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“And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.”

Genesis 17:20 (NKJV)



April Showers (Salt)

Dear Friends

as salaam 9alaykum السلام عليكم (Peace be upon you). Many people believe that all Muslims are inheritors to the promises, material and spiritual given to Ishmael. However I believe that they are held for his physical decedents, the Arabs. Ishmael and his descendants occur many times in the bible; in Isa 42 the Kedar, one of the twelve princes, is mentioned worshipping the coming messiah (Jesus), and at this time following Pentecost we can remember that Arabic was spoken there too. Too often we can forget that God gave promises to other nations too, like Israel on condition of faithfulness. Of course this is true for us too, we also must keep faithful.

WORK STUFF.

Work seems to have stabilised during the springtime but has been affected by my holidays and rather a lot of sickness. Mustapha (one of the brothers with Epidermolysis Bullosa Dystrophica) was admitted with another lung infection, I administered his care by mobile phone from Wadi Rum & Petra! I had an excellent meeting with the Head of the Family Protection Dept. We agreed working procedures. Unfortunately I have already had a case of abuse to follow up. I have also meet many

dignitaries; the Minister of Social Development & Princess Majida both visited Khaldiyya. The first visit also saw me unknowingly joking with the Governor of Mafraq! Fortunately I also met the deputy of the Mafraq Governorate Civil Defence Dept. and we hope to work on resuscitation training together.

SA9YDIYA.

I am glad that I have proved that it is possible to reach it by bus! However I

often stay with friends in Mafraq due to the long distance. The first aid course here was possibly the best yet. During this time I also made good contacts in Mafraq; the contagious diseases manager, the Director of Health, for the Governorate, and the Director of Mafraq Government General Hospital.



Faraj at Sa9ydiyya CBR Centre

JORDAN VALLEY (Jofeh).

I am delighted to report that Fida, my assistant has had a real change of heart and is now getting into the job, even getting her own equipment and getting frustrated when I can't get there. However the greatest success is probably my co-operation with S. Shuna Government hospital. 4 Paediatricians rotate there and I have developed good relations with them and some A&E staff. Several children have been taken in with severe chest infections, and we have co-operated well. Also we did a genetic profile for one, Amjad, and finally have a diagnosis (Chromosome 22, defect), which will help a lot.



Working in Jofeh

MUWAQQAR.

The work here seems to have been rather quiet but I think this is more due to my ill health. Unfortunately we are now experiencing problems with compliance with the anti-psychotic medication of the woman we admitted from here. I had an excellent meeting with Liza, from the organisation supporting the work there.



9adel (left) & Omran in my house

KHALDIYA.

Apart from visiting dignitaries and a meeting to about our work, we continued the Continence Programme here, with Nawaal, the OT. This provides an opportunity for Children to gain independence and self-worth, but we struggle against the attitudes of the families toward the disabled, yet we must persevere.

GOD STUFF.

Ash Wednesday was a new experience for me. It had always been a bit "Papist" for my sensibilities! However, celebrating it with the Church in Salt was different. I felt a sense (in fact communal) of pride & joy (never mixed before) having the Ash Cross marked on my forehead. It was like saying, "I'm Christian & proud of it!" For lent I gave up meat, to try and relate with the local community. I am not sure what I learnt, or gained. I enjoyed Palm Sunday with my friends and the Church was packed. On the Feast of Resurrection, I was not feeling well so did not attend the dawn service at Mt. Nebo, but enjoyed the service in Salt, and the town's greeting ceremony. Afterwards I joined staff from

HLID to picnic near Ajloun, where I was able to watch Honey Buzzards. Unfortunately I am now mostly working on Sundays & miss worshipping with the local Church. The classes with Saliba have been on hold as he was "driven" out of university. We still meet at the Shabibeh and the "All Jordan" meetings are a great success. Faraj Hanna, has preached twice. I have spent some good time with William; he now has a job & is formally betrothed. I was very encouraged to hear Bishop Suheil preach at the English service, also by his actions to reconcile the Clergy. He has invited a young American and me to his home to talk about our vocations. The youth group have continued to be an inspiration, tackling questions many Christians are scared to ask, e.g. the Trinity.



May Flowers

WEDDINGS.

May saw me return to the UK for 2 special Weddings: my former housemate Michelle to Paul on the 20th in Penzance, Cornwall; and Rachel, my stepsister, to Martin on the 27th in Congleton, Cheshire. They were both fantastic occasions and I hope and pray, and wish

them all the best for their futures together. It was also good to catch up with many of you, thank you for your hospitality and generosity.

PORK SCRATCHINS, TEA & CHOCOLATE.

Food and friendship continues. I had a wonderful curry with new friends Michael & Elizabeth. Another new friend is Dr Adil, who is struggling with many life changes in family and career. Unfortunately as some enter our lives others leave both Emyr (Welsh) & Simon (German), will leave soon. I have not seen Omran lately but he sent me the most amazing Easter greeting for a Moslem! It is these moments and the hours of "inaction" at the hospital where the real spiritual work happens. Old friendships were renewed too. Steve & Ali Taylor (CMS, Amman 2004-05), providing Pork Scratchin's and curry paste, but having lost the knack at the quiz. Followed quickly by Kev Akehurst (Uni friend) & Vicky, exploring culture & religions. Then hot on their heel's Kirsten, Helen & Tom (former Maple colleagues), also bearing gifts. This was my first chance to see the sights of Jordan. Which was good fun, and I must agree with Tom; "I've not laughed so much in years". We also had some deep discussions, including evolution before breakfast and altruism before dawn! We also saw the Sunrise at Wadi Rum, in memory of the pilgrims who lost their life near Petra.

Please continue to pray that Christ will grace my friendships, and I may be an example of love in a culture that finds it a difficult concept.

FACT FILE: AL-KHALDIYA.

LEAVING HOME BEFORE DARK, WRAPPED LIKE A MUMMY AND KICKING THE SNOW OFF THE DOORSTEP I HEAD FOR WORK. 3 BUSES AND 2½ HOURS LATER I ARRIVE IN AL-KHALDIYA (الخالدية), I GRADUALLY PEEL OFF MY LAYERS AND PUT ON MY SUNGLASSES AS THE HEAT OF THE SUN DEFROSTS & ROASTS. KHALDIYA IS IN THE NORTHERN GOVERNORATE, A SLEEPY LITTLE TOWN; ONE WONDERS WHY IT DESERVES A DUAL CARRIAGEWAY THROUGH THE CENTRE OF TOWN? THIS IS PERHAPS THE ONLY CLUE THAT THIS WAS FORMERLY THE MAIN HIGHWAY TO SYRIA, THE BADI ROAD, ON THE EDGE OF THE DESERT. THE DARK GREY BASALT PLAIN THAT IS DISTINCTIVE OF NE JORDAN. KHALDIYA IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER CENTRES, PROBABLY BECAUSE IT IS A HOME-GROWN SOCIETY RATHER THAN HELPED FROM ABOVE, BUT ALSO THE COMMUNITY IS STILL STRUGGLING TO ACCEPT DISABILITY. BEFORE WE EVEN START THE VISITS HERE I AM WELCOMED WITH BOTH TEA AND TURKISH COFFEE. THE CENTRE COVERS A NUMBER OF BEDU VILLAGES (& TENTS) AS WELL AS A VILLAGE OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES. THESE ARE FROM GAZA AND HAVE A WORSE DEAL THAN OTHER REFUGEES BECAUSE THEY WERE FORMERLY ADMINISTERED BY EGYPT, NOT JORDAN. I HAVE ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF VISITS HERE BUT THE RELATIONSHIPS ARE PROBABLY STRONGER. STILL I FACE DIFFICULTIES OF CULTURE AND LANGUAGE (HARDLY ANYONE SPEAKS ENGLISH), THIS IS ESPECIALLY BECAUSE UNLIKE MOST MEN I WORK SO CLOSELY WITH WOMEN; AND WHAT CONSTITUTES THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN FLIRTING AND FRIENDSHIP? NOBODY KNOWS!

Please remember Gods promises to Abraham and his sons, and pray that both families will return to their Heavenly father in faithfulness. Moreover that we as his Spiritual heirs will also remain faithful.

Good Bye (ma9 as salaama) and God Bless (rabbii yibaarikum).

*If you require any more information please contact me, or CMS.
Yours in Christ,*

Michael

PRAISE:

- Thank God for the Church in the Middle East.
- Praise God that it has rained.
- Praise God that we are able to share in Abraham's promise.
- Thank God for friendships here.
- Thank God for my family, and their sacrifice of me at this time.

PRAYER:

- Pray for the newly weds as they start their lives together.
- Please pray I may have opportunities to share God's love.
- Please pray for Wisdom, Skill and Agreeing Finances at work. Also Follow-up.
- Please pray for Dr Adil as he settles into a new and difficult life.
- Please pray for my Health & Strength.

