

A sister from Lebanon (8)

Marie Bond
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California

Writing about my life in California will be the most challenging part of my testimony.

Although I went through a lot of challenges in my life in Lebanon and in Egypt, nothing had prepared me to my life here, in United States.

I tried my best while I was writing my memoir to not talk about jealousy and conflicts that I encountered in my personal journey but to talk mostly about the general encounters and the whole environment that I went through.

But in America it's going to be totally a different picture. How living in a beautiful place, peaceful and safe environment, could be the most challenging experience of my life.

So leaving Lebanon in the end of October 1997 with Anne, Paul and baby Scott on my lap for over twenty hours journey, made me reflect about the recent spiritual experiences that I had while I was in those countries.

In Egypt I had a very special dream that I will never forget. I saw the two brothers, Heung Jin Nim and Hyo Jin Nim meeting together, hugging and embracing each other. The joy and the love in that encounter

was unbelievable. Until now when I remember it, I get goosebumps. Heung Jin was wearing the traditional Korean outfit and Hyo Jin was wearing a T-shirt and jeans. In that time Hyo Jin Nim was still on earth. The dream was as a revelation about what will happen later.

Another important dream I had this time in Lebanon was seeing the sky full of black birds. I was standing outside with a lot of people watching the sky when the black birds start leaving and white birds start coming until the sky was full of them. Then suddenly two beautiful white horses appeared galloping in front of the crowd and everyone starts clapping.

Those dreams were kind of spiritual experiences that I wanted to share for their deep meaning in my life of faith.

We arrived to San Francisco on Halloween night and we were picked up by Larry and Donald and went to grandma's house for dinner. I had received few letters from Larry during those five months separation time describing his lonely course and the challenges that he went through in order to live in California and to find a job.

Larry was 43 years old man looking for a job. He didn't have a college degree as he left Cal Tech College (one of the best college for Math and a very hard place to get in) and joined the church in 1974. His parents were furious when he left and they tried to deprogrammed him years later.

Although he visited his parents many times in the past, coming back to live beside them after over twenty years of absence, was a big challenge to endure. Specially coming back with no penny in his pocket, a big family to take care and a health issue to resolve.

As he stayed with Donald at his mother's house as he didn't have any other place to stay until he finds a job, his sister and her husband were already moved to his mother's house after the father passed away and they were taking the whole second floor to themselves. Larry and Donald slept on the bed couch in the living room for five months.

Beside, every time Larry applies for a job, he got rejected because his heart condition. He couldn't lie when he was asked if he has a health issue. He was also depending on his mom to support him financially until he gets a job which made his sister furious and angry at him. He endured all the negativity of his environment until one day a friend of the family brought him a newspaper which had a special ad: A professor at Stanford University is looking for an assistant. He applied and got interviewed by this Jews professor who was so impressed by Larry's experiences in working in the Middle East. He got the job at Stanford and surprised everyone. And a new beginning started for the Bond's family in California.

To be continued.