

May 2024

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Greetings and blessings to you all. Having made it through a relatively mild Michigan winter, it is a joy to experience some warmer climes. As always, we deeply appreciate your prayers as well as those who have been faithful in your support of this international ministry.

My first lecture of the spring was a new venue for me. I was invited to give lectures on the Dead Sea Scrolls at Macomb Community College, where they offer enrichment extension courses open to the public. I agreed to do so, and in early April made my presentation. I thought perhaps we might get a dozen or so interested folks, but I was absolutely amazed to discover that I had 135 signed up

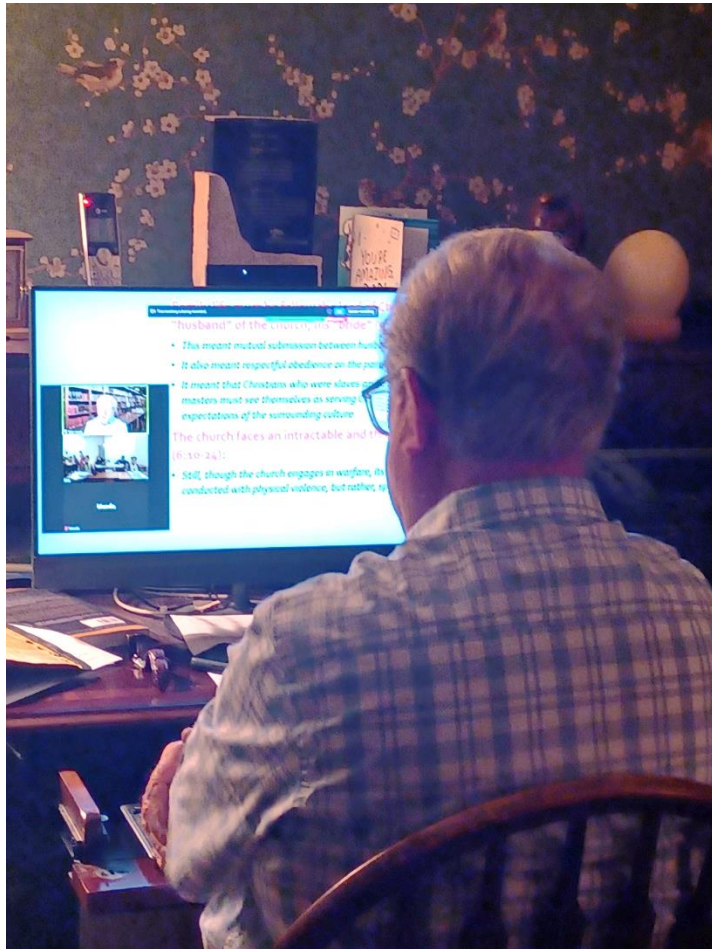


*Here, you can barely see me up front at the left between the two projection screens for my Powerpoint.  
I have to say, it was a delightful group and very much engaged!*

for the course. The director indicated it was the largest attendance this season. Mostly, the group consisted of retirees, but they came from all walks of life and a wide variety of religious persuasions. Indeed, the lectures went so well that I've also been invited as the opening lecturer for the fall season later this year.

Speaking of invitations, I've had three recent invitations to travel to Asia to lecture, but I've declined all three, since I've decided that I need to avoid these long, half-way around the world trips. I'm confining myself to no more than six

time zones away from home. I find the travel to be increasing difficult, and at my age (74), I am so “beat up” after such long trips that I cannot function well. I did, however, agree to do a week’s lectures by Zoom for a school in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which is located between India and Southeast Asia. This set of lectures was on Paul’s life, letters, and theology.



*Here is a rather uninspiring shot of the back of my head. Because of the time zone differences, I lectured each evening from 8:00 – 11:00 PM (which was the morning of the next day for the students in Dhaka).*

Dhaka is a huge city with a population of 24 million, and it is one of the largest cities in the world. My students included former Hindus and Muslims (Dhaka is about 95% Muslim), and they were a lovely group. I must frankly confess that I don’t especially like Zoom lectures. I much prefer to teach in person, but in this case, it was the only reasonable alternative.

I finished the Friday lectures in Bangladesh and left two days later for Orlando, Florida to teach in another University of the Nations school, this time covering the Tribal Period of Israel (Joshua, Judges, Ruth) as well as introducing students to Hebrew poetry and the Psalms. One of the challenges in covering this area of the Old Testament is the

problem of war, and especially, the moral issue of the destruction of the Canaanites. Today, with increased sensitivity to religious war, ethnic cleansing, and pogroms, the ancient wars of Israel’s invasion of the land of Canaan raises some sticky questions. On the other side, of course, is the wonderful little story of Ruth, and it compensates to some degree for the darker side of these early Israelite narratives.



*Here's my Orlando class, a delightfully engaged bunch of students, all of them young enough to be my own children, and all of them training for Christian missions.*

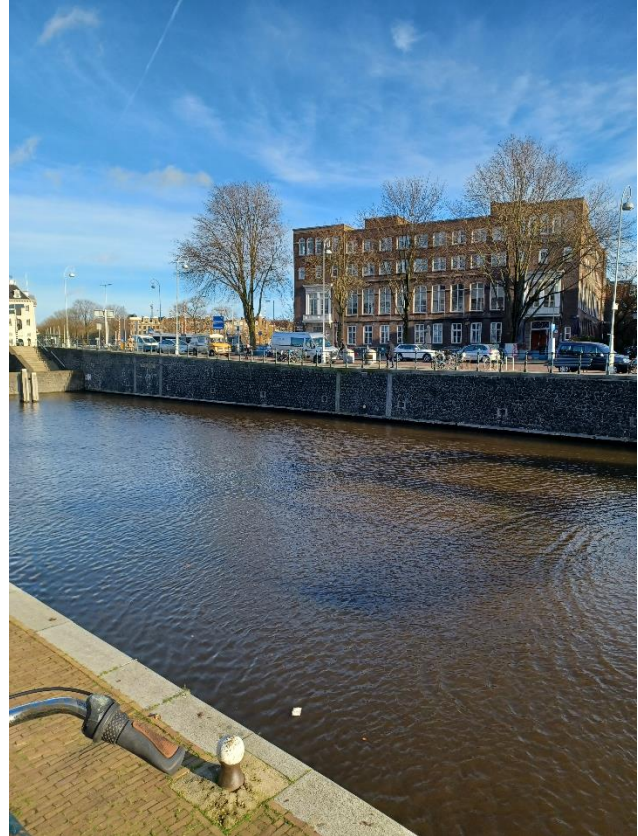
After a week at home, Peggy and I boarded the plane for the Netherlands to the School of Biblical Studies in Amsterdam. I've taught here several times previously,



*This Babylonian clay model of a liver was designed for predicting the future. The liver of an animal was extracted, closely examined, and sticks placed in the holes of the corresponding clay model. The pattern of sticks was examined and interpreted by priests or diviners.*

but it was exciting to get back to the Dutch students (plus we had a handful of others from France, Germany, Canada, South Africa, and Brazil). Here, I covered the books of Jeremiah, Lamentations, and Ezekiel, which are always fascinating. One of my teaching goals is to put the students in touch with the various archaeological artifacts that directly connect with passages in the Bible, and in Ezekiel, there is such a passage describing the Babylonian army pausing in the Transjordan to decide whether to attack Jerusalem or Rabbah (Ezekiel 21:19-23). True to pagan form, they killed an animal, cutting out its liver, so as to decide which way to go, east or west.

This action of pagan divination is aptly illustrated by an artifact in the British Museum, the clay model of a liver with small holes in it. Such artifacts bring to life biblical contexts and ancient cultures.



*(LEFT) Here, I do a bit of Q/A after class. (RIGHT) While the University of the Nations has several buildings in Amsterdam, this is the one housing the School of Biblical Studies.*

If you've been keeping up with our mission letters, you may remember that the University of the Nations is developing an annual Bible Teachers School to offer additional training to Bible teachers around the world. The school consists of three linked annual lectures, BTS I (Adam to David), BTS II (Kings and Prophets), and BTS III (New Testament), and they will be offered in South America, Asia, Europe and other venues. I have been honored as the initial lecturer for each section. The first was in Mexico last year, the second in Colombia in January earlier this year, and the next will be in Lausanne, Switzerland in September of this year. In January 2025, I will travel to Curitiba, Brazil for yet another one. Hence, I have stayed busy this late winter and early spring prepping the lectures for the New Testament section, and I've just sent them off for translation into Spanish and Portuguese for the Brazilian lectures. About 100 Bible teachers from all around Latin America are anticipated for the three week-symposium in Curitiba.

Upcoming for the remainder of this year will be trips to Mexico (June), Idaho (July), Lausanne (September and October), Costa Rica (November), and Seattle

and Kona (December). Also, I'll be teaching on the Archaeology of the Life of Jesus at Macomb Community College in early October. In addition, I keep up with my Hebrew and Greek on-line students.

God is good, and life in his kingdom is fascinating!

May the Lord bless you all!

In God's grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan and Peggy Lewis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D" and "P".

Dan and Peggy Lewis