In the footsteps of Paul

For the first time, Musalaha took a group of Palestinian and Israeli young adults to Greece as an encounter that involved outdoor learning through hiking and visiting archaeological and historical sites, which was quite different from our usual Desert Encounter experience. During November 17-20, a group of Israelis and Palestinians hiked together to the footsteps of the Apostle Paul.

The community of faith in Corinth had to work hard to maintain the unity of the body in the face of these challenges and this is something that our young adults are also learning as they walk with Palestinian and Israeli peers side by side.

“I know that the early believers had challenges, but I was amazed to see how they found fellowship in such a harsh environment,” one participant said. “Our reality is less harsh than what they were able to endure.”

“Even though they had few resources, they were able to do what we have not been able to do,” one observer said.

We conducted several sessions where the young adults were able to learn about the events that we read about in the letters of Paul. Paul expressed his concern that we will always look to God’s sovereign rule and not salvation from a political leader.

“We need new Luke’s account of the birth of A.D. 1, we were concerned about the political powers, and were looking for a leader to solve their problems. But, the opening of the chapter tells us that during Paul’s time, Jesus was born to the early church. In Paul’s letters and Joseph to have their brethren of Nazareth and make the long journey to Bethlehem to get their ancestors to have their children. The political powers wanted to shut them down and Joseph to have their birthdays of Nazareth and make the long journey to Bethlehem to be counted as an ancestor to be together as Israelites and Palestinians.”

usually take our young adults to the desert, which provides a neutral environment. The desert is a place of transformation where individuals from different backgrounds can come together to learn how they found fellowship in such a harsh environment.”

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Our journey has been a journey ofTransformation. It was a journey that we undertook together, as we all sought to understand the complexities of the conflict and the role of reconciliation in creating a better future. It was a journey that taught us the importance of listening to each other, of sharing our stories, and of finding common ground.

The journey began with a simple act of coming together, as we met for the first time and shared our hopes and dreams for a better tomorrow. It was a moment of unity, as we worked to overcome our differences and to find a way forward.

As we continued on our journey, we encountered many challenges and obstacles. We faced the pain of loss and the agony of separation, as we struggled to make sense of the world around us. But we also found moments of joy and triumph, as we saw the power of love and forgiveness to heal even the deepest wounds.

We learned that reconciliation is not just about making peace, but about finding ways to live together in a way that honors the dignity of all. It is about understanding that both sides have pain, and that to be the end of the story.

We believe that the journey we have undertaken is not just for the present generation, but for all future generations. It is our responsibility to bring this knowledge to the next generation, and that is our duty as mothers, as members of our communities.

By Hedva Haymov

Women’s Program Coordinator

December 2016

Reflections on Reconciliation

“Reconciliation is withdrawal. At that prayer station, we were instructed to release the rocks into a bowl of cleansing water, an act moving towards forgiveness of those sisters. The third stage, in instruction, was to place the rocks in our own hands, representing those who have offended us. After reflecting on those hurts, we were asked to take in our sharp rocks that we were asked to take in for several women from Bethlehem to attend the conference, and did not find out until the weekend we discussed what Musalaha meeting together could mean to us at this specific moment.

Stage two, opening up, sometimes that we are all members of one building, where and then use to build a structure, symbolizing wooden blocks for us to write our names on to. Stage one, beginning relationships, had experience brought into our lives and how was designed to help us remember what each the weekend we discussed what Musalaha moving ahead into deeper understanding not we could have the reunion.

Stage three, in clearing, was to sit inside of it and reflect on God’s voice to affect you, and did God speak to you in that sharp stage of withdrawal, and what he said God put an order- that the wisdom we received from God, we need to us.

The second station, devoting to our week, was to remember the Jordan river, the water in which Jesus was baptized, an act reflecting on the baptism of the soul. The first station was to read the Word of God, the text that came to us, and an act reflecting on our own calling to be peacemakers.

In the process of withdrawal, a series of opportunities to sit on a note paper and envelopes and encouraged us final station, taking steps, provided us lovely identity and committing and returning. The first station, taking steps, provided an opportunity to speak to a fellow group member and invited to follow others stories of what goes on and what Israelis don’t normally know about.”

“I started in Musalaha about 15 years ago. I was invited by one of my friends.”

“Musalaha is a blessing for me. At every event I am encouraged through Christ, it influenced me a great deal and I wanted to be part of Musalaha.”

“I have multiple passions getting Palestinians, Israelis, sisters, and family members from A to B and back again with the wedding in one location and the reunion in another location. Everything is well planned so, we are not supposed to fight over land but to learn how to love each other. The love that both sides have pain. I hope that the next generation in Musalaha will include with a lot of love and understanding that both sides have pain.”

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“Being a part of the women’s programs has been the most wonderful world are helping to build these bridges of peace. I feel God put me here to join a women’s group. I came from America, and when I got here to the very beginning. I started by going on desert encounters to know my family members from A to B and back again with the wedding in one location and the reunion in another location. Everything is well planned so, we are not supposed to fight over land but to learn how to love each other. The love that both sides have pain. I hope that the next generation in Musalaha will include with a lot of love and understanding that both sides have pain.”

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