I'm now going to head southward again through the Jordanian city of Irbid to Amman, and I'll be leaving tomorrow for Athens before taking a flight to Montreal on Monday. Just some final closing observations, when I was driving up here from the Allenby Bridge, it took me about two hours, not because it's very far, but because the driving was very slow. There were maybe a dozen or more villages I went through, speed bumps along the way. I was a little bit surprised not to see a significant military presence on either side of the border, but I did go through a number of police checkpoints in these Jordanian villages. They were manned by one or two police officers, none of whom had an automatic weapon. They were armed, but they didn't have automatic weapons. So visibly at least, there wasn't a heavy military and police presence in this area. But that doesn't mean, of course, that there aren't military forces present here but discreetly present. The other thing I want to reiterate is that this particular part of Jordan, which should be relatively prosperous, was actually from my perspective, it

looked very, very modest in terms of its means. Agriculturally, this is vitally important to the sustenance of the Jordanian population. But the resources of the region don't appear to have trickled down to the workers and the farmers of the area. The autocrat, by contrast, the king, who is a vassal of Washington, lives opulently in palaces throughout the country.

In any case, I personally felt welcomed by the Jordanian people. They were very hospitable, but I've had that experience wherever I've traveled in Arab and Muslim countries, and I've been to many now. Unfortunately, they don't have a government, it seems to me, which is representative of their interests. If it were, it wouldn't style itself a monarchy and it would hold regular elections that are free and fair and have a policy towards this genocidal entity over here behind me that is reflective of the will of the people. And if it did have such a policy, surely there would be no diplomatic presence of the Israelis here, and there would be no military or economic cooperation between the two states. And let us hope that one day this country does indeed have a government that is representative of the people. For now, I'm signing off from northeastern Jordan across the border from northern occupied Palestine for Reason2Resist on October 25th, 2025.

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