



... toward peace through the wisdom of
the middle eastern traditions

Dear Friends of Abwoon,



Greetings and blessings of the turning of the year, which this year comes to you from Moscow, where Natalia and I are spending Hogmanay and New Year!

The past year has been one of major changes throughout the world and particularly in the Middle East.

I was continually reminded of the words of the Sufi Hazrat Inayat Khan, who said:

“Friends, we are all on the journey; life itself is a journey. No one is settled here; we are all passing onward, and therefore it is not true to say, that if we are taking a spiritual journey we have to break our settled life; there is no one living a settled life here; all are unsettled, all are on their way.”

Where we are going depends more on our heart-intention than on any fixed ideas we may have about “ideal goals” and “best possible futures.” It is easy to be seduced (or depressed) by the illusion of certainty of various predictions, but as one of my teachers once said, these are only snapshots of the mind-world of a particular state of the world at any given moment: we are creating the future every moment.

I continue to be grateful and amazed at the way that this work unfolds, through the creativity of so many people around the world.

This year marks the **30th anniversary of the Aramaic Prayer cycle**. Praise the One! To celebrate this, we will be releasing a **CD sampler of the best musical improvisations and renditions of the prayer** over the past three decades, with contributions by various artists around the world, including

Robert Gass, Allaudin Mathieu, Omar Faruk Tekbilek, Glen Velez, Akbar Manolson, Christian Bollman, the Czech group Le’Harmonija and others. Watch for news about this from the Abwoon Resource Center.

Last year, I also completed another major **Aramaic Jesus project**, which is a new 6-CD program from **Sounds True**, entitled ***I Am: The Secret Teachings of the Aramaic Jesus***. Certainly, they will not be “secret” after the program is released, which is planned for May. More than simply the “I Am” sayings, which I also reworked in the latest edition of ***Desert Wisdom***, the new program includes a retelling of most of the Gospel of John, with many new translations of Jesus’ most puzzling sayings.

The recording takes us to Galilee to walk among Jesus’ students, some of whom were clearly baffled by veiled references to his departure as well as by sayings like “eating my flesh and drinking my blood.” At the same time, we find here Jesus’ most simple and profound teachings. They show us that there is a way to travel the path connected to a larger caravan of life, not isolated, but arm-in-arm with the wise ones travelling ahead of us. Even more importantly, these teachings give us actual ways of prayer and spiritual practice to make wisdom our own reality, so that we can, in Jesus’ words, “do the things that I have done, and greater than these.”

While the program relies on the Gospel of John, I also draw on the most recent biblical studies scholarship and relate many of the “I Am” sayings to similar teachings in the Gospel of Thomas. According to the most current research, the communities out of which both of these gospel accounts arose knew each other and shared traditions, albeit with different interpretations of them. Once again, it becomes clear that an Aramaic view of Jesus’ sayings makes sense of apparent paradoxes in order to reveal the practical wisdom hidden in the teachings themselves.

Sponsorship for this new publication came from the “Abwoon Angels,” a group of private donors that love and support the Aramaic Jesus work. I will be offering **workshops on the new program** both in the UK (May in **London**) and the USA (September in **Boise**).

In addition to my regular retreats in 2012, I will again be travelling to **South Africa** in early March for the conference of the Academy of Self Knowledge. This loving community of Sufis under the guidance of Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri welcomed Natalia and me very warmly. It uses the research and translation in my Aramaic Jesus books, ***Desert Wisdom*** and ***The Sufi Book of Life*** in their own multi-cultural peacemaking efforts in South Africa.

Continued on page 2.

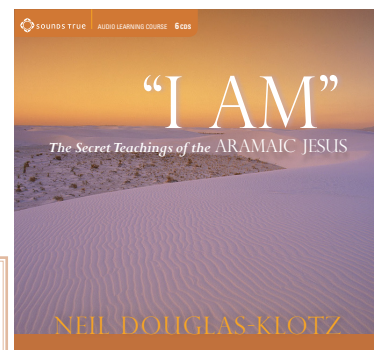
NEW! I AM: The Secret Teachings of the Aramaic Jesus

Perhaps the most essential teachings given to us by Jesus came in the final year of his life on earth. Known as the “I AM” statements and found only in the Gospel of John and the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas, these radical truths were offered to connect each one of us to the original source of Jesus’ deeper power. But to fully understand and embody these profound insights, we must hear them in Jesus’ native tongue. On ***I AM: The Secret Teachings of the Aramaic Jesus***, we go on a journey to the Holy Land of Jesus’ time. Listeners learn 24 specific meditations that combine music, Aramaic chant, and breathing awareness practices to attune us to Jesus’ words and help us “become fountains of healing and inspiration, as Jesus was.”

Available from Sounds True:
6 CDs for US \$69.95
Digital Download for US \$48.97

AVAILABLE IN SPRING/SUMMER 2012

A special pre-release sale price will be offered when ordered through Abwoon Resource Center. Watch the website and Constant Contact newsletters for details this spring.



Letter from Neil Douglas-Klotz continued from page 1.



Neil Douglas-Klotz in South Africa

I will also be sharing a weekend retreat in **Istanbul, Turkey** at the end of May in conjunction with the **Turkish translation of *The Sufi Book of Life***, which has been doing well there. I haven't been to Istanbul since late 1978. During that trip I took this photo of the Blue Mosque and visited Sufis in secret there (the practice of Sufism was still illegal then). I'm looking forward to going back! You can find information about all of these events at www.abwoon.com. You can also sign up for the regular e-bulletins of the Abwoon Resource Center.



The biggest event in my calendar next year is an absence. As I did in 2002, I will again be taking a **six-month sabbatical** to deepen in my own spiritual practice and do further research. This will run from October 2012 through March 2013. I ask for your prayers, best wishes and support for this!

Again, many thanks to Munira Elizabeth Reed and Amy Alwood at the Abwoon Resource Center in Ohio, USA, to the Abwoon Angels and all the rest of you who have donated so generously to the ARC. Finally, many thanks to the hundreds of volunteers worldwide who share this work and use it in their communities. We are helping many people to know themselves more deeply, to work with a clearer sense of purpose and to discover love and community in a more healthy way!

Love and blessings to you all,

Neil Douglas-Klotz

Keeping in Touch with You!

The Abwoon Resource Center communicates primarily through the Internet with news announcement through Constant Contact. This is a secure server and allows you to opt in or out as you wish. Please share your Constant Contact announcements with friends who might be interested in this work so they can opt in if they choose.

To receive our ongoing communications, please send an e-mail message to resourcecenter@abwoon.com.

Prefer Postal Mail to Email?

To receive a copy of our annual newsletter by postal mail please send your name and postal address to:

Abwoon Resource Center
881 High Street, Suite 206
Worthington, OH 43085

You can also leave a message on the ARC voicemail at: 614-429-4009.



Mary Qahira Richardson
answers all phone messages
at ARC

NEW Audio CD Available Soon!

Around the World with The Aramaic Prayer: 30th anniversary celebration anthology is a CD anthology and sampler of the best of the musical arrangements of Neil Douglas-Klotz's music to the Aramaic Prayer of Jesus over the past thirty years. It includes improvisations, arrangements, and contributions by musicians from around the world.

Check www.abwoon.com in spring for details and for information about anniversary-year events and offerings (such as the webcast scheduled April 16th at 7:30pm).

Desert Flowers E-mail Study Group

Desert Flowers is a community of people around the world using the readings, body prayers, meditations and insights offered by Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz. It is open to all and there is no charge to join this online group.

We deepen our connection to the One by sharing our experiences by e-mail during fixed check-in times, "meeting" quarterly for two-three weeks. To join or for information, visit www.abwoon.com or contact Richard McMurtry at rmcmurtry@baymoon.com.

Desert Wisdom, 2nd Edition

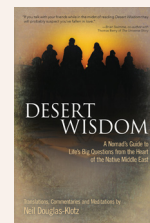
Desert Wisdom: A Nomad's Guide to Life's Big Questions from the Heart of the Native Middle East

by Neil Douglas-Klotz

Part oracle, part meditation book, and part Aladdin's cave of Middle Eastern myth and sacred story, *Desert Wisdom* offers a way to hear the ancient, visionary voices of the Middle East that generated three (or more) of the world's great religions. Visit www.abwoon.com to order for \$18.95.

The second edition of *Desert Wisdom* includes:

- Seven new translations from the Aramaic words of Jesus
- Ten new translations from Hebrew sources
- Three new translations from the Qur'an
- Material reorganized for better use as an oracle
- Meditations rewritten and keyed to "Life's Big Questions"
- All notes and commentary revised and updated
- New "Quick Start Guide" and Preface
- Complete indexes to meditations and textual strands, plus a new general index
- Translations from the first edition revised and updated with improved transliteration of original text



The Abwoon Circles and the Abwoon Resource Center

The work at Abwoon Resource Center supports a network of spiritual activists — ministers, teachers, meditators, retreat directors, therapists and healers — who are creating interspiritual communities around the world. These groups take many forms — study groups, personal sharing groups, groups focusing on spiritual practice (whether chant, meditation, and/or body prayer). Some are led by one individual while others are structured with shared/peer leadership. Under many different names, these “Abwoon Interspiritual Communities” are actively working towards similar goals including:

- Realizing and spreading the global consciousness of unity;
- Bridging understanding between the traditions of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar through shared story, meditation and interspiritual ritual;
- Building communities of peace through the celebration of sacred diversity;
- Sharing the vision of purpose, creativity and empowerment that prophet Yeshua calls *malkuta*, which is known in Hebrew as *malkuth* and in Arabic as *al-Malik*.

This work during 2011 (ongoing and special projects) included:

- **Bookstore operations:** Provided an efficient and responsive on-line bookstore through the Abwoon website; sales were up almost 10% over last year, indicating a continued greater interest in this body of work.
- **Communications:** The website continues to be the main communications arm. Amy Alwood continued her work maintaining and updating the website with new information; also periodic electronic news announcements are sent throughout each year through Constant Contact. For 2011 and beyond, the printed newsletter (available at events, with bookstore orders, and by request through postal mail) will now be produced in house.
- **Outreach/Publicity:** This year an Abwoon Resource Center YouTube® (U Tubw) channel was established and to date a few dances and teachings have been posted. We continue to request volunteer support to edit film into clips appropriate for posting at YouTube. Please contact the office if you have any skill with the use of iMovie or Flip camera software. Neil Douglas-Klotz has an established Facebook page, as does the Abwoon Resource Center. Some funds were allocated to test placement of ads related to those pages. We hope to increase our outreach budget to re-establish Google adwords as well.
- **Workshops and Events:** ARC produced a fall workshop on *The Soul of Sufi Zikr*. Staffed book/resource table at Jamiat Khas meeting (Kansas City, MO). Volunteers staffed book displays at the Ozark Sufi Camp and Prescott, AZ events.



Rev. Elizabeth A. Reed, Ph.D.
(Munira) Managing Director for
Abwoon Resource Center, a project
of the Shalem Center.

- **Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program:** Provided administrative work for the USA AILP groups. During 2011 AILP Group #2 completed its three-and-a-half years of seven modules. A third USA-based group began in the spring; a new group began in Germany. During the summer, two different gatherings were held for deepening or mentoring work, one in Boise, ID (organized by Ellen Bush) and one in Ohio. A deepening retreat is planned for AILP graduates in spring 2012 taught by Neil Douglas-Klotz.
- **Southern Libraries Resources:** Continued to place resources in libraries in southern states by using funding from an individual donor. Provided free resources as able to prison ministries and other situations of demonstrated need.
- **Networking:** Responded to inquiries (from the website, postal mail, and phone calls) seeking information on resources, local or regional contacts, workshops, and groups on the Abwoon work; responded to those seeking support and permissions for using inspiration from this work in other creative projects.
- **New Resource Development:** Continued to work with Neil Douglas-Klotz to produce more resources for supporting individuals and groups who are “building communities of peace.” During 2011 Abwoon Resource Center served as the publisher of the new edition of *Desert Wisdom*, released in the spring. Through the generosity of donors, we were able to co-sponsor a project with Sounds True, *I AM: The Secret Teachings of the Aramaic Jesus*, which is currently scheduled for a July, 2012 release. Also the final two Guitar and Drum Demonstration DVDs were produced — *Simple Presence: I Am Statements of Yeshua* and *The Genesis Meditations* — which completes this project.
- **Video Recording and Archival Project:** Through the generosity of donors, we have state-of-the-art recording equipment and are able to record Neil Douglas-Klotz’ live teachings in retreats and workshops in the USA. These recordings are downloaded to storage drives and archived at the Abwoon Resource Center. These may be used in the future for some other educational resources. In November, Neil’s public lecture on interspiritual work was filmed and a DVD created to be offered to the public in 2012. Workshop recordings, when staff time allows, are created and sold via the Abwoon bookstore. A donor has made possible the recording and production of all the AILP sessions for USA Group #3 (currently available only to module participants).



Amy Alwood
Bookstore Manager and
Administrative Assistant

The Abwoon Resource Center staff includes the **Rev. Elizabeth Munira Reed, Director**, and **Amy Alwood, Bookstore Manager/Administrative Assistant**. They are happy to receive your questions, concerns, and feedback and are committed to the larger vision of Unity that this work serves.

News from AILP

There is an exciting movement taking place with the translation and spiritual practice work of Neil Douglas-Klotz. The second USA-based Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program (AILP) group completed its three-and-a-half-year series of modules in 2011. Two new groups were formed in the spring of 2011: one in the USA and one in Germany.

AILP requires prior reading and an application form. The program consists of two modules held each year: one in the spring and another in the fall. Each module focuses on a particular aspect of the Abwoon Circles work and offers leadership training in body prayer, contemplation, chant, voice, walking meditation and the Dances of Universal Peace connected with that aspect, as well as deepening for those who want to establish a personal spiritual practice.

Visit www.abwoon.com for the full description of the AILP program. Individual modules are open to a limited number of participants who are not enrolled in the entire program. However no one can participate in Modules 6 or 7 without being a part of the full/ongoing training group.

For information, please contact:

- The Rev. Elizabeth Reed, at Shalem Center at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com for information about modules offered in the US.
- Qadima Sabine Brandt at Sabine-Brandt@freenet.de for modules offered in Europe.



Online Meditation Courses

Rev. Elizabeth Munira Reed has written two online meditation courses:

- *Breathing with the Divine Breath: Deep Inner Healing in "The Beatitude Way"*: This course has 12 sessions.
- *A Healing Journey with the Aramaic Lord's Prayer: Reclaiming the Mysticism of Jesus through His Native Language*: This is a 20-session course co-authored with Neil Douglas-Klotz.

Both courses have sessions based on the books and recordings of Neil Douglas-Klotz and are offered through SelfHealingExpressions.com. You can receive lessons by e-mail daily, once a week or every other week.

Please use the link at www.abwoon.com to go to www.selfhealingexpressions.com for information and registration. Abwoon receives a donation whenever the link from our site is used.

Local Abwoon Circles

Interested in more in depth work with Abwoon materials? Begin a local group!
Nothing required. Simply begin.

For help, consider purchasing *Abwoon Circles: Starting a Local Group* for models and suggestions for group sessions. Also look for local volunteer connectors listed at www.abwoon.com.



Donate to the Work of the Abwoon Resource Center

The generosity of individuals and foundations continues to maintain the work of the Abwoon Resource Center. We are grateful for all donations of whatever size given to ARC for its programs and outreach. Without your support we would not exist! We now have a group of "Abwoon Angels" who are doing long-range planning for fundraising for administration and project support. Donations from the Angels have helped many projects move forward. The support of Kalliopeia Foundation has given us birth and sustenance.

Donations are fully tax deductible as Abwoon Resource Center is a program of Shalem Center, a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations can be made by check, credit card, PayPal, or on-line bill pay. Call Rev. Elizabeth Munira Reed at 1-614-441-9773 for information.

To contribute to the work of ARC:

- Credit card payment through PayPal. Use the "Donate" page at www.abwoon.com or donations@abwoon.com.
- Donor-initiated automatic monthly contributions through your online bank bill-pay
- Check payable to Shalem Center and marked "for Abwoon" sent to:
The Shalem Center
881 High Street, Suite 206
Worthington, OH 43085

If you require a receipt for your donation, please let us know.

Abwoon Mailing List

Please send any updates or changes to your contact information in an e-mail message to resourcecenter@abwoon.com. Subhana Elizabeth Ferrio maintains the database for Abwoon and regularly updates the postal mail and e-mail address changes that we receive. To contact Subhana directly concerning your information, send a message to subhana@abwoon.com.

Note: You may opt out of the Constant Contact e-newsletter through a link in any of our e-mail news announcements.