



CAPITAL CONNECTIONS

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“The seventh lot came out for the tribe of Dan, according to its families. The territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, Elon, Timnah, Ekron, Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, Me-jarkon, and Rakkon at the border opposite Joppa.”

(Josh. 19:40-46 NRSV)

These are real places, some of which are still called by the same names today. Upon arrival in Tel Aviv on October 11, I was “whisked” by taxi to the Grand Beach Hotel on HaYarkon Street. (I say “whisked” euphemistically. On Sunday it was suggested I was “taken for a ride” to HaYarkon Street; the street named for the Jarkon River that still flows there as it did when the Tribe of Dan received their inheritance.)

Not far south of Tel Aviv lies Joppa. It’s a beautiful outcropping, perfectly situated on the Mediterranean. Commercial endeavors are facilitated by its easily defensible port. All kinds of history happened in Joppa, perhaps beginning with the passage quoted above, then tracked down through the long ages after the conclusion of the New Testament.

We’re familiar with these words: “Now send men to Joppa for a certain Simon who is called Peter; he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside.” (Acts 10:5-6 NRSV) The extended passage recounts Peter’s vision and Cornelius’ visit, as well as the giving of the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles. All of this and much, much more happened in Joppa. I visited Joppa with my parents on the first day of our trip to Israel.

Early that first morning, we sat at a beachside Café drinking a cup of Turkish coffee watching triathlon contestants emerge from the Mediterranean. Two guys asked to join us at the far end of the table. One had just finished his swim. His friend had been waiting for him.

I’ve learned that the best way to get conversations going is to ask questions, so I asked, “How was your swim?” The conversation that followed was from the Lord.

Having seen the map of Tel Aviv and knowing it couldn’t be too far from where we sat, I asked them, “How far is it to Joppa?” The swimmer answered, “It’s about five kilometers.” That’s three miles; a bit farther than I wanted to make my parents walk.

The swimmer pointed out the stream of bicyclists. He suggested that we could rent bikes on the beach and take a leisurely ride along the coastline. That was appealing to me, but not so much for my dad. I registered the distance in my mind and carried on the conversation.

The swimmer asked, “Is this your first trip to Israel?” “Yes,” I replied. “My folks and I arrived yesterday. We’re joining a Tour Group tomorrow morning and we’ve got some time to look around today.”

He began telling me his story. His family is one of the founding families of what became the modern State of Israel in 1948. I was keenly attentive, asking him when/how they arrived? The miraculous nature of this encounter became apparent to me.

He said, "My family came here from North Africa in 1830." "North Africa?" "Where in North Africa?" I asked. He said, "Oran." I was floored. I pointed to my dad and said, "That's where he was born."



My dad was not completely aware of the topic of the conversation up to that point. "Dad," I said, pointing to the swimmer, "his family is one of the founding families of Israel. They came here from Algeria." The two of them were immediately connected. The conversation shifted from English into French, their native language.

The few minutes spent at that Café more than made up for the fact that I'd been taken for a ride the night before. This encounter was the first of several in which the Lord made clear both his presence and his blessing upon the days we spent together in Israel.

Rather than walk or ride bikes, that afternoon my parents and I rode the Number 10 bus to and from Joppa; jam packed together with dozens of Tel Aviv residents and tourists. I'll never forget it.

I wrote last month that a trip to Israel in mid-October 2018 was not on my agenda, at all. My parents first mentioned it to Elaine and me at the end of July. My first response was, "It doesn't fit into my schedule this year." Unfortunately, it didn't fit Elaine's schedule either. She didn't have vacation time available until Christmas or Spring Break next year. So, I just told the folks, it's not the right time. And then...

I considered a few things. Having done so, I changed my mind. Sometimes the Lord's timing and our timing are not the same thing. This was another time I've realized I need to adjust and accommodate God's will.

Initially Elaine and I talked about it, put it out of our minds and carried on with our late-July vacation. But, it came back up. Perhaps I could be helpful to my parents as a "chaperone." So, I called them back a few days later and said, "I've decided to go to Israel with you."

At Men's Breakfast this past Saturday I told the guys that I have so much to unpack from the trip that I've not yet figured out how to do it. But I will.

Thank you for letting me get away for that tremendously meaningful and important time. It's a treasure to have had the opportunity.

And, thank you for your generous Pastor Appreciation gift. The cards from the kids and the congregation bless my soul. I'm grateful to the Lord for the privilege of serving together here with you.

Blessings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Pastor John

When I was a Junior in High School I began to think of the next chapter in my life — college. I compiled a list of half a dozen schools I was considering and wanted to tour. Early in the process I was convicted that my choice had to be made under the leadership of Jesus, determined through prayer.

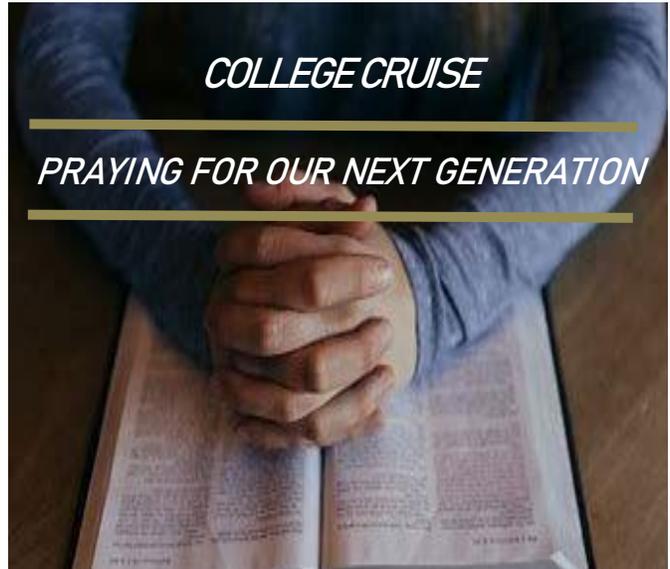
Dallas Baptist was originally at the bottom of the list, but as I spent the next year praying DBU rose to the top. I am so grateful God led me to DBU, because if he hadn't I would have never met my beautiful bride, found my best friends and be formed into who I am today.

Prayer was also the driving force in my household for the better part of this year as McKenzie and I considered where God was leading us to serve next- spoiler alert that ended up being Capital Baptist!

Pastor John has put out the call for our Church to consider what it would look like to pray in a fresh, vibrant way. Out of that vision I want to invite you to join me on a *College Cruise*, where we will pray for our next Generation.

One of my responsibilities here at CBC is to give leadership and encourage growth to our College Ministry. I know that we need to seek Gods Will through prayer if CBC is going to be effective on each campus. The Cruise will set sail on Nov. 1st, Dec. 6th, Jan. 10th, and Feb. 7th. Would you join me (on our fancy new set of wheels) in having a meaningful time of prayer at and for each campus in our city?

For His Glory! Pastor Thomas



Capital's New Wheels!

By January 2017, it was obvious to those responsible for operating and maintaining Capital's vehicles that their days were numbered. Some issues were unrepairable, some repairs were impractical on vehicles almost 30 years old.

In September 2017, the Transportation Committee reported the specifics to Council. Council suggested asking members at the October 2017 business meeting... "Does Capital even need to have a vehicle?"

Members answered with a resounding 'yes'. There was division as to what type of vehicle would be best, but the majority felt that any new vehicle needed to have a lift.



There isn't space available here to detail the man-hours and effort invested in searching for a suitable vehicle over the past year, but last month, thanks to the eagle-eye of Trustee Virginia Barker, a suitable vehicle was spotted at Skyline Ford in Keizer. Skyline's offer was presented at the business meeting two weeks ago, and papers were signed the next day for Capital's new (to us) 2011 Ford Super Duty Shuttle Bus.

Yes, we will eventually put Capital's name on the bus, but please be patient, and don't look for that to happen until January.

The Transportation Committee wants to thank Church Council, the Stewardship Committee and Trustees for their input and advice, and particularly Bob Warberg and Virginia Barker for their invaluable help.

We are grateful for the reliable, comfortable vehicle God has provided and pray it will serve Capital with trouble-free transportation for many years to come.

Transportation Committee, Lonnie Fowler, Louie Byrd



Odds and Ends...

My hope is that when you read these “odds and ends” from *my* life, you will be reminded of incidents *you* could share. When you think of one, just write it up. (I will help if you need help) and email it to me: eekersey@me.com.)

1) This happened Tuesday last week, breakfast time, the first morning of the NWBC Senior Retreat in Cannon Beach. Our group from Capital included Jan Landers, Jan Leaf, Virginia Barker, and Earl and me. We were seated at a table together.

When the young man in charge of the event called us to attention, he explained breakfast would be buffet style, and he would point out each table as it was that table's turn.

I thought it would be funny to try to bribe him, so I flashed a dollar bill in his direction. He did notice, and said, “That lady wants her table to be first.”

But then he added, “I went to Corban, and I know Ellen — and that table can go first.” I was in a state of shock, and we were all laughing. Lo and behold, Tyler Wells *was* that young man. He *had* gone to Corban, and he *did* know me — but not from being in my class.

He knew me from a video I was in some years ago. It was an entry in a Doritos competition; the winners would get \$2,000. My friends, the Riffle brothers, had been making videos since they were kids; their talent had already earned them some thousands of dollars, and Tyler was one of the characters in this Doritos film.

The Riffles were hoping this entry would bring in more winnings.

We made the video in an alley in downtown Salem. I played the part of a little old lady (type casting?) with a walker who beat up the bad guy trying to steal the good guy's Doritos. The video didn't win, but the incident did earn my friends and me first crack at the breakfast buffet. (Want to see the video? I think I can find it and send you a copy.)

2) While a sophomore at California Baptist College (now University), we had a new dorm mother, who had chosen some of her select young women to make up a “Dorm Council.” My friends and I were not included.

The council began to issue “rules.” I don’t really remember what those rules were; I remember that we didn’t like them.

So one night, in rebellion, we set all the alarm clocks in the girls’ dorm to go off at 10 p.m. When the alarms began chiming from every direction, we proceeded to play leap frog down the hallway. (Shocking, I know! *What* were we thinking?)

The next day we discovered two new rules: 1) No alarms set for 10 p.m. and (2) No leap-frogging in the hallway.

But that didn’t stop us. This was the day of gathered skirts and crinoline petticoats, and we young women all knew how to make those skirts. Off to the department store we went; we bought yards of black and white striped material. Our “prison” skirts, worn in unity, would give evidence of our displeasure at the new dorm mother and her “council.”

We did wear the skirts, but not en masse, as we had originally planned. We wore them individually and only occasionally, after one of the saintly young women in the dorm cautioned us that we were “Christian young women” and displaying such antics would not please our Lord.

But...every time I see black and white stripes, I am reminded of our “prison” skirts

3) When we lived in Queensland, Australia, and Earl was pastor of the Margate Baptist Church, near Brisbane, he spoke frequently of God and Jesus and the Bible, as any Baptist pastor would do. But we didn’t realize what an influence he was having on the children, until one day when Earl was sick, and one of the deacons preached for him.

Imagine our surprise when we were told what had happened. A little boy, discovering that the pastor wasn’t there, looked up at his mom and dad and asked, “Where’s God?”

4) When I was 15, our family began going to church, and we all became active Christians. My mother’s Jewish family had some difficulty understanding what had happened to us. Before becoming Southern Baptists, we were free Sunday evenings and Wednesdays.

“But now,” my Jewish grandmother, who had come from Russia, spoke Yiddish, and had a funny accent, said, “Are you going to be selling papers on the corners?” (She was, of course, thinking of Jehovah’s Witnesses, but, sadly, to most Jewish people Christians were anyone who wasn’t Jewish — Baptists, Catholics, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc.)

My dad and Grandma had some great conversations about Judaism, Jesus, and the Bible. Grandma would say, “I believe Jesus was a good man,” and my dad would caution: “He couldn’t be a ‘good man.’ Because he was either who he said he was — the Messiah — or he was the biggest liar who ever lived.”

We always hoped Grandma had become a “silent believer,” if there is such a thing. She did actually go to church with us occasionally, and, after one “revival meeting,” with a preacher from Australia, she said, “If anyone could convince a person to believe in Jesus, that man could.”

5) When I graduated from Cal State Northridge, my aunt and uncle took our family out to dinner at a very nice Italian restaurant.

Our children, who usually ate with a fork — and maybe a knife — were unaccustomed to multiple silverware: three forks, two knives, and two spoons, so when we sat at our table in this restaurant, they were shocked.

“What’s with all the silverware?” one of them said, rather loudly.

I explained: “One fork is for salad, another for the main course, and the third is for dessert. Don’t worry about the others.”

Sometime later, my sister Fran and her family were being taken to the same restaurant by the same aunt and uncle, and I decided to prepare my sister, so her children wouldn’t embarrass her. I explained the multiple silverware and cautioned her to explain to *her* children before they made the trip.

You would hope it went well, wouldn’t you? But it was not meant to be. As they entered the restaurant and arrived at their table, my nephew Dwayne exclaimed loudly, “Wow! Look at all that silverware — just like Aunt Ellen said!”