

ISRAEL Trip First Week RECAP, Part 1 - 4/5/2008:

Shalom and greeting from Jerusalem...

Wednesday: Week two began with a focus on organizing my files and notes that seem to be in every open space in my hotel room. As you meet people and ministry groups you tend to accumulate brochures, cards, and files of various kinds that reach a critical point screaming for order. Giving order is not fun, but necessary.

Calls to set appointment times and get background on meeting objective. It is simply business "101" that is used from time eternal. I often say the original business book was the Bible. It taught integrity, rules, organization, communication, hard work, and most important "love" [either love what you do or do not do it].

Laundry and cleaning placed, car gas [very expensive, \$7.00 gal prox], and water supply for consumption [Israel is dry and arid]. I found small village type shopping area to meet all my needs, very close to hotel.

Finally, a chance to go to the Old City Jerusalem, one of my favorite places in the world. No other place like it. Somewhat like the wild west in movies, a collection of mavericks, hawking goods, food, Bibles, people bearing wooden crosses, orderly processions of Christian groups, IDF Forces with heavy guns strapped on sides, Orthodox Jews [black hats, black coats, black shoes, in serious lock step] and so there is something for everyone. Nice to be an observer of the life flow. Mt of Olives to the Zion Gate and on to the Jewish Quarter and visit to the Western Wall at the base of the Temple Mount. Then on to the Christian Quarter to visit our family friends the Salman Bros Shop; with beads, baubles and all things beautiful. Mostly just a visit this time, with low key level shopping, just some items for K & K.

Visit to Holy Sepulcher where Christ arose. I have not seen so many people since year 2000 before the conflict restarted. The past two years, much better and quiet except for the brief Lebanon conflict in the north. Good to see the Jerusalem going full speed. More difficult to drive with traffic, but still a blessing of many people.

Late call from daughter Kolleen. She was victorious in "mile and 1/2 mile" track events today. She works hard, so I am pleased for her. No matter what place, she is my winner always. Just being a parent I guess. Of course, mom is there guiding her!

Thursday: I guess I should say, "I start my days running the hills of Jerusalem". The weather has been good so every day has been good for running. See a few other runners, but mostly students rushing to class at the Hebrew University, the area where I run. Also the major hospital is close so lots of first shift workers going to work. All except

Sabbath, when it is VERY quiet. Such a change from the daily hustle.

Today is my visit to the Spaffords Children Center in the Old City Jerusalem. It is located at the very top of the Old City walls near the Damascus Gate. This is a wild area. Cars and people everywhere. To park in this congested area you enter the mob scene and inch along until you get to a parking area to abandon your car and go only by foot. I have a very heavy load of meds, to large bags, to tote up many steps winding and turning until finally at the Hospital. My dear friend Dr DeJani is happy to see me, and very delighted to get the meds!!! Also, gave a gift to Center. Kreta and Kolleen had a great visit with her when they were here on my last visit. The Center was awarded a major renovation gift, so they are in a two year program to give the Hospital a complete [do over]. They are about half done now. Had a prayer with the Doctor for her work and the Hospital services. As always, a lift to the spirit to see dedicated people helping others.

Since I am near the Via Delorosa I visit the site of the trial and condemnation of Jesus, which is the start of the walk to the final stop at the Tomb. Then on to the Western Wall to pray and place some prayer notes for specific requests. I am always honored and happy to place notes for people, and of course pray for them.

Back to the Christian Quarter where I found my long time friend Sami who has just opened a "rare coin" shop, and also very old weights and measures. I meet his friend, a book author, who signs books for Sami's shop. Nice visit.

Long day today. I now leave hotel at 7:00pm to drive to Netayna to meet a Messianic Pastor from Tiberias to start a possible association and work together. This could work well if we achieve the Naples and Tiberias association. Arrive at 9:00pm where Pastor Daniel is at a major wedding reception. He was kind enough to meet me at the request of Evan Thomas. We had a great first meeting and see many areas where we can help each other. He has a congregation of approximately 400 which is very large in the Holy Land. Not many mega churches here. More local focus and strong social groups. Back to the hotel at 11:15pm. Night drives up the mountain to Jerusalem can be busy and tense. Now for a few moments to relax and reflect before I turn in at 1:00pm which seems to be the norm.

May the Lord Bless and Keep you, Roger,CWP