

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Now, Pilgrim, here's Aunt Fannèe and your letter. Peace and all joy.*

*Lucy dear,*

*Why have you not included a journal from your trip to the Holy Land? Surely you kept one! Weren't you and that husband of yours gone for three weeks, two weeks in Israel and one week in Abu Dhabi?*

*Since you're perceived as a Christian writer, I would have thought that you must have gained some insights. Do not get me wrong. I do not want to see your photographs. I have been there and I have my own. In fact, I do not even need to hear about the trip. I do, however, think that you could have at least dropped me a line while you were gone.*

*The reason I am writing you is not about me and my needs, for I have few; it is out of concern for your audience. In that last letter of yours, you just dropped the information about Israel as if going there were an everyday occurrence! For centuries, dear, pilgrims have died for that very opportunity, and all you do is complain about jet lag.*

*Really, I know you can do better. I am a bit disappointed. I guess it is just what you young people call "a generational thing." You have always had it so easy. Were you never required to read Pilgrim's Progress or The Canterbury*

*Tales or Dante? Oh, it is useless. I mean I might as well be speaking Greek.*

*Love to all. I would appreciate a response. I do know how busy you and your precious husband are with his grand political endeavor and you with your little company (surely you will be giving that up soon).*

*In my day - oh, it is just useless.*

*Always with your best interest in mind,*

*I am your*

*Aunt Fannèe*

*Here's my response. . .*

*Dearest Aunt Fannèe,*

*How observant you are. You should be writing these letters, not me! You are exactly right. How dare I write about jet lag and Israel in the same sentence!*

*You will be happy to know that I did keep a journal. The trip was incredible. It will linger with me for the rest of my life. The sights, the sounds, the smells have brought the Bible to life for me. I can now picture my Lord Jesus in the actual land in which He lived. Right now it is too rich and multifaceted to share. It's like carrying around a glass filled to the very rim with water and you're in a desert and you realize how very precious that water is and you don't want to spill even a drop.*

*If that analogy is a little bit too contrived, then I'll give you a true scenario. My husband was re-baptized in the River Jordan. It was awesome and unexpected. I turned around, and there he had rolled up his pants legs and was walking into the water. It was grand. The Sea of Galilee was grand. The Holy Sepulchre was grand. Bethlehem was grand. Nazareth was grand. Jerusalem was grand. Capernaum was grand. The Mount of the Beatitudes was grand. The Via de la Rosa was grand. The Garden of Gethsemane was grand. On and on. I still can't comprehend it all --.*

*Anyway, after the baptism, I filled up our little drinking bottle with Jordan water. I filled it to the top. I carried it safely in my carry-on bag for the rest of the trip. Each night I would check on the lid to make sure it was still securely fastened. My husband and I would jokingly talk about accidentally drinking it and getting some rare Jordanian disease. That didn't happen. The bottle made it safely back to the States.*

*When I got home, the first thing I did was to carefully pour out its contents into the built-in trough of a St. Francis wall plaque, which hangs in our bathroom. It was given to me by the Hobbs family after the first book was dedicated, so it holds special significance. The amount of water was perfect. It couldn't have held one more drop. I was thrilled. I know it was ridiculous how I'd made it into such a big deal, but it was.*

*The next day, I went in to check on it, and there wasn't a drop in the well. Obviously, I had failed to realize that the plaque was not sealed, but porous, so the water had been completely absorbed.*

*My immediate reaction was disappointment. I wouldn't be able to dip my finger into the water or splash it on like cologne.*

*That reaction gave way to a more appropriate one.*

*I realized that just as the water had been absorbed and now was a part of the plaque, so was the experience of the Holy Land now an intrinsic part of me.*

*Right now, I'm unable to relate much of its take-home value to others. I may never be able to share it. That's a new phenomenon for me, for as you've observed, I like to show and tell immediately after an experience.*

*This, however, seems more like a precious gift, one to be savored, guarded, and cherished like that Jordan water.*

*Your filled up to the brim,*

*Lucy*