

My Dear Sweet Ladies,

In my typical spirit of comforting myself, I come to you already in July. Probably most of you know we are back in the middle east already and no matter what the weather reports are, don't believe them. It is hotter than I would have thought possible. I think it's the dewpoint or heat index that contributes. Kind of like windchill factors for northern winters (yeah, only hot).

People don't talk about the weather here though, except in the newspaper to tell who died from heat stroke. There are many greetings used, often in the same conversation, but the topic of the weather is left out. They will say things like:

-Peace be upon you

-hello and welcome

-very nice to see you (same word as the hello and welcome one)

-What is the going's on with you? (rather like "so what's up?") -how are you (to which there are 3 answers – 1) fine, praise God; 2) Good, praise God; 3) Praise God

I'm pretty sure there are more if I sit and think long enough. But when they are speaking in english, it does explain why they keep on saying "Hello, how are you?" over and over. I try to stem this flow, by talking about the weather (which brings more odd looks). That small little culture clash illustrates somewhat, how the language you speak does determine how you think, as well as one reason it can be difficult for this multi lingual world to talk things out and get along.

The clearing up of a few things paragraph:

*I often state the very obvious. This is simply my way and is in no way intended to imply you wouldn't otherwise get it. In fact the opposite is true.

*No,I am not at all offended if you want to be "unsubscribed" to this letter, conversely while I am surprised when someone asks to get it – that is also a possibility. You are only stuck with me one more year anyway.

*My back is doing considerably better thanks to the Waseca Chiropractor, and time. It is a small (harmless in the main sense) cyst that was creating very local havoc with a nerve near my tailbone, but it is now shrinking. I would prefer it to just go away now. At any rate I am rarely noticing it now. I am hoping that the next time I am "on my last nerve", it will not be that one.

*We will have all 9 children here with us again at the beginning of August. Robyn, Jonathan and Kimberly stayed behind an extra month for a few worthwhile activities.

*The addition of more dry land in front of the place we lived in Abu Dhabi is now a completed beach. It is of course, beautiful. But we are just as glad to not be right over it, as it were.

*to my California Dawn Miller- your state is on fire again (perhaps you have noticed this?!). Isn't it about time to return to the Midwest.

*Bullet points do not tax my brain and I may just write this way for the rest of my life

It's very quiet around here. One can hear some Mina birds (who appear to be very hardy to this climate), and I see other birds in the mornings and evenings, but I don't hear too much from them. Many neighbors are on trips. Our friends Saif and Mohammed are with their family in France right now. Another neighbor is in Qatar (since he is afraid of flying and one can drive through Saudi to get there by car). Another is just over in Al Ain, UAE where her family lives. Our single friend and Arabic teacher, Ameena, after making a pilgrimage to Mecca and a stop in Turkey, is in Bagdad. I hope she is ok. Earlier this year 2 of her cousins died from bombing there. Other friends are in Lebanon and Syria. Bushra (my friend from Iraq who loves to get together for coffee and to talk about Jesus) wanted me to go to visit her sister in Syria with her, but Mark vetoed it.

The return of the "Logic-Free Zone" report:

-You may not be surprised to hear that there is some massive road construction going on here. Before we left it would get so clogged up that those of us with 4 wheel drive would take off through sand, cutting a corner and avoiding the road altogether. We returned to find they had put a thin layer of pavement on that very shortcut and had it marked as a temporary road. Glad to be of service :-D

-Ben's arab friend said that the reason there are advertising signs for McDonald's items, Hardies and Dunkin' donuts, is because (he says): "there is nothing *in* Fujairah".
....er...so...that is the reason then.

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Not much happening this month. And though it's relatively quiet outside, I am enduring the usual "acoustical overload" I get when we return to these cavernous, cement and marble (thanks to Indian, Turkish, Egyptian, and Chinese marble works) dwellings here. I realized it when I felt suddenly on my last nerve after a day of dropping things on the floor.

Robyn, Jon and Kim - I have good news and bad news: We found a jar of Kosher Dills in the next emirate. They have all been eaten. But I'll keep looking. Sorry.

Thanks once again for "listening". Things are going well. We're looking forward to a good year. Please pray that we would be useful.

Much love and fond affection,

~Pam.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed:  
lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Psalms 61:2)

desert weed. Beauty in the heat.



Saif and Mohammed over for a project (left to right: Ben, Lilly, Stephen, Mohammed, Jacob, Saif)



There is no McDonald's in Fujairah. (but the sign makes us look important)



nor a dunkin' donuts...



NOT the Norwegian bus drivers league bus. Thankfully.



The shortcut through vacant sand, made official.

