

Day 1: I Made It!

After staying up to 3 am the night before preparing for my trip, and after nearly missing my flight to JFK the next day, I finally made it to Israel!

My tour group and I arrived at Ben Gurion International Airport close to 3:30 pm and could hardly wait to see the first city on the tour schedule.

Tel Aviv is a wonderful place to visit, but if you're thinking it's lined with dusty roads like in biblical times, think again. It's a modern city and has all the makings of a bustling metropolis like billboards, quaint restaurants, public transportation and more.

And though the people here speak with a slurred accent, they are no different from us. They like to jog along the beach, dash in and out of traffic, and talk on the cell phone— just as we Americans do.

After taking a bus tour of the city, we bundled up and went to eat dinner at The White Pergula Restaurant at the port in Tel Aviv. Though the weather dropped to a shivering 50-something degree, our appetites didn't budge. We enjoyed a spread of Mediterranean cuisine and ate everything from fresh mushrooms and olives to calamari and a dessert made from orchids. I'm a picky eater and I don't like to deviate much from anything that doesn't resemble baked chicken, but the food was delicious.

I think the highlight of the first day of my trip (by the time you read this blog, I will be on second day of my pilgrimage) was my visit to Jaffa. The city is lined with museums and boutiques, but just 10 years ago the tour guide said it was a place of prostitution and other criminal activity. Today Jaffa has been restored and is a hub for millions of tourist who visit Israel each year.

But Jaffa is also the city where Peter received a vision from God about Cornelius. It is the place where the Father revealed His plan of salvation for Gentile people.

It's amazing to me how the Holy Spirit can bring to life the words of Scripture and make them real to a person. That's what happened to me today in Jaffa. Tomorrow I'm looking forward to the Lord doing it again.

Valerie

Please pray for Valerie and the peace of Jerusalem below.