

Dan & Peggy Lewis

December 20, 2016

Dear Friends,

Grace, hope and peace to you all!

Fall and early winter have been full for my mission work. After being home from Western Samoa for a month and attending a conference at Notre Dame University, I had six more weeks of travels and lectures in biblical studies beginning in September.

Dunham, Quebec was our first week, and Peggy and I flew to Montreal, where staff members picked us up and drove us to the campus in Dunham, southern Quebec near the Vermont border. Here, I did a week of lectures in the Torah with an emphasis on the Book of Deuteronomy. I don't speak French (at least not much), but I had a wonderful translator from the Sorbonne in Paris, a young woman attorney who had committed a year to missions work in French-speaking Canada.



These are my French students in Dunham, Quebec.

Toronto was the next stop, and since it is only about a 5-hour drive, Peggy and I took our car. This school was all-Korean, so my week of lectures in Ezekiel and Daniel also were translated. A highlight of the week was taking the students to the Royal Ontario Museum, where we looked at ancient Near Eastern artifacts, the most impressive being the Babylonian lion relief from the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II. We had studied Nebuchadnezzar in connection with the Book of Daniel, of course, but to see an actual piece of history from his own throne room was pretty impressive for everyone!



Here are some of my Korean students at the ROM in front of the Babylonian lion from the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, excavated by German archaeologists in the early part of the 20th century.

San Antonio del Mar, Mexico in the Baja was my next location, and I took this trip alone. Once again, translation was necessary, since I don't speak Spanish. Crossing the border into Mexico is not difficult, though crossing the border coming back into the USA usually takes about 3-4 hours, most of it waiting in very long lines of cars. My week of lectures on Deuteronomy and Bible Translation Theory went very well, and as a bonus, I was able to spend a couple days with a Lutheran pastor friend of mine in San Diego on the weekend before flying to my next stop.

Kona, Hawaii was my next week after Mexico. Usually, these schools work together to arrange multiple weeks for a single trip so as to minimize the plane ticket cost. Kona is home to the main University of the Nations campus and has about a thousand students, more or less. Here, I covered 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles. Also, I was able to connect face-to-face with some of my Greek students who are taking biblical Greek from me online. A major focus of this missions-oriented university is a joint project with Wycliffe Bible Translators for bringing the Bible to many of the South Pacific islands which have no Bible in their own language. There are literally hundreds of dialects in these islands, many villages each speaking their own unique language, so Bible availability is a considerable challenge.



These are the flags of the nations, a flag for the native country of each student attending the University of the Nations in Kona, Hawaii.

Honolulu was just a short inter-island hop from Kona, and in this School of Biblical Studies I lectured for the week on the Book of Joshua. This small campus is located in a valley not far from Honolulu, and it is the only place I've ever been where I've seen a full double rainbow—end to end for them both! The relatively small body of students here were very engaged and engaging as we spent a good deal of time with biblical archaeology and some of the challenges raised by the Book of Joshua!

Finally, after being home for a couple of weeks, my last trip of the year (by now in early December) was back to **Lausanne, Switzerland**. Once again, I lectured with a translator to a large class of about 50 students on Matthew's Gospel, plus I preached in the campus chapel service. The hosts in Switzerland are very generous, and one of the staff members was gracious enough to take me to Geneva to the Bodmer Library of World Literature while I was there. This library is well-known to scholars, but not so well-known to anyone else, so it was a treat for the staff member to discover it. It has the oldest complete copy of John's Gospel (p66 dating to about AD 175-200), plus many other priceless historical manuscripts (a 1st edition Gutenberg Bible, a 1st edition of Luther's translation of the NT from 1522, a Samaritan Pentateuch, a 1st edition Erasmus' Greek NT, etc.). While there, I also briefly visited the chapel where John Calvin preached back in the Reformation Period.

The trip home from Europe was grueling, since my tickets were with Lufthansa, and the pilots went on strike. After flight cancellations, I was able to get home via United Airlines, Swiss Airlines and Delta—half a day late and exhausted, but very glad to be home for Christmas! So, all in all, this was a very successful fall and early winter lecture series.

The upcoming winter and spring will see me in:

- Australia for the whole month of January (Origins, Worldview and Torah)
- Back in Switzerland in February (Genesis)
- Vancouver, British Columbia in March (Intertestamental Period and Matthew) as well as Toronto (Luke-Acts)

- In April Peggy and I will be back in England (I'll teach Isaiah in one school and Joshua, Judges and Ruth in a second school)
- In May, I will be back in Germany (Torah) and then Oregon (Isaiah)
- In June, three weeks in New Zealand (lectures in Gospels/Acts, Paul's Letters and the Johannine Literature)

I still find it amazing that so many doors of opportunity have opened to share the deep truths of the Bible with so many mission students around the world— German, Swiss, French, English, Spanish, Korean and many others! God's family is a big one, and most of us get to see just a small part of it. Occasionally, due to the episodes of Christian-bashing in the West, we may sometimes feel like Elijah once did—that we are the only ones left—but God reminds us that he has many, many more who have never “bowed their knee to Ba'al nor kissed his idol”.

May the Lord bless you this Christmas season (and remember, Christmas goes all the way to January 6th, Epiphany, twelve days in all)!

In the grace of Advent,

Dan Lewis

P.S. – This letter is not a solicitation, but should anyone wish to support this mission work, contact Diakonos, Inc., care of Sue Wilson, 400 E. Long Lake Rd., Troy, MI 48085.

