

Cheon Il Guk Israel: Shalom

Roland Platt
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🕊️ Or for those of you who are unversed in Hebrew, shalom!

It's been four days here in Israel, and man oh man it's been amazing thus far! The team has spent the past few days meeting the community, touring the old and new Jerusalem, and beginning preparations for the next three months we will be here in the Holy Land.

Touring the old city was like going back in time. As we strolled the sandstone streets we were immersed in thousands of years of history, and swarmed by millions of people flocking to their respective holy sites such as the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Temple Mount. For many people, the team included, it was an experience of a lifetime! There is a tangible, peaceful atmosphere in the city, affirming it as a special and unique place.

Perhaps one of the most adventurous things we have undertaken thus far has been shopping in the market in the city center of Jerusalem on Friday! Here we experienced the core of Israeli culture. Tea and spice stands lined the streets, vendors selling hummus and olives peddled their product while mounds full of fresh fruits and veggies greeted customers scrambling to purchase their last bits of food before Shabba. Every Friday night the Jewish Shabbat begins, when the whole city including buses, businesses and schools completely shut down as believers spend the hours between sundown on Friday and Saturday in prayer. It's an entirely new experience, but a major aspect of this nation.

We were able to spend the Shabbat meeting the local community in Israel, celebrating family and fellowship with a service and lots and lots of food!

Looking forward, we are beginning to brainstorm with the Youth and Students for Peace (YSP) program coordinator here, Yavriel Ben Zvi. Together, we are developing a project we can do with local students, and obtaining student signatures to open a Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) chapter at the Hebrew University.

Until you hear from us again, shalom! May peace be with you.

