

June 27-29, 1996

Trip to Washington, DC

The Oseh Shalom bus (which had the musicians and brothers and sisters from the Basin Farm and Rutland) arrived at their campground in the middle of the night. The brothers in charge of the statue, Nehemiah and Arum the son of Takif, had a burden to get it set up on time. So they attached it to the van from Virginia that Jehu had been taking to the Further Festival and they drove down to the Lincoln Memorial. (The Further Festival is a gathering of some of the former musicians and a lot of the old Grateful Dead crowd. They are appearing in concerts all over the United States with a full parking lot and vending scene.)

The Boston bus arrived at 9:15 am Thursday morning. We were carrying the people from the Maine, Hyannis, Providence and Boston communities. We found the statue already set up and the sound equipment being set up. (They were just rolling away the trailer from the statue.) But the musicians were unable to begin playing because we didn't have a generator. Evidently there were no electric outlets we could hook up to. It took awhile to get set up even though we had brought a very nice 6500 watt generator on the Boston bus. In the meantime some officials came and told us we couldn't have any amplification — that it wasn't on our permit. But then just a short while later, a higher official came by and said that it was fine for us to have amplification. He said, "Here's my name. Just have anyone call me who might give you a hard time." We were so thankful! Our Father was with us, helping us.

While the physical things we were getting worked out, the brothers with the prophetic burden met to receive direction from our Father. Hakam gave them direction to speak from the little pamphlet, "From Every Nation... A New Social Order." He also directed them to speak all that was on their hearts about the Stone Kingdom, and do not be afraid to even read our literature if we felt led to.

Hakam told them he wanted the women to be speaking from the pamphlet as well, making little introductions of us throughout the day. He wanted them to speak because of their warmth and friendliness. He also wanted the musicians to periodically introduce who they were (which they did as the "Hewn from the Mountain band). And so the women were the first ones who started us out. Miriam spoke after one of the Hebrew songs and dances saying, "Hello, you might be wondering what language that is we're singing in. Well it's Hebrew. We follow the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham was a special man. He had faith. But he didn't just have a private relationship with God. He shared his faith. He was able to pass it on. He passed it on to his son Isaac and he in turn passed it on to his son Jacob. And Jacob passed it on to his 12 sons who later grew into a mighty nation. We're part of a people who are looking to the restoration of this tribal culture — this 12 tribe nation. We invite you to talk to us and ask us questions. Thank you."

We did a few more dances and then Khemdah spoke. "Hello. We're part of a community of people. You may be wondering how our community came to be. Well, it just started out naturally. We never set out to form a community. Instead a man and his wife, who had been touched by the love of God, opened up their home to young people and began to love them in practical ways. They gave of their time and energy, their possessions, their encouragement, and comfort. What happened was that a community formed. We're here today sharing with you the life that we have. Please feel free to talk with us more. Thank you."

A few more dances and then Tiqvah spoke. "Hello, we're here today from communities across New England sharing our life with you. For us, the word community is a rich word. It means a group of people who live together, so much united that they even have the same heart and mind, being devoted to one another because they are devoted to the One who saved them from death. We invite you to talk to us and ask us any questions. We'd like to get to know you."

I may not remember exactly what was said, but this was the spirit of it. Every so often the musicians would announce "Hello! We're the Hewn From the Mountain Band and we're here today to sing and dance and share our life with you."

Amaz announced a few dances, explaining what they meant or the spirit of them. Someone or several people explained why we were dancing — that we were happy and had something to dance about. Hushai told everyone we were there to have a celebration with them just like we had at home. Several people also said at different times during the day that the life we had there was the exact same life we had in our communities everyday. Our Father gave us grace to be spontaneous, warm and friendly. The women first mentioned, all spoke twice that day or maybe even three times. When the men spoke, Qatan went first, then Racham, then Hakam. The men spoke simply, with conviction and passion expressing the dream and the statue and what they represented back then as well as today. People listened. Whenever we did Israeli dancing it gathered a crowd. There were always 2, 3, and 4 people on the steps handing out literature. People were warm and friendly and receptive to the pamphlets. Most people were in some what of a hurry though — with a busy agenda of seeing a lot of sights in a short amount of time. A few turned the pamphlets down.

Down at the statue it was different though. There was an assortment of about 6 different kinds of literature all laid out in a row. People who came down there were curious and they wanted to know. They wanted to talk. They weren't in a hurry. We had 2 people down there and they had many encouraging talks with people. The first day it was mainly men, but we saw the value of having a man and a woman so the 2nd day we always had a woman there, too.

The first day we ate a late lunch. We went off to a grassy area on the side, the bulk of us. But we left a few people handing out literature and Jehu sang and played guitar. He sang clearly and with passion for 30-40 minutes. He prophesied with his music. He ended with the song, "He

wasn't thinking of the cross or the glory He had lost..." (Netsak wrote this song a while ago.) It was stirring. He sang it both days as his ending song. People noticed it. After he ended singing he started preaching the gospel, pouring out his heart in his passionate way about the Stone, the Statue, the forgiveness one can find in Messiah. His words were as clear and as effective at communicating the good news as his songs, and that is saying a lot.

Then the band came back, played a few mountain music songs, without any dancing, and then we went into our Israeli dances. We did quite a few of the simple dances and got people to join in on them. The crowd died down quite a bit around supper time though (6 PM or so), and then picked up in the evening around 7:30-8:00. This was our biggest crowd of the first day.

We kept going strong until dark and then broke down our set-up there on the steps leading up from the reflecting pool to the Lincoln Memorial. This was around 9:30-10:00. We were hoping to get a good night's rest and push it tomorrow, and we had to be completely cleaned out of there by 11:00 because of their regulations. We were tired from being in the hot sun all day — there was no shade where we were for nearly a hundred feet. In most directions, it was a lot further than that. The sun was brilliant those first two days, but as a local person said, the weather had greatly dried up — low humidity. He said it was just about ideal for what we were doing. Our encouragement came from all the seeds which had been sown that day, all the words people had heard, papers they had taken, conversations with us they had entered into.

The day had a kind of pattern to it of people making short, warm announcements about who we were, the band doing a few songs and dances, and a brother speaking at length about the statue. We would then repeat the whole process again. Jehu spoke about the statue also, and Joseph Grellis too. Joseph Grellis increased so much on this tour. When he first spoke, it was clear and full of passion, but maybe just a little fast from nervousness. But as he spoke more and more his calmness and conviction increased. You got the feeling he had composure — that a potential distraction (like one of the noisy jets that periodically flew by) wouldn't have really ruffled him. Grace was upon him.

The other brothers had such grace to talk about America today and current trends in society right in line with the prophecy of Daniel. They spoke how the oppression people feel in their lives is that Statue began to weigh down on their souls, all the oppresiveness it represents. They especially had grace to explain how government has been degenerating and losing its integrity down through history. It was the truth, it was clear, it was understandable.

There was opposition though. The first night — when we were all wrapped up — the Oseh Shalom went back to their campground. Then the Boston bus started, or tried to, and the drivers realized we were out of gas. There had been some sort of miscommunication about how much gas was in it (it has no fuel gauge). After many delays — the only other vehicle available was the van which had to move the statue to the back of the Lincoln Memorial where it was to

spend the night, waiting for it to go get five gallons of gas, finding out that wasn't enough in the bottom of the gas tank to sustain the engine, having to send out another trip in the middle of the night to find more diesel fuel which took even longer to get back because they got confused as to how to get back to us — we finally left the Lincoln Memorial about 4 in the morning! After getting a little more gas, we arrived at the Frys', Ruth Aminah's parents, where we have spent much time in the Washington D.C. area, at 4:45 am.

Some people had fallen asleep on the bus at ten the previous evening, others of us, around eight in number, had not been able to because of not enough room or the bus being too hot and stuffy. We were waiting hopefully for everything to be all right in "just a little while." We were woken up about 9 am and some of us remembered He could only speak through pure vessels, and trusted that He must have been refining us with suffering so we could speak more powerfully.

The Second Day, June 28

The second day we began at around 11 am. This day we began with a gathering of all the brothers and sisters. We were encouraged to project our voices and our spirits, to speak faith from our hearts and the musicians were encouraged to speak more. Also, we were charged to pay close attention to whoever was speaking as well as the words of the songs, in case they might speak to us and stir our hearts to speak. We were told not to worry about it, paying attention, only if we were talking to a guest.

And so the day began with short, encouraging announcements of who we were, why we were dancing, what the dancing meant, and what the statue stood for. The women spoke and the musicians and the prophets too.

One time Racham spoke about the guilt of Christianity in telling the boys they were killing the enemy in the name of Jesus. He started out by referring to all the monuments that have to do with honoring the dead at this end of Washington. There is the Vietnam, the Korean, and even the Lincoln Memorial is really a monument to the 600,000 war dead of the Civil War. Thinking of the far ranging effects if Yahnathan died — for at this point some of us had been told there was a good possibility the accident had inflicted fatal injuries — he spoke of how many lives these deaths had affected, even ruined. How many hopes died, how many sons and brothers and husbands and fathers never came home just because of these few wars. He said one day there was going to be an accounting for every life, and those who bore the guilt would also bear the penalty.

He referred to the addresses of Lincoln inscribed on the walls of the monument, and how everyone has heard of the Gettysburg address, but that the second inaugural address is more poignant. There Lincoln noted that both sides in the Civil War prayed to the same God asking for victory. How could it be, he asked, that they could pray to the Prince of Peace to have victory over their brothers in the faith, when that meant killing many of them.

He told the story found in the pamphlet, "Lifting Up Holy Hands *Without* Wrath or Dissension," concerning the day World War I stopped in December 1914, when the men would rather celebrate Christmas than kill each other. How could it be that the chaplains, he asked, would support the orders from on high to go back to killing each other in the name of the Prince of Peace. He said he was not denigrating the wars men in the nations sometimes have to fight to defend their liberties and their loved ones, but he said not one of those wars has ever been fought in the name of the Son of God — not in reality — because His kingdom is not of this world. Those who use His name to inspire the boys to go off to war will bear their guilt.

He went on to say the Gospel was never meant to produce churches on every street corner where men and women could live in comfortable conformity to the world at large — to such an extent they would even go to war against their brothers of another country but of the same faith. He said the Gospel was meant to be a radical turnaround from the ways of this whole society, to produce a new society, one whose life and purity would actually judge the world. It was meant to call people out of the world, and that was why our Gospel was uncompromising in regards to the claims of Messiah that we would surrender everything to Him. He said that was why we were here, to preach the same Gospel the Son of God did when He said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the Good News."

Around noon I heard that Yahnathan Rigney had been hit by a car. I was stunned. I received the word not to talk about it and only encouraged someone to pray for him. That was Chetz Beru, after he looked at me stunned at hearing the news. I went off and prayed that our Abba would preserve his life and that He would give us grace to like His Son and not think of ourselves (like the song Jehu sang). What we were going through with Yahnathan made us want to get downcast, but to think of Him and how we wanted to bring glory and honor to Him, helped us a lot. It gave us the faith to encourage each other.

Qatan spoke something about our Master that gave us courage. Then a few songs later, Miriam read the Yahshua article that starts out, "They followed him around from town to town. They loved Him, or at least thought they did." She read it slowly, clearly, and it was very moving. People listened and it really encouraged us as well. It said Yahshua would get His disciples to sing and praise our Father even when they were feeling down, and they stopped feeling down. It helped us to do that as well.

Around this time the microphone kept going out on people. There was some problem with the generator. It had gone out right in the middle of the things Qatan was saying, and it couldn't have happened to a person who could have handled it more naturally and with more grace. He leaped out over the wires, walked to the middle of the huge steps we were on, and projected his voice so that everyone on the steps could hear him. You couldn't help but be impressed with his sincerity and lack of "airs" at being an "important speaker." He had

something to say, and he kept on saying it as best he could under the circumstances. When the power was reconnected, he stepped back and finished. People paid attention to the witness he gave of the life within him.

At one point the first day, and again on the second, Havah spoke clearly as she looked back to her days as a student protester of the Vietnam war. It was in 1968 and she was there on the Mall in Washington demonstrating along with thousands of others against the Vietnam War. Abbey Hoffman was there, smashing a television set because it represented the society he was protesting against and it was the prime source of the lies he saw underpinning that society. They wanted to change things, but very little has changed as far as fewer wars, barriers broken down between the sexes, parents and children, the races. Many of those who sang and spoke out about these things have killed themselves or been killed. Where are they now? The way she spoke was moving and convincing. She spoke about the Stone Kingdom that is being raised up, a life of love; a life John Lennon could only imagine; a remedy for the problems, not a protest.

After that the musicians played and sang our version of the song, "Imagine."

One time when he spoke Hakam was encouraging us about the message of the Stone — it is something that we have that our Father has revealed to us. He told the gathered people that it is the same message that our children are going to go to Washington and speak about, and their children. He said we are going to continue to bring this same message until the end of the age. We can have confidence in what we are speaking about. And that is so true.

Hakam encouraged Khemdah to go down by the statue the second morning and speak to people about the Stone Kingdom. He said there are many Christians who need to hear from former Christians who have received this message and have it in their hearts as a reality. It was so encouraging to speak to people with that confidence. Many Christians indeed looked at the statue and identified it right away as from Daniel 2, but they didn't have any idea about the Stone. One man was very strong that the Stone was Jesus Christ Himself. "You are putting God in a box if you say He needs a people to crush the other kingdoms. He doesn't need us."

How sad his gospel is! But there were others who were encouraged by that hope that He was going to use a Kingdom of people to bring about His will.

Many papers went out those 2 days. By 9 or 10:00 the second night we were searching for the 2 pamphlets "From Every Nation....a New Social Order" and the Viet Nam paper. We had plenty of the Freepapers "Bringing in the New Age... Daniel's Vision."

We must have found a few more of those 2 papers and it was a good thing because we really needed them the next day.

The Third Day, June 29

The Sabbath started out by us getting up around 8 or so, having breakfast and preparing to meet the other bus in the city again. We left the Fry's around 10:30 — 11:00 and met the

"Peacemaker" in Washington on one of the side streets along the Mall where the "American Folklife Festival" was set up. We started serving lunch around 1:45 and Sameach came and gathered us on the lawn and had a "body meeting" with us to bring clarity and instruction about what happened to Yonathan. He warned us not to speculate and talk unnecessarily about the situation. He explained the extent of his injuries.

After the meeting a small party was sent out to the Holocaust Museum (Racham, Miriam and Qatan) to pass out the Martin Luther papers and another small party to the Viet Nam Veterans Memorial (Chazaq, Tiqvah and Yohannan Ben Chessed) to pass out the Viet Nam Papers. Both parties expressed the sensitivity and delicateness of being at those places, and how they had to be sensitive to each person they went up to.

All the rest of us went down to the Mall to a grassy area just outside the sign to the Folklife Festival. We had no P.A. System that day but just started playing and dancing, inviting the onlookers who had parked themselves on the grass around us to dance with us. What a crowd we drew! Every kind of person: Christian families, sophisticated tourists, intellectuals, dead-heads, sodomites, theater people with painted faces, people from every state in the Union, from many countries, all races.

Several times while we played and danced Anak took the opportunity between dances to speak about our life. He spoke with a loud voice walking back and forth looking people right in the eye. It was encouraging how he spoke so boldly. He pulled Habakkuk up there with him, then his wife, and then his 2 daughters, and spoke each time of the restoration that is happening between the races, between husband and wife and between parents and children.

Another time he spoke of how at that great building everyone could see — the Capitol — laws are made. And how everyone wants there to be just laws made, and how as people find ways to get around them they have to make more and more restrictive laws. But no one can make enough laws so that people would live together in peace and actually love one another. Then he spoke about Yahshua, the Son of God. People came up to Him and asked Him what the greatest law was. He told them the greatest law was to love your neighbor as yourself. But He also said there is no way for you to keep that law if you do not obey the first half of the most important law, which is to love your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. He said no one can do that without being forgiven for the wrongs they have done and having God's own Spirit dwelling within them. It was better than what I have been able to capture here, so well suited to the setting of Washington D.C.

We had many opportunities that afternoon to share with the many people who came around us to see what we were doing. Our Freepapers got into the hands of people from all over the world. That city is such an international place!

Sameach had been with us all afternoon and around 5:30 said his good-byes and was off to Monticello. We continued on with the dancing until about 8 and then gathered right there to have supper, inviting the few who stayed around to eat with us. Then we started loading the buses around 9 PM. As we were preparing to leave Someone said Sameach is back. He wants us to meet on the lawn.

We gathered one last time. Sameach said as he started to leave town he felt compelled to visit Yonathan one more time. He gave us an encouraging report about his surgery being over and how he was alert and communicating some.

Then in a serious way he brought us the news of Jim Wall. We all leaped, shouted and cried tears of much joy. We left Washington around 10 PM full of encouragement!