



The Half Shekel Journals of 2023 by Pastor Ed Rice #23023 Sun 26 Mar Dead Sea

It was remarkable to stay at the David Dead Sea Hotel¹ (31°12'09.23"N 35°21'41.03"E), so allow me to remark a little. I didn't get any pictures of our trip to the "beach," the warning about what this Dead Sea salt does to smart phones was that sobering. I'm sure one of our group that reads this has some neat pictures, and that when they read this they will send them to me, and that I will update this Half Shekel with pictures when I get them, but, for now, I'll attempt to put the picture in your minds eye.



The Dead Sea water is so dense that even a Baptist Preacher will float. (Inside joke, my wife liked it.) We had previously been told about some Roman who described the three wonders of this land as 1) they have a temple where there is not a single graven image; 2) they have one day in the week were nobody works; and 3) they have a sea where everything floats. At about 4 PM or so, our group emerged from their rooms, went across the street to the beaches of the Dead Sea to experience that last wonder. It is a wonder indeed, but the Dead Sea is so much more than that.

The sea with multiple inlets and no outlet was destined to become very high in mineral content and it has the highest on earth, but it got that way in a single day, not in a million years of fictitious evolution². The high density of the water makes a body float abnormally. In my military career I have worked with some very dense individuals, and I suppose even they might float on the Dead Sea. It was a genuine worthwhile adventure to try it, and just as adventuresome to watch others in the group experience abundant buoyancy.

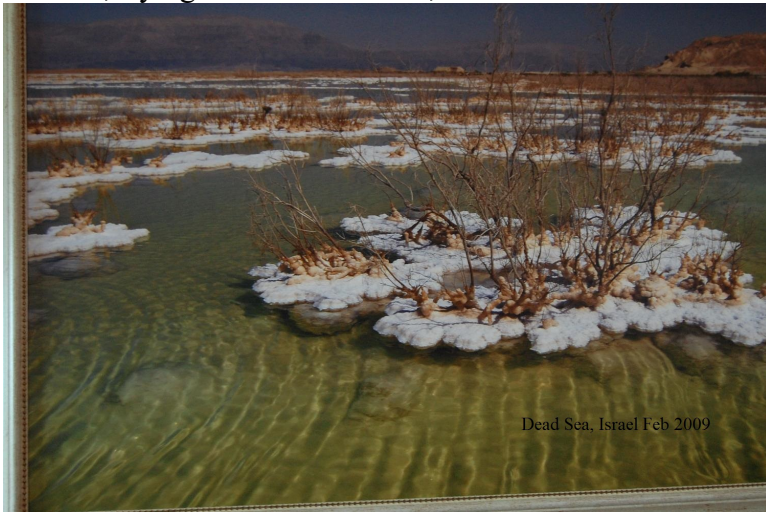


Exposing bodies to the extraordinary high mineral content of the Dead Sea supposedly

- ¹ The David Dead Sea Hotel is a luxury resort and spa, located in the scenic Ein Bokek resort, along the bank of the Dead Sea. The hotel's vast amount of amenities and facilities means that guests can choose between a tranquil and serene stay or a vibrant and entertaining experience. The hotel is fully equipped with a deluxe spa, multiple restaurants, dining rooms, bars, pools, saunas, and much more. For a truly unforgettable Dead Sea travel experience, this is certainly the place to stay. <https://deadsea.com> see david-dead-sea-hotel (Accessed 01/02/2024)
- ² Encyclopedia Britannica says "Beginning about 2.5 million years ago, heavy streamflow into the lake deposited thick sediments of shale, clay, sandstone, rock salt, and gypsum. Later, strata of clay, marl, soft chalk, and gypsum were dropped onto layers of sand and gravel. ... During the past 10,000 years, the lake gradually shrank to its present form. In so doing, it exposed deposits that now cover the Dead Sea valley to thicknesses of between about 1 and 4 miles." The Bible says the four mile deep layer of mineral deposits came in one day (Gen.19) for a reason (Gen.13:13).

has a myriad of health benefits. Consequently, several snake-oil salesmen have made a business of concocting various lotions, soaps, and creams, prepared by the apothecary art, that we could buy here for half price, several did. My Beverly is inclined to allergic reaction sinus infections when exposed to perfumes and colognes so we carefully avoided the concoctions, as best we could.

I still feel bad having a 2023 Half Shekel Journal record without pictures so I pulled some from 14 years ago when Lee and Donna Pickett, myself with Bev, and our good friends Pastor Jeff and Denise Carpenter floated on the Dead Sea in 2009. The times were different, Lake levels were significantly higher, and Hamas was assembling and launching missiles made of school and hospital sewer pipes from Gaza, trying to reach Tel Aviv, but the Dead Sea was still, ... well, dead.



The spiritual significance of the Dead Sea is squelched by the tourist trade, and categorically denied by our atheistic, or agnostic, or apostate catholic society. They miss or dismiss significant Scripture:

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. 24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. 26 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: 28 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace (Gen 19:23-28).

When God rained down fire and brimstone³, the fertile plain that surrounded Sodom and Gomorrah, described in the Bible as being like the garden of the LORD (Gen.13:10)⁴,

3 Noah Webster's 1828 - BRIM'STONE, n. Sulphur; a hard, brittle, inflammable substance, of a lemon yellow color, which has no smell, unless heated, and which becomes negatively electric by heat and friction. It is found, in great quantities, and sometimes pure, in the neighborhood of volcanoes. It is an ingredient in a variety of minerals and ores. The sulphur of commerce is procured from its natural beds, or artificially extracted from pyrites.

4 Ge 13:10 *And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the*

was turned into a brimstone laden, sulfuric, salt, and mineral laden slime which sunk so low that it is now the lowest place on all of the LORD God's otherwise green earth, and Sodom and Gomorrah's brimstone goes to a remarkable depth of four miles down under that Dead Sea! That was done for a reason, Jehovah God says:

So that the generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall



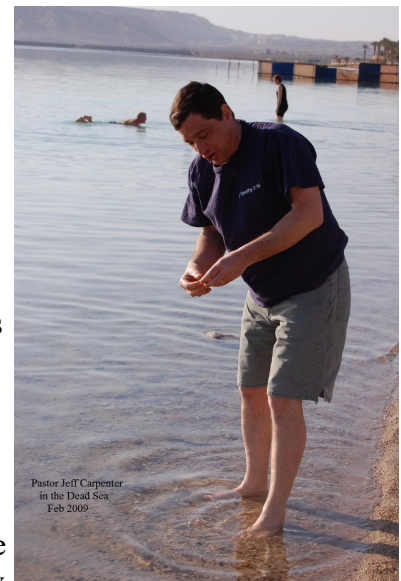
say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses which the LORD hath laid upon it; And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great

anger? (Deut.29:22-24).

When God uses adjectives to



describe the sin that went on in those two cities, those Hebrew adjectives exceed all others in the vile, disgusting, sinfulness, they adjectate; more-so than all other “abominations.”⁵ Consequently the destruction of that sinful place became a perpetual monument of what brimstone does to prime real estate when Jehovah God turns his wrath upon it. That is precisely where all that mineral content came from; actual blocks of brimstone are quarried out of this place to this day! Hiroshima and Nagasaki (ref Atomic bombings of, Aug 6-9, 1945) were eventually re-populated, but this place, this Dead Sea, will remain a dead sea until the healing waters from the throne of our Lord Jesus Christ flow

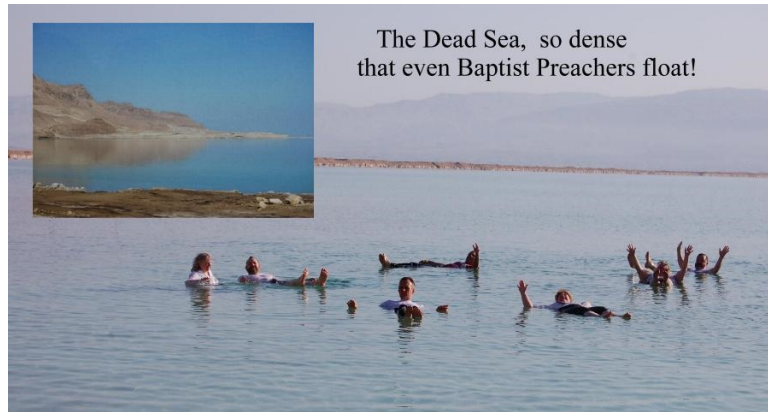


land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

- 5 “The first use of the word that pertains to what God finds disgusting, loathsome, vicious, vile and abhorred is found in Leviticus 18:22, “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination <08441 תוֹעֵבָה tow‘ebah or to-ay-baw’>” Sexual sinfulness, particularly sodomy, is again called out in the Bible as being exceedingly sinful (Genesis 13:13), very grievous (Genesis 18:20), and now as sin that God finds disgusting, loathsome, vicious, vile and abhorred. We are not here profiling any sin, we are doing word studies that examine some first use Hebrew words for sin and find that sodomy is ranked up there as the most vile sin for heathen nations.” See “A Systematic Theology for the 21st Century Volume 07 Hamartiology - Chapter 4 Etymology of Sin”, www.GSBaptistChurch.com/theology/21cent_vol07Hamartiology.pdf, pg 27-45.

into it and rejuvenate the earth during the millennial reign of Christ.

Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever



The Dead Sea, so dense that even Baptist Preachers float!



Pastor Ed & Bev Rice floating in the Dead Sea Feb 2009

the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. ... And by the

river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine (Ezek.47:8-9,12, cf Rev.22:2).

If you have not secured a place in that Kingdom of Heaven, you need to do it now. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"(Matt.18:3).

You cannot enter God's Kingdom carrying the condemnation of sin, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ tells us: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world;*



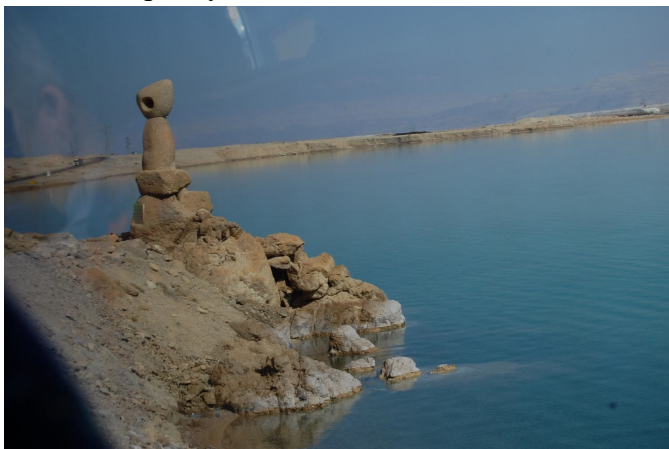
Pastor Jeff & Denise Carpenter, Friendship Baptist Church, Rome NY, afloat on the Dead Sea Feb 2009

but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ... 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. ...

5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life (John 3:16-18, 36, 5:24).

Salvation from that condemnation is a free gift, *“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Rom.6:23).

Christ paid your sin debt on



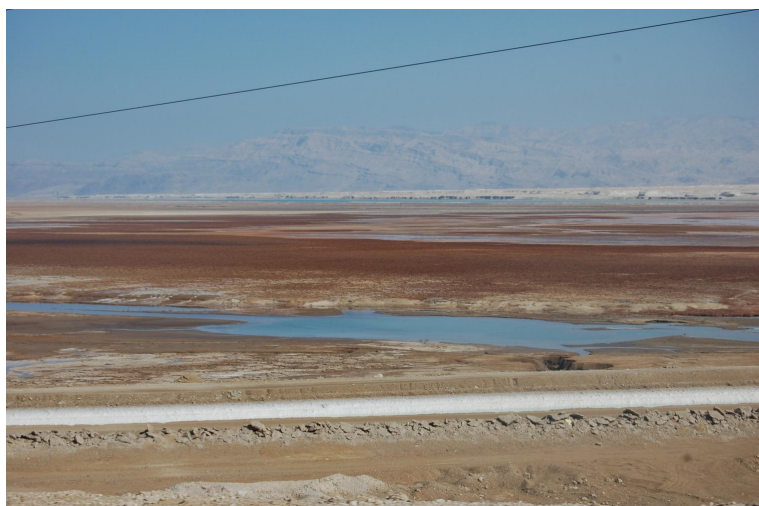
Calvary, *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Rom.5:8).

It is a free gift but there is a formal acceptance policy for it, you must take advantage of it to get into the Kingdom, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;*

and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom.10:9-10).

Being saved from condemnation and entering the family of God to be part of the Kingdom of Heaven is just that simple, anyone can do it anywhere! Be sure you have; be sure you are “IN”. *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”* (Rom.10:13). *“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life”* (1Jo.5:12).

The information about the Dead Sea's origin, is known to born again Bible believers, but concealed from a blinded world. It is that blinded world, led by Hell itself, who resurrects the hideous sin of



sodomy, and wants it as our society's preferred lifestyle today. God help us... Oh, by the way, he will.

Everyone knows someone, or has a family member who is entangled in the queer sin of sodomy. It is the dregs of our society, but they are not: they can be reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with prayer, and supplication with thanksgiving. You can play a part in reaching them with such a simple gospel message. God bless you as you pray, ... and try, and keep trying.



The supper table buzzed with exciting talk and stories about floating on the Dead Sea. Bev and I found a secluded corner of the luxurious lobby to read our “Through the Bible Chronologically in One Year”⁶ assignment of Joshua 21-22. We then read aloud Psalm 85 because we read a Psalm/Prov. each day, and this was the 85th day of the year 2023. The Bible is a living book wherever you read it, but reading it here, with Dead Sea salt still cleaving to our skin, made it even livelier than normal. Praise our Lord Jesus Christ.

And then voilà⁷ we were zonked in the luxurious David Dead Sea Hotel, getting rest for a big day tomorrow. Day 12 March 27 would take us to Timna Park, Solomon's Pillars, the Tabernacle Model, and then a restful day off on the Red Sea at Eilat.



6 See www.GSBaptistChurch.com/kjv/bible_read_sched_fam20xx.pdf.

7 Voilà is essentially a French combination of two words: voir (to see/look) and là (there). So literally speaking, voilà is an instruction. When you use it, you are telling people to 'look there'. So you can use voilà to draw attention to something that you can physically see. “Wah-Lah” should probably be pronounced, “V-wah-Lah” with a “V” sound at the start. For sure it would be spelled “voilà” and not “Wa-La.” Be careful, however, because “Wallah” means I swear/by God it literally means “I swear to God,” and it is sure to come up in conversation way more times than appropriate, given what Exod.20:7, Deut.5:11, and .Prov.30:9 say about using his name in vain.