

Dayspring Discipleship Institute

"...the ministry of the Word" - Acts 6:4

505 E. Boydston, Rockwall, Texas 75087

972-722-1905

www.dayspringdiscipleship.org

Teaching – Equipping – Training – Ministering

Brenda Cox, Executive Director

June 2011

"...the Dayspring from on high has come to give light to those that sit in darkness..." --Luke 1:78-79

Newsletter

Dearhearts,

In the late 1970's a gruesome killing in Wylie entranced the metroplex in its spell. The Dallas Morning News carried full-page coverage that morning. Best friends in their late twenties, Candace and Betty were active members of the local Methodist Church, both sang in the choir...their children played with each other. Betty, an elementary school teacher in Wylie, was killed in her utility room. The weapon was an axe from her garage. Candace was arrested and now was on trial for Betty's murder. As I scoured the paper for details, the phone rang. It was my best friend. "What do you think about Candace Montgomery...is she guilty?" "She's as guilty as sin!" I declared, borrowing a time-worn phrase from my mother. Rae was in total agreement.

And so for almost an hour we shared our courtroom arguments and hung up, reinforced about the rightness of our verdicts. As I resumed reading the article, somewhere toward the end, a seismic shift occurred in me. I suddenly was compelled to pray for this woman as all my notions of her guilt submerged in a wave of the Spirit that pled for prayer and summonsed humility... *You do not know what spirit you are of.* I was not to judge. Prayer seized me for hours that day. By mid-afternoon I called my friend. "Something strange has happened, Rae. The Lord has moved me to pray for her." "The same thing has happened to me," she responded. Both of us had been praying for Candace for hours; not about the verdict but for *her*. This burden of intercession continued in us both even past the verdict of "not guilty by reason of self-defense."

There are times when God will not be found vague...or silent. Times when an urgent message awaits our soul with lessons to be learned that will serve His kingdom; pearls He wants us not to lose. The lesson of Candace Montgomery has never left me. We often do not know what we think we know. When we judge, no matter how right it may seem, something of righteousness is lost in us.

Our human spirit bends, often unthinking, toward a common voice. Buoyed by shared sentiments, the rightness of our course seems so obvious we find it unnecessary to consider anything else. Yet Christian

history is replete with those who were "as guilty as sin" and with those who knew what to do about it. The disciples wanted to call down fire from heaven to destroy the Samaritan village that would not "receive" Christ. His response revealed the chasm between the ways of heaven and those of earth: "You do not know what spirit you are of...I have come not to destroy, but to save." Yet "destroy" we Christians have...and do. The Spanish Inquisition, the death of the martyrs, the Salem witch trials...all entailed judgments rendered against those who were as guilty as sin by someone's standard. Today...it is homosexuality or political opponents or a myriad of other things. As herd mentality confirms our rightness and others' wrongness and we seek to rain down judgment upon the infidels, it is *our* spirit that seems to be targeted by God. It is our spirit that must be made usable again.

So was Candace Montgomery guilty? Though I think I know, the lesson is...I don't. And the point is...that wasn't the point. The point was God had a work he wanted to accomplish through prayer that could not be done with a condemning spirit. The point is there were more important things than her guilt or innocence astir behind the scenes and God needed to clear the debris to get it done.

When we ride herd with fellow believers into a mindset or point of view, it is too easy for us to criticize, or judge...to lose ourselves in the issue. And as we condemn those we know...those we read about...those in politics or church...we do not realize what spirit we are of. He came not to condemn, but to save. Not to destroy but to give life. He calls each of us to step out from the herd...to listen for His voice and walk in it. To look for His ways and, if need be, walk a solitary path, un-blazed by man, to accomplish the ways of heaven here on earth.

I love you, *Brenda*

"Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it..."
Jer. 6:16

Art Workshops Update

Our personal discovery art workshops continue to be well attended with strong interest in continuing them in the summer. Given traditional difficulties with summer scheduling, we are looking into the possibilities of combining the two into one that would meet on another day, perhaps Tuesday.

Initial reservations by some regarding their artistic limitations have fallen by the wayside as Elaine Souder has guided them to their own personal, creative discoveries. Elaine is gifted in providing a safe place for people through art to express their life story, past or present.

Our plans are to make these workshops a permanent offering of this ministry, and will offer a small art therapy class this summer for some youth seeking to recover from some painful family circumstances.

One of the ladies who most struggled, initially, with feeling “artistically challenged” recently emailed Brenda with a quote she had found by Julia Cameron and included a follow-up statement of her own:

“Creativity is a spiritual practice. It is not something that can be perfected, finished, and set aside.” Wow, thought I would share this with you about the art classes. The class is such a blessing and I will keep on digging.....there is gold at the end of the rainbow.” Bobbie

Can You “Adopt a Patch” of Garden to Water for the Summer?

Gay Bostick and Teresa Box are wilting at the prospect of having only a couple of other people helping in the prayer garden this summer. The primary caretakers of the garden who give sacrificially in keeping it beautiful, they have asked if we might find some help. We’re looking for some people to adopt small portions of the garden that would be simple to hand water with as little as 15-30 minutes a week. These would be areas of your choosing. There are many other simple things that need to be done, but watering is the primary need. We have lost many plants over the years in places where the sprinkler system doesn't easily reach. We could even use a garden “gofer” to pick up purchases and supplies for the garden.

A green thumb is not what we’re talking about here...just a willing body.

Please Let us Know if You Will.

Nursing Home Ministry “Makes Their Day”

Activities Director, Judy Mushonga, continues to encourage us with the comments from her residents about our visits and popcorn social music, as well as the art class Elaine Souder provides on Monday mornings. Visitation, whether with humans or cuddly dogs “makes their day.” Teresa Box is doing a great job coordinating this “Touch Ministry.”

Caroline Doyle oversees the music portion and arranges a variety of music at the Tuesday afternoon popcorn social. Sometimes Melvin Merritt is the hit as he leads in hymns or Karen Rash as she sings a variety of songs. Linda Loveless continues to make birthday baskets and Terry Lancaster sends birthday cards. Elizabeth Moses brings her dog, Bravo, and she and Judy Adams will soon be working with individual residents on “Legacy Books” – their personal, written or recorded stories, pictures and other memorabilia.

Please let us know if you would like to be a part of this blessing of “touch.”

Do You Have Old Jewelry? The nursing home gift shop can’t keep enough jewelry to satisfy its residents. If you have jewelry you no longer want but don’t know what to do with it, consider giving it to the nursing home. We would be happy to deliver it for you.

Teaching Tour of Israel Update

Though we have not yet met our minimum quota, we are very close, and our trip to Israel is still on the agenda for November. **July 25** marks the last day for a final decision so we are encouraged that the Lord is in this trip and it will make.

If you have been considering this trip of a lifetime, please put it to renewed prayer. Let us know as soon as possible of your interest.

Thanks to all who gave so generously...

Our chapel is donning new apparel. Fifty new chairs are now complemented with new rugs and a runner that accent the chairs’ color. Two new candelabras stand on either side down at the front. Additional dimmer switches have been installed and indirect lighting now softly highlights the beautiful wood ceiling.

Teamwork on God’s Behalf Accomplishes Greatly!

Israel: How Did We Get Here?

At midnight on May 14, 1948, Israel declared itself to be an independent nation. After sixteen hundred years the prophecy of Ezekiel suddenly was fulfilled.

Two Nations. The last time Israel had existed as one people was nearly 3,000 years earlier. At the time of Ezekiel they had been two kingdoms for almost 200 years (921 B.C.) when the 10 northern tribes (Israel) split from the two southern tribes (Judah).

Scattered Among the Nations. Multiple prophetic references speak of the dispersion of the Jews throughout the world. That began in 722 B.C. as the Assyrian Empire conquered the Northern Kingdom. It never reconstituted as a country. Two centuries later the Southern Kingdom was conquered by the Babylonians. In 70 A.D. the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Romans marked the permanent dispersion of the Jews throughout the world, though some remained in the region.

The next 500 years saw a Christian influence in this area that dramatically changed with Mohammed's arrival in 634. Surprisingly, most of the next 1200 years saw extraordinary cooperation between the ruling Muslims and the Christians and Jews.

Provision was made for Jews and Christians to co-exist peaceably with the Muslims in Palestine. **During the early years of Muslim control a small permanent Jewish population returned to Jerusalem after an absence of 500 years.**

- **661-750.** Christians and Jews were granted the official title, "**Peoples of the Book,**" underlining the common monotheistic roots they shared with Islam. The **Dome of the Rock** was built in **691.**
- **750-969.** Muslim leaders pledged freedom of religion and access to Jerusalem for Christian pilgrims. European benefactors, including Charlemagne, funded inns and other lodging facilities to accommodate the large flow of Christian pilgrims.
- **969-1099.** Islamic Civil War resulted in a Muslim clampdown of Jerusalem. Europe responded with the Crusades.

The Crusades: 1099-1187. Christian Europe mounted a series of crusades to wrest Jerusalem from this new strain of Muslim rule. It is estimated Palestine had only 1000 poor Jewish families during this period, but

Jews fought alongside Muslims against the Crusades in Jerusalem in 1099 and in Haifa in 1100.

In **1267** a synagogue was built that survives today in the Old City Jerusalem and communal Jewish life was re-established. In **1270** Muslims expelled the Crusaders from most of the country.

Through the end of the 19th century, Jews and Christians had enjoyed 400 years of "extraordinary privileges and immunities" that became imbedded in the Muslim Ottoman Empire's approach to its distant religious cousins. Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities were allowed to exercise jurisdiction over their own members in matters of worship, taxes, and in managing their own schools and charitable organizations.

Two massive waves of Jewish emigration from 1881 through 1914 marked the beginning of the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy and culminated in the end of cordial religious co-operation. As many as 75,000 Jews from Europe, Russia, Poland and Yemen disrupted the Muslim domination of Palestine and eventually triggered armed Arab resistance.

In 1916 as world leaders anticipated the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, they envisioned Palestine as an international zone without any direct rule. The next year the **Balfour Declaration** promised to **establish a Jewish national home in Palestine.** When World War I ended Ottoman rule over the eastern Mediterranean, it left a stateless milieu of discord between Arabs and the Jewish settlers, and the international community quickly changed course. The newly formed League of Nations intervened, mandating Great Britain as administrator of the defunct Ottoman Empire that had ruled Palestine since 1841 "until such time as they are able to stand alone." This "British Mandate" lasted from 1920 – 1948.

Almost immediately, violent Arab disturbances against Jews in Jerusalem erupted known as the "1920 Palestine Riots." By 1922, the League of Nations had approved the terms for establishing a Jewish state in Palestine with the clear understanding "**that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.**"

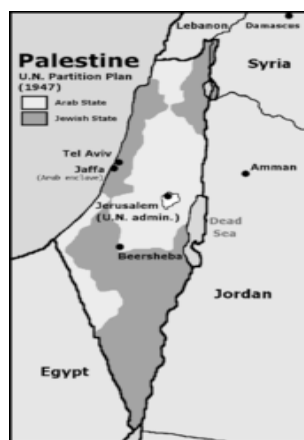
Two states, Palestine and Transjordan (in dark), were established as the “British Mandate of Palestine.” Consistent with centuries old traditions of mutual respect for differing religions, it addressed the viability of both peoples. This did not last long, however, as Transjordan was shortly removed as part of the Palestinian solution to become the nation of Jordan.



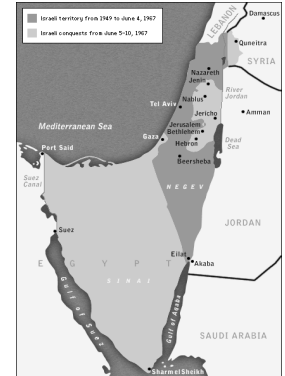
In their half-century magistrature, the British managed to anger both sides. The Arab Revolt of 1936-39 resisted British rule and mass Jewish emigration. In the end Britain clamped down on the insurrection with “administrative detention” – imprisonment without charges or trial - and with curfews and house demolitions. More than 120 Arabs were sentenced to death and about 40 hanged. Though the revolt petered out in 1939, its lasting legacy was Arab Palestinian identity.

When World War II broke out Palestinian Jews sided with Britain with 30,000 joining the British army along with 6,000 Palestinian Arabs. But Britain reneged on its promise to President Truman to allow 100,000 Jewish immigrants into Palestine and instead enforced a yearly quota of 15,000, which meant thousands of Jews fleeing Nazi persecution were placed in detention camps, deported or even sent back to Germany. By 1944 Menachem Begin issued a Declaration of Revolt and spearheaded armed attacks against British forces in an effort to force their departure from Palestine.

In late 1947, the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. The Jews accepted the plan but the Arab community locally and regionally rejected it. The map shows the Arab zone in light and the Jewish in dark. Civil war erupted and despite an infusion of Palestinian Liberation fighters from neighboring Muslim states, the Jews prevailed, and 300,000 to 350,000 Arabs either fled or were driven out. When the Jews declared themselves to be the nation of Israel, full-scale conflict broke out as Syrian, Iraqi, Egyptian and Jordanian forces sought control of Jerusalem. Israel quickly prevailed and another 350,000 Arabs fled or were expelled from newly



acquired territory. With the peace arrangements failing to establish an Arab state, Jordan annexed the Arab territories of Samaria and Judea (now the West Bank) and East Jerusalem, while the Gaza Strip came under Egyptian administration and the Golan Heights went to Syria. The dark gray here is Israel from 1949 to June 4, 1967 (notice the divergence from the original U.N. partition of 1947.) This is what the President has proposed as the beginning point for negotiating “land swaps,” agreeable to both sides for the purpose of creating a 2-state solution.



The light gray shows areas acquired in the 1967 Six-Day War (June 5-10): The West Bank (center), Golan Heights (top right) and the thin Gaza strip near bottom left of Israel’s coast are now Arab areas within Israel. The Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt.

Historical context helps us better understand statements from the last 5 or 6 administrations that a two-state solution is the only hope for the peace and security of Israel. That three-quarters of a million Palestinians were displaced with the birth of Israel explains recent statements by the moderate, pro-western King of Jordan that “there can be no peace in the Middle East until the Palestinian issue is resolved.”

Prophecy tells us God’s people will return to the land of their fathers. A 2-state solution, though not impossible, is problematic. A Palestinian state carved out of existing Muslim countries seems the most likely resolution to this Biblical dilemma. But a look at the “land of their fathers” suggests other challenges. Three tribes are situated east of the Jordan river in what is now Jordan. A return to *this* original land requires acquisition of Jordanian territory. How that is to be accomplished only the Lord knows.



The reminder for us is that “we” cannot make it happen...only the Lord can do that in His time and way. Though we are to remain unfailing supporters of God’s people, we must not be blindly so. As with the prophets of old, we are to be God’s corrective voice as that is needed. God is our first love as we walk as His instrument with His people.

-- Brenda Cox