



REFLECTIONS

September 25, 2022, Refreshed from the Archives of November 25, 2012

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.

2 Corinthians 2:14-15

Transformed Images

Sometimes things aren't as we picture them to be. Sometimes images painted in our minds are vastly different from reality and only exposure to the real thing can change them. Pictures long embedded in my mind have been challenged and corrections to them have been bountiful. Among them I found the transforming images of the Holy Land breathed richness into my perceptions of it and strengthened my commitment to Jesus Christ.

The notion of an unsettled land threatened by war almost discouraged the trip that would change it all. But waiting for peace to come to the land God gave Abraham's heirs would delay the visit until the dust settled from Armageddon. There has never been a time of unthreatened peace in the land; and those very heirs haunt the land with unrest today.

So we made the trip and the experience was transforming. There was the walk down the Mount of Beatitudes, the blue waters of the Sea of Galilee before us. There we could almost hear the Sermon on the Mount echo and we felt inspiration when we envisioned the challenge of the Great Commission that may have been delivered at that very place. And we were walking there!

Through much of Israel we walked where the patriarchs walked and the footsteps of Jesus traveled. Heat from parched sandy ground burned our feet, and the gritty taste of dust dried our mouths as we became engrossed in the barren land. We understood the travails of Moses as he wandered with his people through the rugged land that offered no meaningful landmarks to guide their way to the Promised Land.

In Nazareth, the traditional site of Gabriel's message to Mary presented a new image of that sacred day; and a visit to a nearby town prompted speculation that a young Jesus may have worked alongside his earthly father there. A sycamore-fig tree in Jericho might have been a descendant of the one Zacchaeus climbed to see the Savior pass by. And the bustling crowd in old Jerusalem portrayed an atmosphere much like the one that prompted Jesus to upset the tables in the temple.

Other scenes also transformed images in our minds. But the greatest image is of Jesus who once lived among us. We walked where He once lived, traveled, died, and rose again. Because He came, we live in triumphal procession in him.

Jesus is God's greatest blessing to us; and we should tell the world.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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