

Day 5: Never Forget

What a sobering experience. My tour today began with a visit to Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum located on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem. After reflecting on what I saw, it's clear no other place so far has impacted me like this one.

First we went into the Valley of Communities where we watched a short video of life among Jewish people before Adolf Hitler executed his sinister plan to destroy them.

I saw scenes of Jewish culture with men and women, boys and girls laughing, dancing and enjoying everyday life. Then we descended deep into the museum and the deeper we walked, the more horrific the images were. After seeing remnants from victims herded off to concentration camps—their shoes, pocket watches, family photos and more—the tears started to trickle down my face. It's something I'll never forget.

I could barely contain myself when I entered the Children's Memorial. All I could think about were the millions of children who died in gas chambers. I saw some of their faces and they were no different from my precious 5-year-old niece, Taelor, and your kids. I could hear them giggling and laughing in my mind. Yet they died without the embrace of a mother or father. They died without mercy.

As we departed the museum, I started thinking about an article I had written back in early 2000 titled "The History America Chose to Forget." It's about the heinous act of lynching and the persecution of black people. During the Civil Rights movement, many Jewish people marched arm-in-arm with African-

Americans because they could relate to the pain. Seeing those images in the museum made me think about my great, great grandmother who was a slave.

As a black person, I sometimes want to ask God about the Holocaust, slavery and other atrocities that have occurred in the annals of time, but I don't. Instead I trust God to right every wrong and to judge righteously every human being. Every day Jewish people demonstrate forgiveness, and I believe that's the model we must all follow.