Post Israel Thoughts

It didn’t take long after arriving in the United States for the questions to start rolling in. “How was Israel?” “What was your favorite part?” “Where did you go while over there?”

While it was fun telling my tale at first, after the first week I had the spiel memorized and was more so bored than anything else.

So on the rare occasion after this point that I was asked a question that actually made me think, I was impressed. The question that impressed me the most was simple but thought provoking enough to throw me off my game.

“What was the one thing that made the largest impression and has forever changed your views?”

While I had answered a broader version of this question before this particular one made me fall silent for a while.

Finally I managed to pinpoint the one thing that has stuck with me the most after the past month.

I had never spent any time in a military state, which is what Israel is classified as. I didn’t have any choice but to get used to guns being strapped to the multitudes of people walking by. As it bothered me less as the weeks passed while there it has stuck with me that this is the culture.

People don’t fret about the fact that there are hostile countries completely surrounding them. In their minds there is little more to worry about these hostile countries causing them trouble then there is for anyone else to worry about a tornado popping up in their city.

The hostility of the region stems from different viewpoints of religion and political systems. These viewpoints are held at the highest most importance to the citizens of these countries and can’t be sacrificed for something such as compromise to create personal safety.

This mindset is what stuck with me the most, and it is not something we can easily wrap our heads around after living in the United States.

If I came out of the country of Israel with anything it is the knowledge that the Middle East is far more complicated than the media makes it seem. The nature of the area leaves them with a much different viewpoint on how a country should be run and after experiencing this firsthand it has helped me form strong opinions on the entire region.