

Introduction

My name is Tom Brimmer and I'd like to show you around my adopted country. I am an Israeli tour guide. I was born in a small town far from New York City but still in New York State. That was a long time ago. I've been living in Israel for over 12 years. I started as a volunteer at a Kibbutz and have worked as a journalist, writer and webmaster here (as well as delivery driver, singer and a few other things). My passion though has been learning as much as I can about this tiny country. There is so much history!

Every tour group gets to see buildings that are thousands of years old and places where world events have unfolded throughout time. There is geography, archaeology, theology and a bunch of other "ologies." It can be rather daunting. I have found that the average tourist can take about 6 hours of lectures before the eyes glaze over and they wander off to look at the postcards in the gift-shop. Since I have far more than that to say, I have to find a way to make the days pass. My solution has been to tell stories.

When I was a kid, I used to love to read. I read science fiction, stories from the Reader's Digest, textbooks, mysteries and just about anything else that I could get my hands on. My mother always had a great, if somewhat twisted, sense of humor and I remember times when she would spin the most hilarious tales. What can I say? I love a good story.

Over the years, I have often been asked to repeat some of my stories or to invent a new one. It has become a sort of joke among my friends... Ask Tom a question and you get a story. If he doesn't know the answer, one of three things could happen. He might say, "Duh, I don't know." He is just as likely to launch into a story that might be related to the subject or if you hit him in the

right mood, he'll make up a new story on the spur of the moment. Of course, in my defense, I would say that I never invent answers. If I don't know the answer, I will tell you. Then I'll try to distract you with a good story.

Well, now I have endeavored to write a few of those stories down. Some of them are meant for teaching. Other are intended to illustrate a point or to explain something. Some are just for fun. I hope you enjoy them all and come ask me to tell some new ones.

Blessings and Shalom from Jerusalem

Tom Brimmer