

# *The May Holy Land Quest*

Israel to Jordan  
May 4 – 15, 2014

*Earth's bones claim me now,  
hold me close,  
teach me my future song.*

## **Guides: Doug Van Houten & Sage Magdalene M.S.**

SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, people seeking truth have journeyed into desert wilderness in order to sense the subtle and compelling mysteries living beneath the surface of things. For those called to this quest, the voice of the desert may sound as hoof beats thrumming in the blood or the siren song of wind whooshing across vast sand plains and sighing through sinuous canyon turnings. Perhaps there is a deep longing for the stillness of Arabian nights lit by innumerable wheeling galaxies, and a visceral need for enough emptiness for the wild soul to finally make a shy appearance. Our destination, a region of sandstone cliffs, spectacular gorges, honeycombed weathering and enormous caverns has been a sanctuary and pilgrimage site for many thousands of years. Petroglyphs and rock inscriptions give testimony to ancient human presence. Could it be that this devastatingly mysterious landscape requires your presence in order to inscribe upon your heart the hieroglyph of your soul's true name?

AS A RITE OF INITIATION, the quest is a ceremonial descent to the underworld, in which you die to your familiar way of belonging to the world, uncover the passion and wisdom of your soul, and retrieve the gift that is yours alone to bring to the world, enhancing personal fulfillment and genuine service. The quest serves as a modern rite of initiation into your own soul and deeper layers of true adulthood.

AS A RITE OF PASSAGE, the quest facilitates the transition through a major crossroads of life. These crossroads — leaving home, mid-life crisis, career change, loss of a loved one, divorce, a healing crisis, spiritual crisis, or retirement — can be quite disorienting and emotionally traumatic. But these unavoidable and pivotal shifts are often the necessary threshold of all post-adolescent personal development and initiation.



*Could it be that these desert  
canyons require your presence  
in order to inscribe  
upon your heart the hieroglyph  
of your soul's true name?*

**Must register by April 4 • Early bird discount when deposit received by March 1 →**



OUR GROUP WILL MEET in Eilat, Israel, on the Bay of Aqaba at the northern tip of the Red Sea. We will cross the border into Jordan and travel north toward Petra, heading into convoluted canyons, leaving the homeland, and with peaceful, soulful intent, carry our prayers, grief and hopes into the unknown.

We will settle into our basecamp amid a colorful mosaic of red, orange, and beige canyon walls. For five days we will immerse in a synergistic mix of soulcraft practices and ceremonies including dream work, poetry, sacred rhythm and dance, talking staff council, deep imagery journeys and conversations with the wild inhabitants of this place. The breeze may carry the scent of aromatic herbs growing among the rocks, and our vision may be blessed by spring's display of wildflowers.

We may glimpse hare, fox, hyrax, jerboa, Arabian ibex, and lizard (or signs of their passing) as eagle, harrier, and Sinai Rosefinch draw graceful arcs across the sky.

The heart of the quest consists of the solo: three days and nights without human companionship in nature, fasting, engaging in personal ceremonies, saying yes to the mysteries of soul, tending the true myths of your particular life, praising and grieving, and birthing a vision. Each person will discover a uniquely enchanting location for the solo: tiny oases among palms, wild figs, ferns and white broom, or striated

*...uncover the passion  
and wisdom of your soul...*



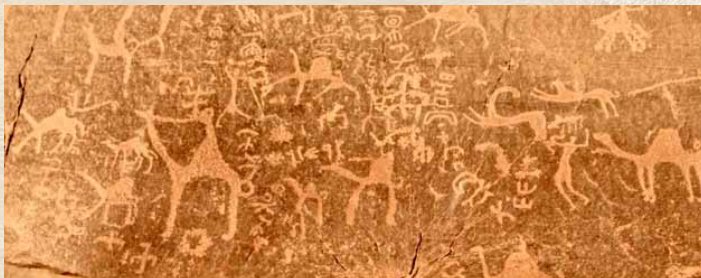
rock walls carved by time into strange faces over sandy grottos etched with tracks of tiny creatures. Listening with the ears of the heart, attuning to the secret wavelengths of the deep imagination, within the holy wild surround beneath the waxing moon, anything and everything is possible.

Upon the return of those with the courage to go out alone, the group will gather and with reverence share the stories of the quest, gather the gifts from the underworld, and gently prepare to carry vibrant possibilities back to our people. There will be two days of integration and opportunities to give thanks and offer praise to all the wild desert beings.

If you feel allured and perhaps terrified by the beauty and mystery of desert vastness, if you are called toward the timeless ceremony of

dying in order to become more fully alive, we invite you to journey with us to the sacred desert.

**For more information about the psycho-spiritual underpinnings of an Animas quest, please visit ([www.animas.org](http://www.animas.org)).**



### Contact in Israel for enrollment application:

Lia Naor [leahnaor@gmail.com](mailto:leahnaor@gmail.com)

### Contacts for Program Content:

Doug Van Houten — [doug@dougvanhouten.com](mailto:doug@dougvanhouten.com)  
Sage Magdalene — [gatebetweenworlds@gmail.com](mailto:gatebetweenworlds@gmail.com)

**Quest Fee: \$2,000**

**Early Bird Discount: \$1,900**

(with a non-refundable \$600 deposit paid by March 1)

**Quest begins May 4 at 10:00 a.m. in Eilat, Israel.**

**Quest ends May 15 in Jordan about noon  
followed by 3-hour drive back to Eilat.**

## Guides



**Doug Van Houten** is a student of Hakomi, apprentice to the honeybee, visual artist, wild ceremonialist, activist and guide for Animas Valley Institute ([www.animas.org](http://www.animas.org)). In this work he draws on the wisdom of indigenous cultures, the natural world, depth-psychology, eco-psychology, dreams, poetry, and many cross cultural soul-encounter practices such as vision fasting, council, trance rhythms and conversations with the sacred Other. Doug's

Great Work lives in support of others uncovering their own unique gifts and in so doing transforming their own lives in service to the Great Turning transformation of our times. Doug lives in Louisville, Kentucky.



**Sage Magdalene** has a gift for hearing and reflecting the deep stories of all beings. She invites people to thresholds and opens gates between worlds. She has been an educator, artist, dancer, and gate keeper in many ecosystems. Her greatest joy is to hear and converse with the wild others: moon, spider, frog, human, river and stars.

She brings a light touch and embodied wisdom to the serious work of transformation. She guides for Animas Valley Institute ([www.animas.org](http://www.animas.org)). Sage lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.