



The Half Shekel Journals of 2023 by Pastor Ed Rice
#2304 Sun 19 Mar Worship on the Sea of Galilee, Boat Museum

The Psalmist writes, *“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile”* (Ps.32:1-2).



The Sea of Galilee from
Lake House Hotel
3/19/2023 6 am

I became ankylosing spondylitis conscience at 4 AM, light conscious at 4:01, God conscious at 4:01.5, and Sea of Galilee conscious at 4:02. I am remiss to describe in prose exactly what it is when a born-again, bought-by-the-blood of Christ, Bible believer



From Lake House Hotel
Tiberias Israel
3/19/2023 6 am

awakes to consciousness on the Lords day, the first day of the week, the day Christ arose victorious over death, on a Sunday. But when it also comes to mind that we are on the Sea of

Galilee, where Jesus called and taught his disciples, ... Well, it is almost



overwhelming, and one reaches for a Bible, as in the background he sings, “Alas, and did my Savior bleed, and did my Sovereign die, would he devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?”, meddling it with, “Up from the grave, he arose, with the mighty triumphs o'er his foes.”

It was that kind of morning on March 19, two hours before my alarm would sound. *“This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles”* (Ps.34:6).

Shortsighted motels provide no desk light when they provide a desk, expecting one could turn on the room light,... and wake up the whole room. My little pen light illuminated Matthew 8, and Matthew 14, but not as much as the Holy Ghost did. Disciples were led, they followed Jesus, into the overpowering storm on the Sea of Galilee in chapter 8, and were commanded into the overpowering storm in chapter 14, so I brushed up on both accounts before breakfast.

The alarm got us to a buffet kosher breakfast at the Lake House Hotel in Tiberias, ... on the Sea of Galilee. Our group of 25 were present; I surveyed each trying to discern between “morning people” and “non-morning people.” I think, when you awake in Israel, with great anticipation of a day, everyone is a morning person. I could have launched into our old camp song, “I am alive, awake, alert, enthusiastic” and everyone would have joined right in. ... I could be wrong.



The tour bus was loaded with anticipation and passengers at 0700 on Sunday morning. Pastor Diedrich Peters opened our day together with an open Bible. He likened the experience of being on this pilgrimage, and tasting all the sites we visited, and all the Scriptures we explored,

to being at an overwhelming buffet, ... Like a buffet of Jesus' provisions, where there was more available than could possibly be absorbed. It was relatable, and well received, and he closed in a “God is so good, thank you Father” prayer of thanksgiving, which met with resounding “Amen”.



Costia launched the tour bus into light traffic in Tiberias, Israel, as Eli launched into a “*Bogataw*” greeting that congratulated us on being prompt and bringing about a 0715 departure. Eli's eyes sparkled, and his face could barely contain all of the smile that enveloped it as he began to describe our day and the Sea of Galilee. “The Holyland Boat Tours” would take us out to sea, and we would have a worship service while adrift right near where Jesus walked on the water.

I pondered the sea as glimpses of it flashed by the window of the tour bus. I remembered my first look at lake

Erie through a car window. I had looked up to see a line of water touching the sky, and asked, “Dad, Why can’t I see Canada? ... All I see is water!”

My Father, driving our green Rambler Station wagon¹ said, “It’s like we are on a gigantic basketball; the shores of Canada are around the curve quite a bit, and all you see is water.” My dad knew everything, and loved to explain in great but plain detail (It is sad, I have run into people hopelessly locked onto an idea that the world is flat. They never had a dad like mine that observed things, and then logically explained them. I left off talking to such misled people; they taught me well that a



reprobate mind can have a truth staring them in the face, and yet forever refuse to move from the lies they had been taught.)

One cannot see across Lake Erie, but it was easy to see across the Sea of Galilee. It was much smaller than what it was showed to be on Map-Plate 6 of my Scofield reference Bible. One could fit 150 Sea of Galilees into one Lake Erie; it being 13 miles long, 8 miles wide, 133 miles in circumference, and 84 feet in average depth. It was about the size of Oneida Lake in



upstate New York where we lived from 1989 to 1995. I could see across it as well, and both were very susceptible to very fast rising, very furious storms.

Costia pulled the tour bus into the Holyland Sailing parking lot,

and we made our way through the light rain down to the pier. The boats of Holyland Sailing (www.JesusBoats.com) are meant to be replicas of



“famous boats that played a key role in Jesus' life in the Galilee.” I’m thinking he didn’t

¹ Annually Levi & Doris Rice packed four kids, a Coleman cook stove, and a canvas 6-man tent into a 1965 Rambler headed to Zephyrhills Florida to visit Grandma and Elton Bly. This year we were to visit a Baptist Preacher in Kentucky and tour Mammoth Cave, so we went through Cleveland Ohio.

have the engine, a full awning, or 55 life-vests, but appreciative of these extras, with the barely audible engine purring, we set out to sea.

Someone had the wherewithal to bring a package of crackers and seagulls were doing aerial acrobatics to fly in and snatch crackers out of mid air. These were quite an entertaining and competitive bunch of gulls following our progress out to the center of the sea.

There were three flags flying on the ships mast head and, as the ship drifted to a stop in the sea, our Sunday worship began with three national anthems:



The Star-Spangled Banner

O say can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

Canadian National Anthem O Canada!

O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee,
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

HaTikvah ("The Hope") Israel's National Anthem

*Kol ode balevav p'nimah -
Nefesh Yehudi homiyah*

*Ulfa'atey mizrach kadimah
Ayin l'tzion tzofiyah.*

*Ode lo avdah tikvatenu
Hatikvah bat shnot alpayim:*

*L'hiyot am chofshi b'artzenu -
Eretz Tzion v'Yerushalayim.*



הַתִּקְוָה

כָּל עוֹד בְּלֵבב פְּנִימָה,
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמְיָה.
וּלְפָאֵתֵי מְזֻרַח קְדִימָה
עֵין לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפְיָה.
עוֹד לֹא אֶבְדָּה תִקְוַתְנוּ,
הַתִּקְוָה בַּת שָׁנוֹת אֲלֵפִים,
לְהִיּוֹת עִם חֶפְשֵׁי בְּאַרְצֵנוּ,
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.



English translation:
 As long as the Jewish spirit
 is yearning deep in the heart,
 With eyes turned toward the East,
 looking toward Zion,
 Then our hope -- the two--thousand--year--
 old hope -- will not be lost:
 To be a free people in our land,
 The land of Zion and Jerusalem.

The words to Israel's national anthem were written in 1886 by Naphtali Herz Imber, an English poet originally from Bohemia. The melody was written by Samuel Cohen, an immigrant from Moldavia. Cohen actually based the melody on a musical theme found in Bedrich Smetana's "Moldau."

Our tour guide Eli gave a hearty welcome and some insights about our time out on the sea. The captain of the ship gave a hearty welcome and some facts about Holyland Sailing and her ships. Our tour host, Pastor Lee Pickett, gave a hearty welcome and some exciting words about being on the sea of Galilee, and how thought-provoking it is to be here where Jesus was.

After a couple hymns sung together, Pastor Bill Thiessen opened his Bible to Matthew 14 and gave a moving recital of Jesus saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." And Peter's answered, "Lord, if it be, thou, bid me come onto thee on the water."

I looked over the rail and down to the calm water about four feet below me. It is likely, their's was a 15 passenger boat, not a 55 passenger boat, equally likely, their's had no safety rail, but hey, Pastor Thiessen gave Peter a lot of credit for his stepping out of the ship; well-deserved credit. As he read scripture, and as I stared at the water below, I could see Jesus's foot prints, there on the sea of Galilee, and look, there's Peter's foot prints right beside his, they are headed to the bow of the ship. It might could be they took a lap around the ship before they climbed aboard.



There were a couple, more hymns, a couple, moving testimonies, and our hour of worship had an afterglow as a replica Jesus boat glided back to the pier. We shall never forget being on the sea of Galilee for Sunday worship.

The Boat Museum (32°50'40.1"N 35°31'29.8"E) houses a most marvelous, imaginative story. In 1986 after a severe drought, some lads, exploring some muddy lake bed, stumbled onto a piece of obviously very old wood. Upon further careful excavation it was found to be the hull of a very, very old fishing boat. Upon even further, very tedious, even miraculous excavations, that challenge the genius of the ablest archaeologist in Israel for 11 years, the whole 27 foot long, 7 1/2 foot wide, 4 1/3 foot high hull was removed from the mud and put in a museum. In 2000 the 15 passenger, 2000 year old² fishing boat, designated "The Ancient Galilee Boat" went on display in Yigal Allon Museum at Kibbutz Ginosar near where it was discovered. We saw it there; but didn't touch it. We watched the miracle movie detailing how it went from mud to awesome display. This paragraph is only a readers – digest condensation.

I wish I had more time³ to describe the fisherman brothers, Moshe, and Yuval Lufan, who stumbled onto it, the mortise-and-tenon joints of its planks, the cedar planking and oak frames plus five other woods used, the evidence of repeated repairs showing the boat was in use for nearly a century, the likely stripping and scuttling that landed the hull sunk into the muck 2000 years ago, and all the media hype about the excavation (like the Ministry of Tourism's knockdown drag out fight with the ultra-Orthodox Jews of Tiberius, who thought there were already way too many "Christian" tourists showing up in Galilee!).



- 2 Radiocarbon dating, called carbon-14 dating, is one of the most reliable and accurate methods of dating organic materials. It is the Creationist's friend because it is extremely accurate for organic materials that existed in God's 6,000 year old Universe. It is the Evolutionist's worst nightmare because there is no way it can give them numbers greater than the tens of thousands that their reprobate science requires. The basis of Carbon-14 dating is that living plants, animals, and humans ingest carbon dioxide containing some ¹⁴C, a radioactive isotope of carbon, that, upon their death, when they quit exchanging carbon dioxide, begins a natural radioactive decay. After 5,730 years only half of the original ¹⁴C remains and, with today's very accurate bean-counters, very accurate results come from organic materials which died from 100 to 6,000 years ago.
- 3 On journaling in general it was well said by Mark Twain, "If you wish to inflict a heartless and malignant punishment upon a young person, pledge him to keep a journal a year." In fact I so enjoyed Twain's journaling in his book "*The Innocents Abroad*", that was referenced earlier in this journal (HS2301), and I so feared that my readers would miss Twain's true expertise, I included an excerpt of his prose about journaling, at the end of this journal.

Each of these could support a couple more paragraphs and that wouldn't touch the huge dike that had to be built, or salvaging the ships planking that had the consistency of wet cardboard! To study more, start at seetheholyland.net/jesus-boat.

Our Sunday was just starting and we must get to the Mount of Beatitudes, and the city of Jesus, Capernaum.

Below is an excerpt of Mark Twain's "*Innocents Abroad*" Chapter IV, that has his humorous insights about journaling. I thought it worth the read, as is his whole freely obtained book <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3176/3176-h/3176-h.htm>

After prayers the Synagogue shortly took the semblance of a writing school. The like of that picture was never seen in a ship before. Behind the long dining tables on either side of the saloon, and scattered from one end to the other of the latter, some twenty or thirty gentlemen and ladies sat them down under the swaying lamps and for two or three hours wrote diligently in their journals. Alas! that journals so voluminously begun should come to so lame and impotent a conclusion as most of them did! I doubt if there is a single pilgrim of all that host but can show a hundred fair pages of journal concerning the first twenty days' voyaging in the Quaker City, and I am morally certain that not ten of the party can show twenty pages of journal for the succeeding twenty thousand miles of voyaging! At certain periods it becomes the dearest ambition of a man to keep a faithful record of his performances in a book; and he dashes at this work with an enthusiasm that imposes on him the notion that keeping a journal is the veriest pastime in the world, and the pleasantest. But if he only lives twenty-one days, he will find out that only those rare natures that are made up of pluck, endurance, devotion to duty for duty's sake, and invincible determination may hope to venture upon so tremendous an enterprise as the keeping of a journal and not sustain a shameful defeat.

One of our favorite youths, Jack, a splendid young fellow with a head full of good sense, and a pair of legs that were a wonder to look upon in the way of length and straightness and slimness, used to report progress every morning in the most glowing and spirited way, and say:

"Oh, I'm coming along bully!" (he was a little given to slang in his happier moods.) "I wrote ten pages in my journal last night—and you know I wrote nine the night before and twelve the night before that. Why, it's only fun!"

"What do you find to put in it, Jack?"

"Oh, everything. Latitude and longitude, noon every day; and how many miles we made last twenty-four hours; and all the domino games I beat and horse billiards; and whales and sharks and porpoises; and the text of the sermon Sundays (because that'll tell at home, you know); and the ships we saluted and what nation they were; and which way the wind was, and whether there was a heavy sea, and what sail we carried, though we don't ever carry any, principally, going against a head wind always—wonder what is the reason of that?—and how many lies Moulton has told—Oh, every thing! I've got everything down. My father told me to keep that journal. Father wouldn't take a thousand dollars for it when I get it done."

“No, Jack; it will be worth more than a thousand dollars—when you get it done.”

“Do you?—no, but do you think it will, though?”

“Yes, it will be worth at least as much as a thousand dollars—when you get it done. May be more.”

“Well, I about half think so, myself. It ain’t no slouch of a journal.”

But it shortly became a most lamentable “slouch of a journal.” One night in Paris, after a hard day’s toil in sightseeing, I said:

“Now I’ll go and stroll around the cafes awhile, Jack, and give you a chance to write up your journal, old fellow.”

His countenance lost its fire. He said:

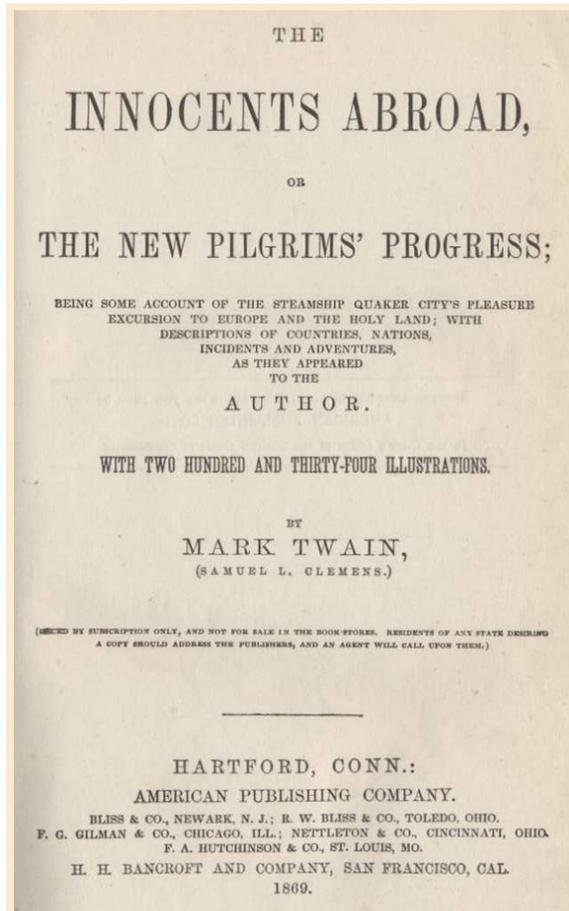
“Well, no, you needn’t mind. I think I won’t run that journal anymore. It is awful tedious. Do you know—I reckon I’m as much as four thousand pages behind hand. I haven’t got any France in it at all. First I thought I’d leave France out and start fresh. But that wouldn’t do, would it? The governor would say, ‘Hello, here—didn’t see anything in France? That cat wouldn’t fight, you know. First I thought I’d copy France out of the guide-book, like old Badger in the for’ard cabin, who’s writing a book, but there’s more than three hundred pages of it. Oh, I don’t think a journal’s any use—do you? They’re only a bother, ain’t they?’”

“Yes, a journal that is incomplete isn’t of much use, but a journal properly kept is worth a thousand dollars—when you’ve got it done.”

“A thousand!—well, I should think so. I wouldn’t finish it for a million.”

His experience was only the experience of the majority of that industrious night school in the cabin. If you wish to inflict a heartless and malignant punishment upon a young person, pledge him to keep a journal a year.

A good many expedients were resorted to to keep the excursionists amused and satisfied. A club was formed, of all the passengers, which met in the writing school after prayers and read aloud about the countries we were approaching and discussed the information so obtained.⁴



4 Mark Twain's "*The Innocents Abroad*" is available in full (Public Domain) at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3176/3176-h/3176-h.htm> or in multiple formats at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3176> [From an 1869—1st Edition] Accessed 4/4/2023 egr