

International Teaching Ministry of Douglas Jacoby

International Bible Teaching Ministry Update



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LETTER FROM AFRICA, JESUS DEBATE READY

"Challenging men and women of faith to think"

All newsletters available at the main website, douglasjacoby.com. This website contains over 8000 pages of (free) material. The second (subscription) website contains advanced N.T. studies as well as weekly O.T. podcasts. That address is jacobypremium.com.

5 August 2009

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Georgia! We trust your summer is going well. (Southern hemisphere readers, we hope you're having a pleasant winter!) It's been eight weeks since the last bulletin. Not that I haven't wanted to write sooner. Most of my available creative energy has flowed into writing my book *Why Believe in God?* (nearly complete). Sometimes I feel drained. Of course this could simply be the effect of age! At any rate, the summer has certainly been action-packed. I would like first to share about one of the shorter adventures.

To Tuskegee

I have not often been in Alabama, despite its proximity to Atlanta. But I was highly motivated to make the drive southwest to Tuskegee (of Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver fame). Our mission: to interview Fred Gray, attorney and influential figure in the Civil Rights Movement. Mr. Gray (nearly 79) was Rosa Parks' lawyer. He represented the hundreds of victims of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, and successfully won a number of important civil rights cases, especially for Native Americans and African Americans. Mr. Gray was also Martin Luther King's lawyer. This was the fourth time I've met Fred; we first connected at Pepperdine University. (He's a member of the Church of Christ.)

One of the brothers from North River (our home congregation) works for Fox TV, and accompanied me. We crossed the state line into Alabama -- no Banjo, just the filming equipment. I had hoped Fred might speak at our upcoming seminar, *Why Do the Nations Rage? Gospel Solutions*

to Prejudice and Separation. Though he was not available (in one sense), he was indeed available in another. We got the interview on film, and will show a clip during next week's seminar.

Orlando

The next I was at the Florida Discipleship Conference in Orlando (1500 participants). Floridians have been extra supportive of the teaching ministry since 2003, and I'd like to express my special thanks to everyone from my home state. The fellowship was wonderful, and the chance to meet old friends truly refreshing. The evangelistic challenge in the Sunday sermon by J. P. Tynes (Columbia, SC) was both humbly presented and powerfully on target. All lessons from the seminar are accessible [online](#).

AIM

This week we finished a four-day AIM session on Church History and Worldviews. The brothers and sisters from the Southeast enjoyed the PowerPoint presentations, the fellowship, and dinner in the Jacoby home (an AIM tradition). Sam Laing and Joey Harris joined me in presenting these important lessons. The next session is in October, with guest speakers Mike Fontenot (Virginia Beach) and Ron Clark (Portland). (Athensinstitute.org will publish the relevant information in a few weeks.) In November I'll teach in the Russian language wing of AIM, in Kiev. After this, many of our students--from such countries as Russia, Belarus, Latvia, and the Ukraine--will be near graduation from the 150-hour biblical training program.

Debate

As promised last newsletter, this bulletin also has a link to the latest debate, with "Christian atheist" Robert Price. If you're reaching out to any atheists, or for that matter anyone confused by the supposed "parallels" between Jesus and other ancient figures (miracles workers, gurus, or individuals supposedly raised from the dead), this would be a good evangelistic resource. Click [here](#).

Africa

Let's go back a few weeks. In East Africa I wrote a letter which I would like to share with you. Since most readers have never physically visited Africa, perhaps through the letter you will feel more of a connection. Most of the bulletin *is this letter*.

Thank you

The gospel is life-changing, and the Bible deeper than we could possibly imagine. To help others know the Lord through his Word (1 Samuel 3:1,7,21; 4:1; Nehemiah 8:1-2), the teaching ministry plays a vital role. For this ministry to be effective, we depend on your prayers and encouragement.

You have have played such a key role know who you are. Thanks so much for your support!

In Him,
Douglas

EAST AFRICA

"Jambo! Greetings from Kenya! I am teaching for a few days in Nairobi and Kampala before I head to the Middle East. It's been a great trip so far. It took over 30 hours to get here, and the body is gradually adjusting to the 7-hour time difference. Even though we are near the equator, it isn't too hot, as the city is over a mile in elevation. Still, this is Africa. Even in the city I hear the loud chirping of frogs each night. (And other creatures!)"

At the airport my driver greeted me and we talked for an hour (heavy traffic) about life, family, government, and politics. Phinehas is 59, and he shared that he knows he needs to be more serious about this faith. Two months ago he was robbed. One night a gang of youths kidnapped him and

threw him into the trunk of a car. He escaped, rolling onto the road, but could not outrun the boys, who soon caught up with him and beat him severely. They drove him into the jungle, stole his money and clothes, then tied him to a tree, demanding more -- but he had no more to give. They cracked his skull with a machete, and Phinehas was tied to the tree all night, naked and bleeding, bitten by insects, and believing he would die. The next morning his screams were heard.

He removed his hat to show me the long and ragged scar on his scalp, and his broken ribs are still tender. I suggested that this must not be a wasted opportunity -- the close brush with death. Then I gave him one of my books (he's a big reader). He was interested to learn that there are two men in the Bible named Phinehas. One was filled with zeal for the Lord (Numbers 25); the other, though named after his famous predecessor, was a corrupt man (1 Samuel 2). I am urging this gentle soul to be the former, not the latter. Please say a prayer for Phinehas.

As soon as I entered my hotel, one of the staff called out, "Hello, brother!" He recognized me from a visit Vicki and I made to Nairobi in 1995. (I was surprised!) I was bringing a lot of luggage -- almost 200 lbs. of books for the church. (Thanks, Delta Airlines!) I often tease the porters, saying, "Here, take this 'light' case." (They laugh as they grunt under the weight of the 70-pound bags.) I've easily met a dozen different staff members. Many have biblical or religious names (Joshua, Patrick, Peninnah, Immaculate...) Everyone is friendly. I got a chuckle as I perused the hotel literature, esp. when I read, "We regret that public nudity is not permitted." This was of course an innocent error.

Outside the hotel, of course, this is a poor nation, with many economic woes. Many subsist on less than \$1 a day. Yesterday I had lunch with two preachers who co-lead the Nairobi Christian Church (1400 members, attendance about 2000). Neither of them has running water--not that there was a hint of complaint.

Crime and government corruption appear to be on the rise. Following are just a few items from the newspaper:

- * Annual inflation is around 25%. Taxes are expected to surge.*
- * A 21-year-old man robs three British tourists. He is sentenced to death.*
- * In nearby Somalia, a burglar who stole \$90 worth of clothes receives the typical Shari'a penalty (Qur'an 38). Crowds gather for the spectacle, as his right hand is chopped off at the wrist.*
- * Many contract anthrax after eating an uninspected cow.*
- * Cholera epidemic intensifies.*
- * Three lions escape game preserve and terrorize the populace.*
- * And one of the big stories: On 17 June a tanker filled with gasoline goes off the road and overturns. Immediately it is surrounded by looters, siphoning off as much of the fuel as they can. (Note: gasoline here costs \$1/liter, or 50% more than in the United States.) 46 petrol looters are severely burned when the tanker explodes. Amazingly, many were standing knee-deep in petroleum. All it took was a spark. Locals reported that the police were allowing them to loot the tanker in exchange for a \$1 pay-off. Several have died from their wounds. Is there a lesson here?*

Tomorrow morning I fly to Uganda. Thanks for all your prayers."

From Kenya to Uganda

That was the letter I sent to our Bible study group, just a few days into the African tour. The series of O.T. lessons I presented in Nairobi was well received. Several people arrived more than an hour early, eager to learn and more than willing to push through the physical discomfort of mass transportation and miles of walking. It's always easier to bring the Word when the audience is receptive. The few days spent in Uganda were also very productive. I preached, taught, and spent time with a number of the Ugandan disciples. I will be seeing several of the African leaders at a conference next month; our fellowship will continue.

Dubai

On the way home, I spent a day in Dubai (United Arab Emirates), where I spoke on "Dealing with Doubt." The crowd (most of whom were Indians and Filipinos -- reflecting the demography of the nation) was not only warm and giving, but also inquisitive. The crowd did not know that I had picked up a bug in Africa, and hadn't eaten for 48 hours. One of the brothers said, "Wow, you look older than your picture!" (Yes, some speakers use photos that are decades old!) But the picture he was referring to was up to date! I resisted the temptation to explain. Just to be able to meet the family of believers was encouragement enough. The presentation went well, and they want more! We're already working on a 2010 return visit to Dubai -- plus Bahrain, Kuwait, and possibly other nations.

ASSORTED REMINDERS

* **PODCASTS:** Have you explored the new website? Podcasts are uploaded weekly at jacobypremium.com. This year, one financial and 32 O.T. podcasts have already been recorded, with 20 yet to come!

* **GOSPEL SOLUTIONS TO PREJUDICE AND SEPARATION (NEXT WEEK):** Program (see main web site) includes messages by prominent black, white, and Arab speakers, a case study on the Atlanta congregations, and visit to Martin Luther King Center. And churches sending 5 or more participants receive a handsome discount. Participants will be coming to the seminar from all over the country.

* **ROME:** Spaces are still available for the October 2009 Biblical Study Tour. Currently there are 34 signed up. Complete info at main website.

* **CAN YOU HELP?** The international teaching ministry is largely supported by donations. Would you like to become a monthly supporter? If yes, please click [here](#).