

The Baptism Site of Jesus Christ (Al-Maghtas)



<https://www.deadsea.com/explore/historical-sites/biblical-sites/qasr-al-yahud-site/>

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Design with Nature

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Challenges



! Challenges

1. **Sensitive Political Situation:** The site has shared waters with occupied Palestine “Israel”. And despite all the documents which prove that Jesus Christ was baptized in the Jordanian side of the river, Israel has not stopped trying to attribute it to the occupied side of the Jordan River.





Challenges

2. Deteriorated Water Quality:

2009

- Discharged Saline flows, agricultural runoff water, ineffectively treated sewage, by all networks along the stream = **Decreased Biodiversity**

2010

- In 2010, EcoPeace Middle East warned of serious public health threat due to organic pollutants.
- The Israeli authorities subsequently declared regular water monitoring and safety for immersion.

2015

- new sewage treatment plant.
- FoEME therefore recommends that 400-600 MCM/year of fresh water be returned to the river and that the river be allowed to flood once a year in order to maintain a healthy ecosystem.

! Challenges

2. Deteriorated Water Quality:



<http://mawwadahsuci.blogspot.com/2011/07/angan-angan-kah-atau-impian-kah.html>



Sewage pump



Fresh water pump

1 & 2 <http://origins.osu.edu/article/baptized-jordan-restoring-holy-river/page/0/1>



Challenges

3. Delegations caused by Climatic and Environmental Stresses

4. Man-made Negative impacts: The contemporary practice of pilgrimage to the site and Baptism rituals on site could lead to man-made negative impacts, resulting in decay, especially that the rocks of the site consists of Lisan Marl, with thin layers of chalk and clay

5. The evident difference in the number of Tourist (Jordan receives less tourists): According to the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities the number of Visitors to the Baptism site in 2013 was 86, 339 visitors, while the Baptism site of the Western Bank (Named as Qasr Yhaud) hosted 464,000 visitors. This possibly refers to the upgraded, rehabilitated and well-advertized archaeological site in the West Bank.

6. Lack of regular maintenance.

7. Lack of local community involvement in site development.



Strategies for Improvement

1. Adopting of appropriate **conservation measures**.
2. Analyzing **pollution effects** on the site should identified properly and be available to the public, and the water treatment plant should be set adequately.
3. Encouraging the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to **effectively collaborate with responsible bodies and related parties** to integrate the archaeological site within the environmental development plans.
4. Better **law enforcement** is required concerning activities of the archaeological and religious tourism.
5. Rehabilitating Project that seeks to **upgrade facilities and maintain the site attractions** regularly.
6. Engaging Christians, Jewish, and Muslims to **raise awareness** of the importance of preserving the site as a shared religious and cultural-historical heritage.