



Sara's trip to the middle east...

I have just finished reading a well written post from a Student on the University of Oregon who had come to Israel on a trip visiting the holy places in Israel as part of what I understood to be an educational trip. As always, I would like to post my opinions on the matter, I will of course post a reply in her blog as part of my reference to her story, but I'm afraid what I have to say will not fit in the tiny comment box so' I'll write here.

Sara tells about a wonderful and moving visit to Israel and the west bank where she met Arab students which moved her emotionally with their current regime and government stories, indeed the situation in both the West bank and the Gaza strip is gloomy and the fact that there is actually no regime is eve more saddening, if there was a stable and reliable regime in power, one that could really rule and control the civilians, I think we would have had peace long ago, but, as it seems, at least the people who are currently in power in both the Gaza strip and the West Bank are not interested in such a situation, I think the main reason is that apart from war and struggle those who are in power in both the West bank and the Gaza strip do not have anything to offer their followers. One needs to understand that the driving force of militants is hate, hate towards whole nations and countries, until those who spread hate vanish from the political scene, I 'm afraid there will be no resolution to the suffering and struggle for those people.

Now I would like to refer to the main part of Sara's post about religion and holy people and of course what they do in the name of religion. It is well know for quite some time now that some religious people at power are abusing the reputation and power of religion and of holy men and women which took time to build through the ages. The fact that people sell holy items or supposedly holy items almost in every corner of a holy location, and it doesn't really matter what religion.

For example, as a Jew, I can tell you about people selling candles in various religious locations here in Israel at very high prices just because there is no way to get them nearby.

With all that said, I think religion is personal, no one can tell you what is the right way to believe, what are the right thoughts to think, and which is the right path to follow, most of it is your choice. Don't be diverted from your path because some strays think of how to make money from faith, if you believe, do it your own way, it's not about following the right religious leader or visiting the right church or synagogue or what ever temple you worship in, it's about doing what make you feel good and what feels right.