

Security Problems in Israel – A Statement

By Ferrell Jenkins – November 14, 2015

For almost 50 years I have been writing about security in Israel. In all those years I have never encountered a serious problem with one of our tour groups.

Problems in Israel - An Explanation. During October you undoubtedly saw the media reports on the stabbings of Israelis and the shooting of the attackers in Jerusalem, Hebron, and the West Bank in Israel. I want to say a few things that will help you understand the situation.

The media is not always clear about where the event took place. I saw them showing a stabbing/shooting in the bus station in Beersheba at least two days earlier while the reporter was shown live in East Jerusalem. I receive 3 daily newspaper headlines from Israel and follow the situation closely.

Our tour operator (Nawas International Travel) has an office in East Jerusalem, just a few blocks north of the Old City. The majority of my 84 tours have been arranged by Nawas. I know these folks well.

Barry Britnell, a young friend who has traveled with me in 2010 and 2012, has begun leading tours with my encouragement and advice. Barry and his 2015 group completed their tour in Israel yesterday. Their tour is not identical, but similar, to our upcoming tour. Every tour is different in what we see and where we are able to go. Many years we have been unable to visit the Temple Mount because it is under Islamic control. Some years we have been unable to visit cities in the West Bank (Samaria, Jacob's Well, etc.), but there are so many significant places to see that one would hardly notice it.

I mentioned Barry to say that he and two other tour members with him have written blogs during their tour. I suggest you read them. Except for Barry's post, the other two have some minor mistakes in historical and archaeological information, but they are enjoyable and helpful. Here are the links to those blogs.



Barry Britnell: ExploringBibleLands.com.

Jane Britnell: journeyswithjane.blogspot.com. Jane and Olen have been to Israel at least three times with me, and I think she has been

at least twice with Barry. Jane writes to keep the folks back home informed about how the tour is going. Lots of photos and info about the tour members.

Jeremy Dehut: jeremydehut.com. Jeremy is a young preacher from the Birmingham area. This was his first tour. He has included some very nice photos.

Remember that when you get to these blogs you will be starting at the end of the tour (and perhaps a few posts since they returned), but you can easily locate the beginning of the tour about Oct. 12.

After Barry returned from Israel I spoke with Mr. Nawas, president of Nawas International Travel. He said, “We have 200 passengers departing this week.”

Guide and Driver: In May, Elizabeth, David Padfield, and I spent 10 days traveling around in Israel on our own. One reason I went to Israel was to meet some of the guides for this tour. The guide I had used for several years died following a stroke in 2014. See [here](#). Though I have not decided, I will likely use the same guide Barry used this year, and hope to use the same driver which I have used repeatedly. Both men live in the Old City. *They know the territory.*



Israel is a safe place to visit.

-- ● --

Statement from the Director General of Israel's Ministry of Tourism

The following page is a letter distributed by Amir Halevi, Director General of the Ministry of Tourism in Israel. It was written at the same time spoken of above.



Ministry of Tourism
Director General

2015-0002-1100
October 19, 2015

Dear Friends,

Headlines about the situation in Israel can be alarming, but the reality is that: Everyday life in Israel is normal.

Children go to kindergarten and school, local residents go to work and business continues as usual

Currently more than 100,000 foreign tourists are on holiday in Israel. Groups and individuals continue to arrive daily and they feel safe, enjoying the warm Mediterranean weather, tourism sites, museums, holy places, attractions, restaurants and night life- all open and operating as usual in Jerusalem, as in all areas of the country.

A wide range of international events are taking place at various locations in the coming days and weeks including the Jerusalem Open House Festival from October 22-24, Israel Museum Jerusalem 50th Year Celebrations, TUNE IN TEL AVIV- Israel's international live music industry conference and showcase, recognized as the most important industry event taking place in the Middle East from November 11-15; the Manofilm Festival of Contemporary Art in Jerusalem from October 15-22, where visitors are invited to visit galleries and exhibition venues around the city; Wheels of Love- an annual Bike Ride extending over five days in Jerusalem taking place from October 19-25, with over 700 riders from Israel and overseas; the Terra Sancta Organ Festival (Holy Land Organ Festival), an international music event and a cultural activity taking place in Tel Aviv-Yafo , Nazareth and Jerusalem , produced by the Custody of the Holy Land.

In addition, international conferences and exhibitions are going on in venues throughout the country as planned, in the field of health, medicine, graphics, just to mention a few.

The Ministry of Tourism is in contact with all relevant authorities to monitor the situation and ensure the safety of our visitors from abroad.

We look forward to welcoming you to Israel.

Sincerely,

Amir Halevi
Director General