

Monday, June 1<sup>st</sup>

Tel Aviv

Written by Mark Rogers

This morning we packed up, had a quick breakfast, and started our morning in Tel Aviv. We went to a lookout where we spoke about the history of Tel Aviv, how it got its name, and the differences between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. We spoke a great deal about the difference in religious observance and cultural aspects of the two cities.

We followed our discussion with a visit to Independence Hall where we spoke of the humble beginnings of the State of Israel and about the first Mayor of Tel Aviv. We listened to an excerpt from the radio broadcast of the reading of Israel's Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948.

Next, we visited the Palmach Museum. The Palmach was elite strike force of modern Israel that was in existence from 1941 through 1948. This museum was not an ordinary museum filled with exhibits of reading materials. Rather, we walked through twelve different rooms, where in each room we watched short clips telling the story of the Palmach through the eyes of a small group of soldiers. Their story took us from their recruitment through the end of the War of Independence. This was a very unique way of telling the story, and we found it very compelling.

We then traveled to Herzeliya, where we spent some time at the beach. We played football, sunbathed, and swam along the waves. It was a nice relaxing way to spend the afternoon before going up north, where we'll be spending the remainder of the trip. We arrived at Poriya, had dinner, and then participated in *maariv* and an evening activity. We had fun designing our own countries and got a sense of the magnitude of effort required to create a country.