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Siebring Christmas Flyer

Spiritual Amnesia

As a Canadian boy, come the end of November it still feels a little odd to be having thanksgiving so close to Christmas (Canadian thanksgiving is in October). I have thought of one benefit of the two holidays being so close. People have less chance to forget all the good in their lives they have just expressed thankfulness for, before heading into another holiday celebrating the greatest gift to humanity.

I began to ask myself "Why is it so easy to remember unpleasant events compared to experiences that are pleasant?" What is it about our humanity that forms our memories to retain only a colored portion of the whole. We are leaky forgetful vessels that constantly need to be refilled and reminded. The word of God is full of examples of people and nations forgetting God, his commands and warnings. Then being reminded by the Lord, to turn back and be restored. An example is the Israelites in the desert having experienced the incredible deliverance from Egypt soon after complaining to the Lord and wishing they had died because the food was so much better there. [Exodus 16:3](#). They remembered the food but forgot to mention the whole issue that they were originally complaining to the Lord that they were slaves.

The Lord made us and knows us better than we know ourselves. Is it no wonder that over and over in the bible he instituted times set apart as a remembrance and physical items like altars to bring back to our minds all he has done? [Psalms 103:1-6](#) / [Isaiah 49:15&16](#).

The next time we catch ourselves grumbling in our hearts or out loud ask yourself if you are forgetting something. No it's not the car keys it's the blessings and benefits of our Lord. [1Thes 5:18](#). Christmas is one of these reminders of an incredible act of God towards us. We all know it is not the actual birthday of Jesus but that is not the point. The point is Christmas is a reminder for the spiritual amnesia we all suffer. - Ray

December 2004



AFGHAN CHRISTMAS

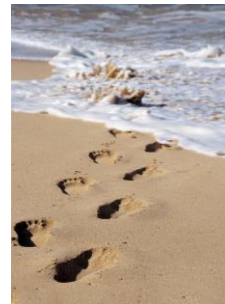
Christmas is not a celebrated holiday in Afghanistan. Being a Muslim nation it is viewed as a Christian holiday.

"The Afghans do proudly share some history with the Christmas story" shared a [professor from the Kabul university](#). It was the three kings that interested him most. "They came from Afghanistan, you know!" he said. These kings were ancient Persian priests, the Magi. "Our Babbas (wise men) knew about Jesus before anyone else!"

The veracity of these claims are [unknown](#) but it is a source of pride for the people.

Christmas also marks the beginning of a horrible time in Afghanistan's history. [Dec. 25th, 1979 the Soviets invaded](#) and this began a war that would last for 10 years and destroy the countries infrastructure.

When it is spoken the phrase "Merry Christmas" is pronounced "[De Christmas akhtar de bakhtawar au newai kal de mubarak sha](#)".



Not one step

I have recently been studying the story of Moses in Exodus. We all know the story of how God appeared to Moses through a burning bush and told Moses that he was to deliver the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. As I read the story this time, God began to show me something I had never seen in this story before.

In [Exodus 7:16](#) Moses meets Pharaoh and tells him once again that God commands that Pharaoh let his people go so that they can worship him in the Wilderness..... The wilderness? I thought God wanted Pharaoh to let the Israelites go so that they could inherit the promise land?? Moses first needed to show the Israelites where he had encountered the living God. God wanted them to worship him not for what he could give them but, for who He is!

God desires to be known by us and wants to have an intimate relationship with us. In [Exodus 33:14-15](#) Moses is on the Mountain top talking with God. Moses says something that has been my prayer and I pray it will also become yours as well. Moses says to God, "If you don't go with us personally then don't let us move a step from this place." I never want to go anywhere that God's presence won't go with me.

The one gift I desire this Christmas more than anything else in this world, is more of God's presence in my life. I want to encounter God daily and forever be changed by his presence. I pray the same for you this Christmas, that you would know Jesus for who he truly is and not for what he can give you. - Julie

P.S. A book recommendation that inspired this area of intimacy with God in my life is "[Draw Near](#)" by John Bevere.



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Our Tentative Timeline...

Deputation in Canada Dec, '04

YWAM [DTS](#) training in Colorado Springs, CO Jan, '05

Outreach phase of [DTS](#) begins and possible departure to Afghanistan CO April, '05

Depart for Afghanistan Spring



Praise & Prayer

Praise:

- Lord's direction and provision for our family to serve in Afghanistan with YWAM
- Safe travels

Prayer

- Smooth transition from MAF to YWAM
- Health of our family
- Financial provision for large expenses and stable monthly support.

[Click here to send us a prayer request](#)

Monthly Ministry Support

Minimum Support Needed	5400.00
Committed	5400.00
Actual Received: Oct.	7218.89
Actual Received: Nov.	3319.35

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Personal Note

I pray this letter finds you all doing well. We want to thank you all for all your prayers and letters of encouragement during this time of transition. You are all such a blessing to our family. We pray you all enjoy this time of joy and celebration with those you love.

Many of you have asked us recently how to give us a gift for Christmas. We will soon be moving our family over seas. Due to weight restrictions on the airlines we are forced to keep our baggage to a minimum. The things we already have put us at our weight limit.

If you do wish to send us something, a gift card or funds can be mailed to our YWAM address in the USA. I hope you can all understand that we aren't ungrateful for your gifts just limited in what we can have right now. I hope this answers many of your questions. We love you all and appreciate your love for our family.

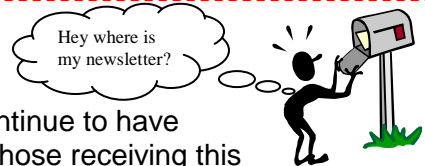
Please continue to keep in touch. We love hearing from you and hearing all the exciting things God is doing in your lives. We look forward to hearing from you soon!! - Julie Siebring For The Siebring Family



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Final Mail Notice!



This section is for you to mail in to us if you wish to continue to have our newsletters mailed to you. This does not apply to those receiving this by email. Because of costs and our soon move overseas, we are trying to shrink our mailing list and or switch people to email as much as possible. Once we are in Afghanistan, email will be our primary and often only form of communication. If we do not receive a response we will assume you wish to no longer receive our newsletters and we will remove your name from our list. You can email us at ris@siebrings.com or cut off this section and send it to our USA address on the bottom of the other side of this page. We really do appreciate your interest and support and hope to hear from you soon. Blessings.

Ray + Julie Siebring,
Elias, Gabriella + Josiah

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