

Dan & Peggy Lewis

September 2016

To All Our Friends,

I will try to update you 3-4 times per year on our mission travels, and since my previous letter in May, we have been quite busy. We did complete the trip to Europe, where I lectured for two weeks in the School of Biblical Studies in Nuneaton near Birmingham, covering the books of Ezekiel and Daniel. I also preached in the campus chapel service. From England, we went to Lausanne, Switzerland, where I taught an all-Korean group—a large class of about 75 students—again covering the Book of Daniel. This set of lectures was conducted with Korean translation, and I had a wonderful translator from the University of London. Daniel is quite a controversial book, with several major interpretive approaches on the table within the various streams of Christian thought, so handling this complicated work with a translator was no small task, but it went very well indeed.

From Switzerland, Peggy flew home and I went back to England for a week of video lectures for the On-Line University in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. I have to say that teaching to a camera in a studio room with no students is rather different than being able to look students in the eye! (Not much in the way of class discussion!) On the plus side, these video lectures on the Bible, in addition to becoming curricula for on-line students from around the world, will be aired on public television in Dubai during the Muslim Fast of Ramadan. Dubai, apparently, has no restrictions on Christian broadcasting, and during Ramadan, the Muslim community, which fasts from sunup to sundown for a month, usually consumes great amounts of television during the nighttime hours (and sleeps much of the day). We'll see how this goes! My videographer, a professional from one of the stations in Dubai, was an Egyptian Christian and seems to think this will go well. Muslims already acknowledge the Hebrew prophets as legitimate, but they never have read them in the context of their messianic predictions of the coming of Christ if they have ever read them at all. In any case, it is an unusual means of outreach to a Middle Eastern community that is mostly closed to outsiders.

From England, I then went for two weeks lectures to southern Germany (Bavaria), where I covered Intertestamental History and the Gospel of Matthew. The campus in Bavaria, affectionately called "The Castle", is quite a unique site. Originally built as a hunting lodge for the Bavarian king, it sits on a hill with high onion domes pushing into the sky. Here, as in Switzerland, I lectured with a translator, and I also preached via a translator in the campus chapel service. Incidentally, after returning home I realized that I probably was in the very mall in Munich where the gunman later shot several people. Looking at the news coverage on

television, I'm pretty sure I recognized the McDonald's where this tragedy occurred only a couple weeks after I was there.

In August, I made the long trip to the southern hemisphere where for two weeks I taught in Western Samoa, again using a translator. Forty-five students not only from Samoa, but also from Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and other areas from that part of the globe attended my classes in a first-ever Discipleship Bible School. Here, I covered the late prophets all the way through the end of the Old Testament plus the history of the Intertestamental Period. I must say, this was a cultural challenge, since Samoa is part of the Two-Thirds World and conditions are very different than in the West. Cold showers, a diet of boiled green bananas, tara root and various soups, residing in open-style huts with chickens, cats (to keep the rats at bay) and a host of termites, bugs and lizards—all were the order of the day. By the end of my first week, I had dysentery, and now that I've been home for five days, I'm just starting to get back to normal. Interestingly, this campus has the only successful bio-gas project of renewable energy in the South Pacific. Using pig and human waste, methane gas is created to fire up the cooking stoves, and then, the remainder of the waste is used as fertilizer on the fields. While there, we hosted a group of Engineers without Borders (sort of like Doctors without Borders), who came to study the project with the intent of introducing it to other south Pacific island communities. Since there is wide-spread wood-burning, a renewable energy source that does not result in denuding the landscape is important.

Conditions notwithstanding, these were some very precious people in Samoa, deeply appreciative and thrilled to be able to study the Bible! On the middle weekend there, I preached in the Apia Protestant Church, a wonderful congregation of about 300 initially established by Anglican missionaries and continuing to thrive under the leadership of Pastor Nu'u. I had my first personal sighting of the famous star configuration called "the southern cross", which appears on so many national flags from countries in the southern hemisphere.

Now, I'm home for most of September. Still to come are trips to:

CANADA In early October, I have lectures in French speaking Quebec Province, where I'll be covering the Pentateuch. Following this week, I will be back in Toronto for lectures in Daniel and Ezekiel. Peggy will be able to accompany me on the Canadian trip, for which I am very grateful!

MEXICO As soon as I get back from Canada, I immediately fly to Mexico for a week's lectures in the School of Biblical Studies at San Antonio del Mar in the Baja, covering the Book of Deuteronomy.

HAWAII From Mexico, I'll continue across the Pacific to the main campus of University of the Nations in Kona, Hawaii, where I have a week's lectures in Kings and Chronicles, and immediately following, I'll go on to Honolulu to another branch of the same university, where I'll lecture on the Book of Joshua and some of the challenges of the archaeological record in that early period of Israel's history.

SWITZERLAND Finally, my last trip of 2016 will be back to Lausanne, where I will once more lecture to the all-Korean group, this time covering the Gospel of Matthew. While there, I hope to take the students on a field trip to the Bodmer Foundation Library in Cologne, where are housed some of the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament (including p73, a very early papyrus copy of Matthew), not to mention a 1st edition printing of Luther's 95 Theses.

So, the Lord's work continues! I am so pleased to be able to serve in such a wide range of communities, teaching the Bible and sharing a deeper approach to those texts we consider most sacred. For those of you who have given support to this ministry, I am truly grateful. May the Lord reward you richly!

In the grace of God,

Dan Lewis

P.S. – If for any reason you should prefer not to receive these periodic mission letters, just send me an email at danlewis@dkonos.org with the word "Unsubscribe", and I will promptly remove your name. No explanation is required.

For those who might wish to offer financial support, any gifts can be sent to Diakonos Inc., c/o Sue Wilson, 400 E. Long Lake Road, Troy, MI 48085. All gifts are tax deductible.



Pictured here is Roy from Papua New Guinea, one of the students in my classes in Western Samoa. He is holding a portrait he sketched of me (no doubt during a dull part of the lectures).

Roy has quite a story! He was expelled from his parental home when still a teen, spent the next 15 years on the streets in New Guinea, but eventually was rescued by an Anglican missionary, who taught him to read and write. He trusted God to provide funds to get to Samoa so he could enroll in the Discipleship Bible School, and a stranger gave him \$750.00, which was what he needed in order to come. He accepted this as a true gift from God!