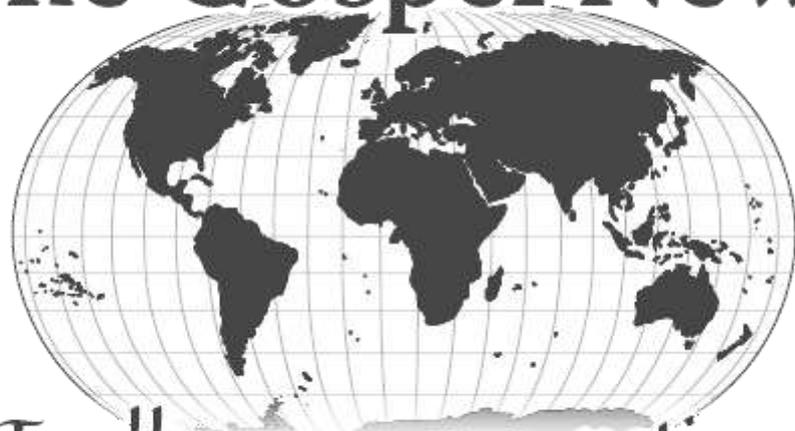


# The Gospel News



“To all nations”



## Editorial: The Peacemakers

In the year 63BC the Roman armies under Pompey captured Jerusalem making it part of the Roman Empire. In those turbulent times many Jews were taken to Rome as slaves and thus it was that when Paul was writing his epistle to the Romans about eighty years later, there was a large Jewish community living in Rome and the ecclesia, too, seems to have had many Jewish brethren as well as gentile Roman brethren. Human nature being what it is there was trouble between the two groups. It is not difficult to imagine the situation; the Jewish brethren were descendants of Abraham, the scriptures had been revealed to them, Jesus himself was of the tribe of Judah and Jews traditionally looked down on gentiles as “dogs”. The Roman brethren would deeply resent this attitude, they would remember that they were the master race of the day and that the Jews in their midst were descendants of slaves. So there was strife in the ecclesia.

One of Paul’s objectives in writing to the Romans, therefore, was to try to bring peace, love and harmony to a divided ecclesia. He was to be Paul the Peacemaker.

Paul set about his task very cleverly; he identified himself with both factions of the ecclesia. To the Jewish brethren he wrote, “... *I speak to them that know the law...*” (7:1); and he writes of “... *my kinsmen according to the flesh...*” (9:3) though he goes on to remind them that many descendants of Abraham will not inherit the promises because of lack of faith. His prayer for Israel was that they might be saved (10:1). So, Paul clearly identified himself with the Jewish members of the church in Rome. But he also identified himself with the gentile members, “*I speak to you gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle to the gentiles...*” (11:13), but just as he had warned the Jews that being descendants of Abraham did not guarantee redemption, so also he warned the gentiles not to boast of their position, that justification was by faith and that just as God had broken off some Jewish “branches” of the tree, so equally He might break off “branches” that had been grafted in, if faith was lacking. Paul’s argument reaches its climax in chapter 10 where in verse 11 he quotes the Jews’ own scriptures, “*Whosoever believeth on him ...*”. The word “whosoever” is all-embracing; there is no restriction. So, the Jewish prophet, Isaiah, had anticipated the gospel being available to all, irrespective of race. Paul then quotes from another Jewish prophet, Joel, “... *whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord ...*” (verse 13), reinforcing exactly the same point. Sandwiched between those two quotes is Paul’s main thrust, “*For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him*” One can almost hear Paul muttering under his breath, “So let that be the end of all this nonsense.”

There are many other passages of scripture which emphasise the point that, like Paul, we should all try to be peacemakers. Here are a few:

- “*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God*” (Matt.5:9). Notice the word **peacemakers**. Peace has to be made; it has to be worked for. Peace is not achieved by merely “keeping one’s head down”; by doing nothing. We must try to make peace; to create peace.
- “*Depart from evil and do good; **seek peace and pursue it***” (Psalm 34:14). Again the same point is here, that peace must be sought; peace will not just “happen” in a vacuum and that “doing good” is a practical way to help make peace among brethren.

- “Let us follow after the things which **make for peace** and things wherewith one may edify another” (Romans 14:19). Those who try to edify their brothers and sisters will be helping to make peace within the ecclesia, for we cannot be expounding scripture faithfully, bringing out heart-warming lessons, and at the same time be fostering strife; no fountain yields fresh water and brackish water at the same time. Here is the positive aspect of the matter – we can help generate peace by making sure that our speech is always wholesome, uplifting and heart-warming; no time will remain for evil speaking which generates and perpetuates strife.
- “The fruit of righteousness is **sown in peace** of them that **make peace**” (James 3:18). The picture here is of a farmer sowing seeds. Each seed contains the germ of a new plant – but what type of plants will come from the seeds we sow? Our lives should be full of good works, not just for those we like, but for all, and our speech should be wholesome with poisonous words eschewed. We seek a good harvest to fill the granaries – not tares.
- “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...” (Galatians 5:22). Once again the picture is of a harvest. Good wholesome seeds have been sown and now the harvest is being gathered in.

But there is also the other side of the coin:

- “These six things doth the Lord hate ... **he that soweth discord among brethren**” (Proverbs 6:16-19). The seeds being sown here are of a different variety; they are poisonous seeds yielding a harvest of strife, pain, bitterness, anger, resentment and division – the fruit of unbridled human nature. That bit of malicious gossip which a child of God would hide is instead whispered of to another; the helpful deed is deliberately withheld; discussion of Bible themes is supplanted by angry words or a discussion of the weaknesses and sins of another – one for whom Christ died.

There was strife among the disciples of Jesus on more than one occasion – even in the Upper Room when our Lord was so near to terrible suffering (Luke 22:24-30). The contention was about status – which of us is the most important. The disciples were expecting Jesus to proclaim himself King and the only question which remained was their relative positions! Of course we can smile at the naivety of the disciples and imagine that we would never quarrel over such a matter. But wouldn't we? Do not people become upset if another is asked to do a particular task or if a suggestion made by another is accepted while our own suggestion is rejected? The spirit that lies behind these situations is this, “Which of us is the greatest?” Jesus rebuked his disciples in the Upper Room pointing out that he, their Lord and Master, had washed their feet, doing the task of a menial slave and that they, too, should be willing to serve rather than insist on rank. He added this, “I appoint unto you a kingdom...”. In the kingdom over which Jesus will rule, the most important people will be those most willing to serve. If we aspire to be citizens of the Kingdom of God we should be showing that spirit now.

In 1 Samuel 25 there is the account of how Abigail turned David away from violence and revenge. Her skill is noteworthy; she made no attempt to justify her husband's conduct, merely saying, “Upon me let this iniquity be.” She then went on seeking to pacify David while his anger abated and when the time was ripe she made her two main points (1) You would later regret shedding blood, and (2) Vengeance should be left in the hands of God. But now note the humble spirit that David revealed; before his four hundred followers he acknowledged the wisdom of Abigail's words and turned away from his avowed course. Truly David is revealed here as a big

man, as a man big enough to be humble.

We remember too the spirit of Abraham when it became necessary for him to separate himself from his nephew Lot (Genesis 13:8). Abraham was the older man and therefore should have had first choice; but Abraham waived that right and allowed Lot to take his choice. Note, however, the words of Abraham to his nephew, *“Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee ... **for we be brethren**”* (Genesis 13:8). Whenever difficulties arise between brothers and sisters in the ecclesia, those words of Abraham should be the end of all strife.

But the greatest peacemaker of all time was Jesus himself; he has brought reconciliation between ourselves and our Maker. Paul spells it out for us:

*“Therefore being justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

*Bro David Budden*

## News from Africa

### news from benin

Brother Abedi Ndjelekulu - request for prayer

An article in the Bible Missionary of January 2004 describes the plight of Brother Abedi Ndjelekulu and his family, refugees from the Congo, then in Ghana. Brother Abedi and his family have now been deported to a desolate refugee camp in Benin, about 40 miles from town. The camp has no means of providing for the refugees, and the Beninese people, unlike the Ghanaians, are generally unwelcoming towards the refugees, often frankly hostile. Abedi is afraid for his life, and for his family: his wife and their five children, four girls and a little boy. Please pray for them. Love in Jesus,

### news from botswana

#### **GABORONE**

I am no longer in Zimbabwe, but am now working in Botswana as a mechanic. Since coming here I am not gaining much spiritually, as most of the time I am by myself, except when I have visits once a month from South African brethren. I have not been receiving magazines and other scriptural materials, but when I went home for Christmas holiday I saw the *Gospel News*. I then said to myself I must write and let you know of my whereabouts. Thanks be to our Lord, you have maintained your love towards me which I cannot match. However, I am standing firm; I am trying my best. This country is infested with evil; the people don't even think God exists. I don't know whether they do this because they are not suffering or whether they are just like that. I am trying by all means to preach the truth to them, but they are ignorant, they just want to enjoy their lives. The other problem is that one has to speak their language, which I am

learning. I do hope God will grant me my wish that some may be saved. The country has 2 million people, 80% of whom are HIV positive. If they would only fear God, surely the number wouldn't be so very high. I do pray that things will turn well one day – it will only be by the intervention of the Almighty Himself; the people love only pleasure. May you pray for me, as I am in the wilderness infested with both dangerous animals.

Bro. Everisto Ruzvidzo

### **MAUN**

I am writing asking for the proceedings of two public debates held in 1989 by, among others, Pastor John Liliakas and Mr. John Alfree on, 'Are the Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Spirit Possessed Today?'

*Gastingwe Bamatshabile*

### **news from cameroon**

### **FONTEM**

Eternal life is a free gift. How can one receive it? The rich young ruler asked Jesus in Mark 10:17, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" The answer was to leave all, take up his cross and follow him. In essence, we must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to save us and therefore dedicate our entire life in service. There is nothing we can do ourselves to earn eternal life. Truly, we are saved by faith, not by works, yet James tells us (2:14-20) that faith without works is dead. We are also told to walk in the light as he is in the light (1 John 1:7), and we read in John 8:31 to continue in his word. Hebrews 3:14 states that we are to hold our confidence steadfast unto the end. As long as we obey God's voice and keep His words, our gift of eternal life remains secure.

*Bro Atabong Vistor*



Photo: *Bro. Atabong*

### **MUTENGENE**

Some people think that it is God who has brought suffering into the world. Man brought suffering into the world through disobedience and not God as some people allege. When God created Adam and Eve our first parents, God put them in a fine garden comprising all eatable things. He told them not to eat the fruit in the middle of the garden, which was the tree of knowing good and bad. The serpent deceived Eve saying that if they ate of the tree in the middle of the garden, they would be as clever as God. Eve was convinced and ate the fruit. When Adam came, Eve told him the story and Adam also ate the fruit. As both of them ate the fruit they knew that they were naked and God asked, Who told you that you are naked?. Have you eaten of the forbidden fruit? Adam answered and said, The woman you gave me, gave me the fruit to eat. So God drove them out of the garden and passed suffering and death sentence on them. To Adam God said

you will work in the sweat of thy face and then die. To Eve he said you suffer when giving birth and you may die. To the serpent he said you will be an enemy to man. God said man will bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. We are suffering today because of the disobedience of our first parents Adam and Eve.

*Bre. Nicolas and Regina Menjuah*

#### news from ghana

##### **HOOE**

I'm thinking now of the point made in *Bible Basics* concerning the baptized believer who, after being baptized, found himself in the wilderness going towards the promised land - this is mainly in connection with the children of God after being taken across the Red Sea (an illustration of their baptism) by the Almighty, and as they took their journey to the promised land (in the wilderness), so do we who, by His grace, embrace the saving hands of the invisible God. What shall we say then? Are we safe 'in Christ' into whom we have been baptized, until he returns, or us reaching the promised land? "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant" (Kings 8:56). We have a task ahead of us and we must not relax from the trek. God will not change His promises (Eze. 12:25; Matt. 5:18). Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do: forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (3:13,14). Forgetting the past is not all that easy, but God is faithful.

*Bro. Wonder Wornyo*

#### news from kenya

##### **BONDO**

I was informed this morning that Brother Alex left information in our house that Brother Benedict Miruka has fallen asleep.

*Bro Walter*

##### **BULIMBO**

We are fine and fighting a good fight and spreading the gospel. I was so pleased to receive a copy of *Bible Basics* this book has helped me to ginger up my faith. I found it to be so interesting and it guides me in day-to-day prayers.

*Bro. Sadique B. Joumer*

##### **ELDOROT**

I am glad to let you know that I am still receiving *Gospel News* through the above Box. In my area I have a Sunday School and this is a good time for spreading the gospel to them.

*Bro. Waliaula Alex*

### **ISHIARA**

How I wish that our Master would return to give us that longed-for reward! I hope you all are fine. I am, alas, still unemployed. Life is not smooth at all – today you are here, tomorrow you are there. Just trying to make ends meet, but in vain. I have a group of about 15 people having instruction through CBM Lessons. I am taking these as a group and hope that soon I will have some companions. I remember telling you that I was compiling a message in Kiswahili for recording. I have finished Part 1, in 12 pages, and Part 2 is even longer than that. If I could record these I think it would help in preaching to the people around.

*Bro. David Aphaxard*

### **KABABU**

As we are teaching oneness in Jesus Christ our Saviour, it is a very good and interesting opportunity to share our Bible knowledge together, as our Father made possible in March last year at Kiagware ecclesia. May I urge all brothers and sisters to preach the word through such meetings. Also, I would like to commend all the brothers and sisters who offered towards the Bible School. Let us all praise the Lord wherever we are.

*Sis. Jane Akongo*

### **KAMUKVYWA**

Thank you for your letter. I heard that you are having a journey of 10 days, so I pray that Yahweh may be with you wherever you walk so that you may continue with the work of Christ until he comes to establish God's Kingdom. Here some follow worldly practices, but our aim is to pray for them that they may keep to the old paths. We can preach house-to-house, although most people are RCs.*Bro. Patrick Wafula*



Photo: Sisters at the Bible School at Kiagware in 2003.

With the help of *Gospel News* world wide, I have really benefited, for I read my Bible daily with the help of the *Bible Companion*. In fact, the Holy Book, known as the Bible, is really the word of God which came by inspiration of God through His holy prophets and apostles (2 Peter 1:20-21). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

*Bro. Patrick Wekesa*

### **KANDUYI**

We are new readers of the Bible truth, being assisted by Bro. Moses Masika Wanami. We were baptized recently and now sharing the one true faith. We have come to learn of *Gospel News* to all Nations and the contents have greatly interested us because most parts of the world have received the good news about the Kingdom of God. We are now introducing ourselves to you so that we may learn more as we continue searching the scriptures. We also need some books to give us more information about the Bible.

*Bro. Eric Wamalwa*



Some brothers at Kanduyi, left to right: Bro. George Maina, Bro. Wycliffe Wekwa and, Bro. Eric Wamalwa

### **KIKONENI**

Here in Kenya peace is prevailing; there is no political instability any more. All ecclesias around Kenya are moving on well; brothers and sisters are eagerly waiting the second coming of our Master, Jesus, to establish the Kingdom here on earth; we all put our trust in him. Our 'eye mirror' (Middle east) has problems, and shedding of blood is now increasing; there is no peace at all. Only Jesus will bring peace to the Middle East, so the only hope I can give to strengthen Brothers and Sisters is that we should all hide ourselves in Jesus alone. We are all happy if we know that the Kingdom shall be ours for ever. The spread of the gospel in Kenya is highly done, and we appreciate the books you sent to us; they also give challenges to the non-believers and give them the truth of the Bible. I am praying that you will be able to print more copies of my *Kikamba* translation booklet; it will be of much benefit to those who read it.

*Bro. Gideon Matheka Mukeku*

### **KOBUJOI**

I am actually through with the *Kalenjin* translation of the booklet, '*What is the Gospel?*' but I have not managed to type it onto a computer disc. Arrangements to establish an ecclesia at the town of Mandi Hills have gone well. We all pray for God's blessing on this.

*Bro. Geoffrey Chirchir*

### **MBITA**

My questions are to parents, relatives etc., Does a parent explain to his child why a father would beat another? Does a parent explain to his child why people exchange abuses, either in parliament or in public? What example are we setting to our children? What kind of role model are we? My conclusions are that as parents we have the responsibility of being the best role models to our children. When, as parents, we may know very well that we are in a violent home, the best that can be done for the children and ourselves is to leave the violent situation, leave and seek help for both yourself and the children. Regarding my life, I am sorry to inform you that my contract in Migori has finished and now I am back home. Please remember me in your prayers with hope that God will raise up His hands upon me.

*Bro. Richard Aduma*

The first time death appears in the Bible is as a punishment – not a reward to be enjoyed in heaven. God punished Adam for disobedience by returning his body to the ground, the dust, from which he had been made (Gen. 3:19). The Bible never talks about going to heaven when we die or about a reward in paradise. God gives each of us one life (Heb. 9:27); what we do with that life decides what happens when it comes to an end, just as it did with Adam. Many people in the Bible obviously believed in the resurrection (a) Job – knew that he would stand on the earth again (Job 19:25-27). (b) Abraham – knew he would live again in the land of Israel (Gen. 13:17; Heb. 11:13). (c) Martha had a clear conviction about resurrection (John 11:24). (d) Paul – couldn't have been more explicit about the importance of resurrection (1 Cor. 15). It always surprises me that since the Bible is so full of the resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15 and Heb. 11) people

do not talk more about it.

*Bro. Daniel Ogembo*

### **MOMBASA**

It is good and encouraging reading the brethren's testimonies and articles. As I read the information of our brothers and sisters, Z and K; M and A of Iran, really I felt and saw that we in Kenya have continued to be loved by God. Because of this, we need to do God's work without fear, because we are given an opportunity and the free will to worship Him. I do pray for our brethren in other countries where the truth is opposed. I thank you for the cards which have taught me much about the Bible.

*Bro. Edward Kunikina*

I had been teaching at Maweni School, Mombasa, but last year I joined the Kenya Institute of Applied Sciences to further my education and I thank God for that. From Mombasa to Eldoret, where the Institute is located, is a distance of about 900km; this change contributed to my silence. *Gospel News* has been a companion to me personally and to the pupils I was teaching, so continue sending it to me.

*Bro. Abwad Bwademba*



Bro. Abwad Bwademba, back row far right, with a class of pupils at the Maweni School, Mombasa.

### **NANYUK**

We must not make the mistake of asking God for guidance if we are not prepared to act on it fully. God is always willing to make His purpose known. If then we cannot find an answer, it may be that we have some reservation in our heart. God will not lead us to His will if we are merely considering it alongside other possible alternatives. Unless we are prepared to trust fully His wisdom and love and go where He leads us, then we should not seek His will. Many people say they cannot get God's guidance when in their hearts they wish He would show them an easier way. God promises to lead us only if we are ready to be led (John 7:17). *Bro. Francis*

*Mwangi Kinandu*



Photo: Baptism of Bro. Samson Onyango NYERI

We would like to have an ecclesia here in Nyeri so that we can preach the gospel news to others.

*Bro. Alex K. Mwaniki*

### **OKUMBO**

Bro. Samson Onyango was baptized in 2003 by Bro. Samuel Masowa. Before we went to the occasion we read from the Bible Hebrews 3:12-14 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 from where we taught the gospel We have also had a talk by Bro. John Mbagha about the spirit of God, referring to Matt. 12:28 and Gen. 1:2-3 After that teaching our friends agreed that spirit is the power of

God, not God himself.

*Bro. John Otieno Kine*

### **SOSIOT**

Christians grow by giving and that is why the apostle Paul said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). What we give to advance God’s Kingdom is of eternal value. “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroys, and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:19-21). As we give we remember: “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” (Ps. 24:1), including the silver and gold (Haggai 2:8). We ourselves belong to God because He created us and because He rescued us from our sins (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Everything we own belongs to God. How much does our crucified and risen Lord invite us to share with him for giving the gospel to others? “Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, How do we rob you? In tithes and offerings”. How much should we give in offerings? Offerings are a matter of individual decision. Each person “should give what he has decided in his heart to give” (2 Cor. 9:5-7). We can’t outgive God. “Give, and it will be given to you, a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will be poured into your lap” (Luke 6:38).

*Bro. Erick Kiprofo Moses*

### **TONGAREN**

We have been having our memorial services at Maine Primary School for the last two years, but because we were warned that we could not stay long, the room has now been locked. At this time we have nowhere to worship God. Tongaren ecclesia has seven brothers and nine sisters and a Sunday School of 13 children. Our best regards go to Bro. Trevor who has supported us so much, but to solve the problem completely, we need to buy a space for Sunday worship. Tongaren ecclesia was established in 1996 and was growing rapidly with the help of God. We notify the following baptisms: Getquin Nandako Sikolia, Lowrin Nafuna Sikolia, Esther Olima Kasembeli. May the Lord guide them to the coming Kingdom.

*Bro. Isaac Kapa*



Photo: Members of Tongaren ecclesia breaking bread at Bro. Isaac’s home.

## **news from malawi**

### **DZALEKA**

A lot of people understand nothing about the word of God and eternal life, but are running after their own interests and look to satisfy their human needs for today’s life. Yet the Bible states in John 6:63-66, “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say,

This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him. From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him”. Alas, seven of our members have joined other denominations, despite our many efforts to meet and exhort and encourage them, showing all our love for them in such a way to have them come back.

Bro. Willy Kananga

### **MANGOCHI**

I thank God Almighty for letting me know the truth. May I take the opportunity to thank brothers and sisters who are keen on converting others, by the Lord’s grace, and to say that their task is appreciated and that their reward is with our God. In addition, we want to follow in preaching the word of God to others around us, as we are aware that there are those who have not yet received the truth. When Bro. David Nightingale visited our ecclesia he enlightened us regarding the prophet Elijah, that he didn’t go to heaven, but is in the grave waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. I enclose a photo during a meeting at Mpinganjira.

*Bro. Morris Asani*



Photo: Mpinganjira ecclesia

### **MWANZA**

I’m now here in Malawi with my family and not in Namibia. I’ve made up my mind that I can’t return there and I appeal to you for any information about the brethren here.

*Bro. Jafari Amisi*

### **SAKATA**

We are living in the last days and the book of life will soon be shut and I want to be in it, so please help me to understand more about the Bible by sending me letters and literature. I find *Gospel News* supports me by letting me know what others are doing and how we can broadcast the gospel message.

*Bro. Davis Madolo*



Photo: Bro. Davis Madolo

### **SALIMA**

I sincerely thank you for the book, *Elpis Israel*, which I received. I am expecting to be baptized in early May and only wish you could have come to witness this, for I have now made my decision to follow the required steps to be “born again” (John 3:2-5): (1) hearing the words of God and believing them (2) confession (3) repentance (4) to be born of water (baptism). I have now come to know the difference between being born of water and that of the holy spirit. A person will be born of the spirit when they are rewarded with immortality after Jesus coming, as Jesus was

now over 2000 years ago. We had a Bible study at Bro. George's home and I enclose a photo.  
*Bro. Austin F. Nyirenda*



Photo: Left to right: myself, Bro. Mphatso (a son of Bro. George), Bro. Ngwanda (a long-time Christadelphian), Sis. Nkhoma, wife of Bro. George, and Bro. George himself.

## news from nigeria

### **ENUGU**

It was the end of last year that armed robbers attacked me and took my belongings; I've not yet fully recovered from that. We are pleased to report that our Sister Franca Omeje who left us when her husband died three years ago is back with us, saying that she had been to other churches and was dissatisfied with their doctrine. We pray that she will be with us until the coming of our Lord.

*Bro. Goddy Nwosu*

### **IKWUEKE OBORO**

I apologise for the long delay in writing. It will interest you to hear about our newly opened ecclesia at Ikwueke Oboro which began in February. People attending are 13, four of whom are baptized. We desperately need help for spreading the gospel as we are in a new area. As a family in Christ who feel the bonds of fellowship, and ask you for your prayers for our work. We are here to do the will of our Creator. We are warned not to despise the punishment of the Lord, neither be tired of His correction (Prov. 3:11). The troubles and difficulties will only serve to cement God's true children more firmly together. Some, though few, will be chosen, the upholders of that which is good have ever been in the minority in the congregation of the Lord. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

*Bro. Friday Enyiogu*

### **URHONIGBE**

The idea of rest began with the Creator and Owner of the earth Himself. Genesis 2:3 speaks of God resting "from all the work of creating that he had done". After the Israelites had suffered as slaves in the land of Egypt God came to their rescue through Moses, and his assignment was to lead God's people to a land "flowing with milk and honey" (Ex. 3:8). This land of Canaan, according to God, was a land that they never cultivated and cities that they did not build. A land that "drinks rain from heaven". "It is a land the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it, from the beginning of the year to its end" (Deut. 11:11-12; Ps. 11:6). From this, and other scripture, we understand the land of Canaan was a kind of resting place for the Israelites; in fact when they wanted to enter Canaan, Joshua reminded them that Canaan was a land of rest (Josh. 1:13). It is, however, clear from scripture that the Israelites never really rested, despite the luxuries of Canaan. In Canaan they fought wars; they sinned and disobeyed; they grew stubborn and stiff-necked. This shows that the rest they had was a physical and temporary one. What, then, is the true rest, if it was not Canaan? How can we enter this rest? What are the manifestations of a life that is in the rest of God? Let us be

assured that the true rest does exist. Hebrews 4:9 says, "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His. Is this not interesting? This is the covenant rest of God (Heb. 4:9-11); it is not a cessation of work, but a release from unfruitful labour into the Divine bliss of God. We thank God for the various welcome schemes: retirement schemes, housing policies, favourable conditions of service; poverty alleviation programmes of Government and non-Governmental organisations etc., but I make bold to say that none of these will equal the foolproof Covenant rest of God. I want to use this medium to thank Bro. Chris Furnice for doing good work of God and showing a very keen interest towards Urhonigbe ecclesial. hall. Presently Urhonigbe Ecclesial hall has been fully electrified under the auspices of our UK brothers most especially Bro. Chris Furnice. We are happy to announce the baptism of our sisters that took place on the 26 April 2004 at river Ethiopie, Nigeria. Their names are Sis. Cilina Iyenagbe, Sis. Osadolor Regina, Sis. Ovbiebo Osayemwenre. We pray that God will continue to strengthen their minds, increase their faith and protect them throughout their lives. Amen.

*Bro. Osaretin Jolly*

#### news from south africa

##### **BENONI**

I just want to thank you for all the literature you have sent me; it helped and is still helping me in understanding the Bible and also to grow stronger in faith. For the past 16 months I have been ill, suffering from gout and it has affected my work so that I am now unemployed. A man must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). I cannot walk long distances and for that reason I cannot attend Sunday meetings, not that I do not want to. What are our struggles compared to those of Jesus, Peter and Paul?

*Bro. Francis Chauke*

##### **IDUTYWA**

We have a small group of youth who attend Sunday School (12 in number), all very keen to learn something. We are also pleased to receive some books (from Sisters at East London ecclesia) which help us to feed them with knowledge. Sisters Selinah and Zelpha thank these Sisters for their help in supplying them with Xhosa books. I enclose a couple of pictures and think they will be happy to see their photograph in *Gospel News* and hope they will encourage/attract others. We pray to our Heavenly Father to increase us both in numbers and spiritually.

*Bro. Templeton Mdludu*



Photo: Teachers, Sis Selinah Banzana and Zelpha Mdludu.



Photo: Mdibaniso Nkoiyoyo, Mdibaniso Sgoebezana, Mdludlu Dowie, Mdludlu Amahle, Mapukata Oresimo, Mafikula Siyasanga, Mapukata Asive.

### **RANDBURG**

Please be notified that my brother in the flesh and in the truth, Geoffrey Kamuloni Mphambo, fell asleep in Christ. He passed through the waters of baptism in September 1998. We look forward to his resurrection. May the Lord soon come to redeem his beloved ones. In December last I went to Malawi and conducted Bible Seminars in Nkhota-kota, Salima and Senga-Bay assisted by Brother George Mayimba Nkhoma. One baptism is due next month.

*Bro Mphambo*

### **news from tanzania**

#### **KIGOMA**

Our means of transport is so unsure that letters are delayed at the Post Office. The ecclesia here at Lugufu has changed the postal address to P.O. Box 116 Uvinza , which is located near the Lugufu camps. My family and I are sad to hear about the suffering and persecution of brethren and sisters in Iran, but rejoice to hear that some of them are now safely in America. May our Heavenly Father bless them. We still face problems, such as shortage of food, clothing etc., so life is bad. Members of Lugufu ecclesia meet regularly to remember the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and his ministry, which we spread to people around us. I always hold discussion with people of different denominations to teach them the return of Jesus Christ to the earth and the Kingdom of God on earth, and that we refrain from taking part in discrimination, terrorism, political elections and other worldly practices, which are a negation of our Christian principles. Please remember us in your prayers.

*Bro. Lawi Pililo*

#### **KYELA**

The ecclesia at Kyela is now eight months old.

*Bro. Gasper M. Mwasimba.*



From left to right, standing: Bre. Benson Mwalukama, Gasper Mwasimba, Samuel M. Mwaipaja (Bible student), Willy Mwaisaka, Stephen Mpangala (Bible student) and Sis. Magreth Mwasimba. In the front Sis. Mariam Sanga with the Sunday School children.

#### **MBEYA**

*Gospel News* is read with keen interest not just by me and my family, but has been circulating to all members of the ecclesia who have a minimum knowledge of English. For those who are not

able to read English, they enjoy looking at the attractive photographs. We are about 20 members here.

*Bro. Nestory Kanjelu*

### **MUSOMA**

I hope you are all doing well with the Lords's activities. Here in Musoma we are doing so well, and spreading the word according to the Lord's will. I heard from Sis. Otter. Her dad is really sick and was admitted to hospital for three weeks; I really pity her and am praying for her during her difficulties. Preaching work is going on nicely; I have four contacts right now and two are doing lessons through correspondence, so making six. I still have thoughts of having a small ecclesial building in Musoma, I am never giving up. I recently visited Mwanza and Usagara ecclesias and really enjoyed being with the brothers and sisters; they were also very happy to meet me once again. It will be wonderful when all brothers and sisters world-wide will be together in the Kingdom. I don't want to miss it. A Post Office box has been opened and I hope it will be safe for communications. Brothers from Mwanza managed to purchase for me a mobile telephone out of their own pockets; how wonderful this is! They sat down themselves and decided to buy a phone for me, this is because we are doing a joint Bible study, Mwanza/Musoma; if I do not understand something in the Bible I can send a message and they answer straight away. The brothers from Mwanza are very mature in the truth; I really like their positive response towards the Bible. I am attaching two photographs of the Musoma Sunday School children. I had 15 students, aged 2-15. Some are very mature; they attend their lessons as usual and the Sunday services. Three students have already said they'll stay in the 'Christadelphians'. I pray for them to understand the truth and be baptized and maybe their parents will come to understand the truth.

*Sis. Monica Achieng*



Photo: Musoma Sunday School children taken inside the house, drawing after their lessons

### **RUKWA**

The words below renew my heart day by day: "But all these things that I once thought very worthwhile, now I've thrown them all away so that I can put my trust and hope in Christ alone. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have put aside all else, counting it worth less than nothing, in order that I can have Christ" (Phil. 3:7-8). I was buried in baptism by Bro. D.A. Smith on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1997 at Kigwa-Tabora. Now I am dwelling at Katumba.

*Bro. Anderson Rabilr*



Photo: Bro Anderson Rabilr

### **SUMBAWANGA**

I am requesting *Gospel News* and five English *Bible Basics* and five in Swahili and other tools for helping to teach the gospel and to increase our faith. I was baptized on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2000 and from that day everything changed. I am just sorry for Tanzanians who think that at death we go to heaven (Dan. 12:2, John 5:28-29). I thank God for showing me the truth from reading the Bible.

*Bro. Andrew Mlengo*



### **USAGARA**

Our ecclesia is now growing in faith, which has been helped after we received the Kiswahili *Bible Basics*. Due to this, our Bible talks and Bible discussions are going on well each Sunday and Tuesday.

*Bro. Joctor J.M. Rufano*



Photo: Usagara Ecclesial members and children

### **UVINZA**

I am a Congolese refugee boy, born on March 2, 1980, and here in Tanzania, Kigoma Western region. My father fell asleep in 1995 and I remained with my mother and two young brothers. After this incident, our mother remarried and left us alone. At that period we lived in an old refugee camp called Kigwa in Tabora, Centre region of Tanzania where Bro. Lawi Pililo began to teach me about the Christadelphian faith, and I was baptized in 1998 by Bre. David Smith and Tony Jarvis of UK. Now we are living in the Lugufu refugee camp as orphans where we have not a close relative, only our brothers in Christ who encourage us in several ways. My thanks to Bro. Bernard Ikola, my big counsellor. Brother, I always get discouraged when my young brothers tell me about a repatriation programme, and emphasise, Where shall we go? as we are now strangers in the Congo (DRC). This becomes a great dilemma to us and we feel without hope in this temporary life for the future.

*Bro. Shadrack Ngambi*

### **news from togo**

I use this occasion to express my gratitude for the long period of time that you have religiously sent me the Magazine. In fact the Magazine has been able to uplift me realising that there are other brothers and sisters in a worse situation than mine. In fact I remember them in my prayers.

I only pray that God's kingdom will appear soon to give us the comfort we have toiled for. I have been reading the Magazine via the internet. In this regard I would let you know that I haven't lost my interest in the magazine at all, rather my copies should be sent to other brothers who need them. I want to assure my brothers and sisters that we in Lome, Togo are with you all.

*Elijah Okorie*

## news from uganda

### **BUGIRI**

There is certainly something wrong with the world we live in. Every day we hear grim news of crime and violence; there are wars and the threat of war. Terrible diseases spread rapidly. Many die of hunger while others have more than enough. Many kings and rulers are not concerned for the happiness of those they rule over. We are so used to hearing about such things we take them for granted. But if we stop to think about it, we are bound to ask, Why? Surely when God first made the world - and made it such a perfect place for man to live in - He intended something better than the world of trouble and uncertainty we live in today.

In the beginning, when God made the first man, Adam, He taught him His ways. He also gave Adam a simple law, and just as a father expects obedience from his children, so God expected obedience from Adam (read Gen. 2:16-17). Adam disobeyed God, and his disobedience led eventually to death, as God had said it would. Every man and woman since that time has found it easy to sin. We read in Romans, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (v. 12). Because Adam was a sinner he died. Notice that God did not promise Adam and Eve that they would go to heaven when they died, that would have been a reward not a punishment. We also sin and die, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6), and the prophet Jeremiah says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (17:9). We read these things in the Bible and know them to be so true, just as the apostle Paul did, when he said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom..7:18). We all have to agree with Paul.

*Bro. Colin Bwire Moses*

### **IGANGA**

With me, this way, preaching is fine, but there are some problems due to lack of materials, like Bibles and some books which would add to my reading, apart from the Bible. I feel very happy and strong in faith because of the letters I receive, although you are very far off and there is no way to meet each other personally - only by writing. Remember us when you are praying because of the many problems, like famines and wars in Northern Uganda, which means it is more difficult to preach there. I have been told that *Gospel News* will no longer be sent to me and I want to know more from you.

*Bro. Kidamba Godfrey*

Comment: This is not so; *Gospel News* is not ceasing publication, as someone seems to be telling many of you. MH

### **MBARARA**

We are OK here, getting on well with God's work and, God willing, we hope to get some additional baptisms soon. We are lacking *Bible Basics*, we are left with just no copies and you know what that means; many of our contacts here are running to me, but to no avail! Endeavour

to send me at least 20 copies.

*Bro. Godwin Mugasi*



Standing on the Equator in Uganda: Bre. Rawlings, Godwin Mugasi, Stephen Waako and Sis. Mary Najjingo.

### news from zambia

#### **CHINGOLA**

I am very happy to let you know that, with the help of our Brothers, I have opened another Post Box, as my other one was closed; it is now Box 10437, Chingola, so you can send *Gospel News* there. Can you please send me an old Bible and a *Bible Basics* and I would like some tapes on the Truth.

*Bro. Cliff Masuwa*

#### **CHINSALI**

Our thanks go to brothers and sisters world-wide who spread the gospel in areas where it has never been heard. God is richly blessing us in doing His work in these last days. I pray to God to bless all Christadelphians in bearing good fruit and standing firm in the faith, because the days we are living in are bad. Let us all run faster in the race, looking for the goal ahead. Let us look for things that can give us life, basing our hopes on heavenly things. God's reward to those who keep His commands is eternal salvation.

*Bro. Ignatius Chilekwa*

#### **LUSAKA**

Before I learned the truth, through my Uncle, Bro. Herbert Tigerepasi and my Aunt, Sis. Luna, I was a believer of other doctrines and, actually, I was lost, because I did not know what I was believing. I thank God for what He did for me.

*Bro. Ephraim Mambwe Mwanje*

Thank you for the calendar. I have shifted from Nakonde and am now staying with my Uncle. I came here because I wanted to start a Course at Hone College, but I have failed, due to the cost of the fees. Please help me fight my problems by praying for me so that God will make a way through. I am just looking forward to His Kingdom, so that when it is established we all who are in need will lack nothing. May the Lord come soon.

*Sis. Esther Muntete*

#### **MUFULIRA**

In our country the rains were too much, affecting some crops. In this world all the time we face hardship. Sunday service is going on very well. Also, the Sunday School is going very, very well; we have youth groups who like the songs and Bible talks. We are sad to report the death of two Brothers, Bro. Lakaba Kaiza Bauduin and Bro. Mumba of Kitwe ecclesia. My brother, our

Father is one, so please don't stop helping us in anything. The world is full of hunger, illness, hatred etc., but don't stop serving our Father. We pray for God's blessings on all our work in His service.

*Bro. Charles M. Daka*

### **NDOLA**

James 1:2-6 encourages us to count our trials as 'joy'. This attitude will, of itself, help us to see beyond our present situations and experiences, knowing that they are for our good and that we might learn that our dependence is on God alone. We must help each other on the road, and pray for each other, but at the end of the day, we each have to bear our own burdens. We must not be like 'doubting Thomas' who said, "unless I see the print of the nails in his hands I will not believe". I am enclosing a photo of the Copperbelt Fraternal at Chingola a while ago.

*Bro James Mwanza*



Photo: Brethren, Sisters and children, taken at a Copperbelt fraternal.

I am very sorry for not replying to your letter which I received on Jan. 11. Many thanks and especially for the cards too. I am once again thanking the Lord God for the job you are doing towards us, your brothers in Christ. May the Lord God be with you all the time. I hope and trust in the Lord that one day you will be here in Zambia. I am requesting from you a *Bible Companion*, as the one I have is worn out.

*Bro. Harris Ndonga Mulongesha*

I am in turn hoping you're in good health and up with your everyday doings, as I am myself at this end of the line. The Magazine truly provides a unifying forum for all Christadelphian news and an outlet for Christadelphian writing and thought.

*Bro Oversease*

### **SPECIAL**

From Sis Eleanor and Bro John Mannell, Canada

To my dear friends who also know and love Martin Tembo. Thought you might like the name we have chosen for Aaron's middle name. Martin is such a special brother whom I am in some touch with these days but not like when I was flying regularly(ish) to Lusaka. Anyway he took good care of me while on trips down there and one time even Alice was with me and we broke bread together in his home. If any of you know whether Martin has an email address I would love to know it because then we could send him the site address to show him the news/pictures. Otherwise I shall try to do a letter snail mail to him soon.

Much love and God be with you all as we wait for our Lord together,

Comment: When Sister Eleanor worked as an Air Hostess she used to be able to see many of you all over the world and also took many books which saved on postage. She now has three

sons and should Jesus tarry, we pray they will grow to continue the good work Eleanor and John do in the Truth.

## news from zimbabwe

### **CHINHOYI**

I am very happy to be a Christian in the Christadelphian family. There are many things I learn from the Bible. Equipped with all the holy words of God, I have developed a strong zeal for seeking the Kingdom of God each and every day. From these scriptures there are some important things which each of us should mark as we journey towards the Kingdom of God. Firstly, we can read alone, using the *Bible Companion*, or as a couple, as a family or in the ecclesia. Secondly, prayer. We pray for our own salvation and that of others. It is a means of communication between ourselves and God. Thirdly, the Memorial meal. Our Lord Jesus commanded us to meet and share the bread and wine (representing his flesh and his blood) as a sign of his sacrifice. Without reading the Bible, praying and breaking bread we gradually cease to recognize these marks on our journey which leads to eternal life. Last, but not least, our hymns, which we should practice to sing alone or with others. With the hope of eternity in the Kingdom of God, we should safeguard our baptism, a sign of burying the ungodly self, and stick to the new principles within our new family.

*Bro. Obert Wiki*

### **CHISHUMBA**

We of Chishumba ecclesia are very happy to welcome Bro. Norman Kamutikaoma back into fellowship; our Brother Norman has been out of fellowship for 14 months for reasons beyond his control, being falsely accused. Praise and thanks be to God the matter is rectified. Bro. Norman has played a major part within our ecclesia among brethren and sisters. The students, both English and Shona speaking, will gain much for us having our Brother with us. Though Bro. Norman was out of fellowship, he never ceased preaching about his beliefs and hope of the very soon coming Kingdom. Our Bro. Grey Masoka is still very sick and is at home. He is not taking any medicine now, and is being looked after by his son-in-law's parents, who are JWs; they are looking after him very well; may God bless them.

*Bro. Ngoni Chikwata*

### **CONCESSION**

Thanks a million for *Gospel News*. This is a catchment area for anything produced in the Shona language.

*Bro. E. Kagogodza*

### **DETE**

I am a person who likes to spread the word of God to many people, but there are 'pros' and 'cons' which hinder my work. I have been cultivating in the field with my wife, Sis. Miriam, but the hand is one as she can't work hard due to the operation on her stomach and I am using my hands because I do not have assets, like a plough and oxen. Now I am doing gardening where I generate income for supporting my family.

*Bro. Fungai Phiri*

### ***GWERU***

People called 'Christians' should live disciplined lives and each Christian should be careful not to be caught up by the covetous spirit of our society, which leads to the worshipping of materialism. John is warning of this (1 John:15-16), because it is incompatible with the love for the Father and because the world and all in it are transient (v. 17). As Christians, we should be aware that the spirit of antichrist is already at work (vs. 18,19) and be prepared for battle. Only those who are deeply rooted in Christ can withstand the antichrist. Our key words must be "Love not the world". I hope God will help us through this hopeless world.

*Bro. Dzingai*

### ***KADOMA***

There are so many problems here in Zimbabwe. For myself, the wife of my employer left the country last year. She left me with nothing, but every month I get my salary, which is enough to buy food for the month. I say to people like me that they must not worry; Jesus said we must not worry about what we are going to eat or wear. We must look to God, who is able to give us more than we need (2 Cor. 9:8). The joy of looking forward is peaceful, but life style is clouded by worry. Jesus wants me to lay all my worry on him (Matt 11:30). I thank you for all your prayers.

*Sis. Alice Mlambo*

### ***KARIBA***

Some time back I received from a Sister some books - "Elphis Israel", "Great News for the World" and a Bible Student's Map book, which I appreciate very much. The Brothers here are well and fit, sowing the seed of the Truth. Response from people from various walks of life (both believers and unbelievers) is very encouraging. Most people are keen to know the Bible teaching and several are on the Bible course. God willing, some will be added to our numbers, in due course. I am enclosing some pictures.

*Bro. Joshua Pakali*



Photo: After the baptism of Bro. Witness Majecha (left to right): Bre. Richard, Joshua, Witness, Revi and Innocent.

Maybe you do not know that I have a problem with my eyes. I always meet up with the brothers here in Kariba and thank God we have increased in number; we are now seven Brothers and several students who, God willing, may be baptised soon. I can hardly read or write, and often get help from the brothers when it is my duty to preach or to read a certain chapter when we meet to remember the death and resurrection of our Master, Jesus. Hopefully, in the Kingdom to come my sight will be restored, by the mercy of our Lord Jesus.

*Bro. Innocent Manyembere*

Jesus said that no man knows the day or the hour, except the Father, so we should be prepared to meet him at any time. A pregnant woman gets busy preparing for her child, so we are spiritually pregnant, but we must not be proud, since some may bring forth nothing when Christ returns. We recall that even Moses did not reach Canaan from Egypt. We must not see splinters in our friend's eye when we have a plank in our own eye. Let us testify the word of the

Lord according to the Scriptures, especially those who claim to be prophets today.

*Bro. Clever Thomas*

### **MAGUNJE**

The apostle Paul said, Who can deliver me from this body of death? (Rom7:24). Although all men are sinners and unable to help themselves, God has given to us a Saviour and Deliverer. Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), he is the Saviour of the world, if they will have him. The Old Testament points forward to Jesus and God's promise to send him. The New Testament tells us of his coming, his life, death and resurrection. "God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Jesus Christ saves men from the consequences of sin.

*Bro. Emmanuel S. Mgugeufe*

There is no room for quarrelling in Christ's family. Christ died in agony to give us peace with God. We must not spoil that heavenly peace by earthly bickering. If we let God's word work in our lives, we will produce fruit. Let us pray to the living, Almighty God, our Father, for the setting up of His Kingdom with the return of Jesus Christ and to understand the scriptures.

*Bro. Jonathan Muparabasa*



Photo: Bro. Jonathan

Many thanks for *Gospel News* that we have been receiving regularly. Every time I receive it I feel so much less lonely in times of problems and also in happiness. Give my deep appreciation and thanks to all brothers and sisters for their zeal and effort in working the things which please God. I am praying that God will soon send His Son so that we may all share the joy which the world cannot give to us, especially during times of distress and evil. I am happy that my son is enjoying the Bible stories I tell him about Jesus Christ, Adam and Eve etc., so can you please send him Sunday School Bible stories.

*Sis. P. Tongovona*

### **News from Europe / Eurasia**

#### **news from albania**

We are delighted to report the baptism of Bro EMERSON in Pogradec; may he run the race faithfully to the end.

## news from azerbaijan

### **BAKU**

We are still here awaiting for UNHCR. We pray for you all. Please don't forget us but pray for us. May God bless your work on and on!

*Bro. N [ex-Iran]*

This is N--- , the Iranian refugee who living in Baku , i just wanted you to know that I always hold you all in my prayer although we hadn't any contact to each other .

*Bro N*

I am trying to learn English, so that I can translate some basic things into Farsi, like a chronological outline of basic Bible facts, to help others understand. We love and pray for you.

*Sis. E. [ex-Iran]*

## news from belarus

### **BARANOVICHI**

We are really grateful for the work of Brother Igor from Moscow who comes here often and helps us with literature etc. I am in touch with a man I spoke to 4 years ago on Biblical themes and it seems he will respond more. I am very happy about this.

*Bro. Leonid*



Photo: A newly baptised family in Belarus

### **LUNINETS**

The Lord Jesus said that if people persecuted him, then they would persecute us too. This is happening now as a sign of the last days. My flat is always at the disposal of those persecuted for righteousness' sake.

*Bro. Sasha*

### **MINSK**

Things have had to change in our lives because of financial problems but I hope all will now normalize. I have 4 more people interested to receive *Bible Basics*.

*Bro. Gennady*

### **TERESHK**

I am eagerly reading through the books sent, they are is true spiritual food for me. I would love to have a library of Christadelphian books like this but I know only Russian.

*Bro. Vladimir*

## news from bosnia

We are delighted to report the baptisms of Brothers D and I in Sarajevo; may the Lord guide them to His Kingdom through their lives in this difficult land.

We reproduce an email just as received from one of our new brethren:

Hey brother i'v got extra good news: Another friend of mine wants to be baptised YUHUUUU I could just scream and sing how happy I am because of it. It came finally, I am so happy, I am sorry if I sound crazy but that means so much to me. Praise the God almighty!

### news from bulgaria

*SOFIA*

Now I am preparing an exposition. It is a sort of address to younger brothers and sisters. I hope it will have some effect - at least to those with relevant disposition of mind. It may be interesting for you too. I started writing it last night but I was short of time. I hope to finish it today.

*Bro. Lyuben*

I am now very sick and my father also is about to die, all I think about is to have my burial done by you who taught me about Jesus and the hope. Please pray for me.

*Bro. Ivan*

### news from greenland

In response to the call we have each received to take the Gospel into all the world before the Lord returns, the Bible Basics Follow Up Team have been expanding work into Greenland and Iceland, where we are unaware that there are any Christadelphians. Response from Iceland to advertising has been excellent- we now have around 50 contacts studying *Bible Basics*. Seeing the population is only about 250,000, we found the response quite amazing.

Spurred on by this, we have sought to advertise on web sites in Greenland, where the population is even smaller.

We've found that the internet is only just taking off there, and of course people have never had offers of free Bible literature put to them before. Some internet cafes are opening and we are in touch with them with regard to advertising. Further, the small population there is very closely connected with each other, and we found a listing of all home pages of Greenlanders - there are about 30 people in Greenland who have their own private home page. So we've written to the people and asked if they'd like a pen pal with whom to discuss the Bible, and whether they'd like us to send them a copy of *Bible Basics*. Our working team have also discovered that the University of Greenland has a theology faculty - with one lecturer and four students! The way things are going, most people in Greenland and Iceland who are online and know some English will have been approached by us with the offer of the Truth. We've also learnt that there's a major alcohol problem in these areas, and we are seeking to get our material about "Living with alcoholism: A Christian Response" [see [www.carelinks.net/alcohol.html](http://www.carelinks.net/alcohol.html)] translated into Danish, Icelandic and the Greenland language.

## news from iran

An Iranian Brother on the run because of persecution in Iran reports:

I hope that God helping to all of us and show us the true way in every where! There are some people who want to baptize and I'm in contact with them! God willing they will come here but the date is not clear yet, about the other brothers & sisters in Iran, I have to say that everybody are ok and they are growing up in believe and faith as well, [brother K] has sent me some offline message, he sounds so busy! And I received an email from [brother D], and brother M called me a few days before and brother A also. And I heard from the other sister that she is ok too, thanks to God that everybody's living peaceful at the moment!

Lots of love and regard, God bless

## news from israel

### **BEER SHEVA**

I ask for your prayers for my daughter who is still unconscious after her accident, and for my son, who is going to remarry, to a woman who has a child. I have been visited by several brothers and sisters recently, some of them came without a translator so we couldn't communicate, but I send greetings and love to you all.

*Sis. Anna*

## news from italy

I'm fine here, by the grace of God. Thank you for your letter, magazines etc. I have heard from Simon Phillips and Anna, who have briefed me about brethren and sisters here in Italy - I'm glad to be one of them. I'm alone here, as my wife and kids are back in Ghana.

*Bro. Foster Ankrah-Pambour*

## news from latvia

We are delighted to report the baptisms of EVA and LIGA at the Riga Bible School; and KARINA, TAISA, EDGARS, NINA, ROMAN and ALEKSANDR on subsequent visits. May God bless and guide them in their walk.

### **JEKABPILS**

We are both still very much in shock after the loss of our mother. All is very dark for us, and worse, we have difficulty finding even odd jobs, and we now have only a sack of potatoes to eat, we worked on a farm and then they wouldn't pay us but gave us the potatoes. Please pray for us, we so trust in God.

*Brothers Sasha and Sergej*

**JELGAVA**

Today I was in touch with a great question. Why it is so hard to say to our relatives that we love them? I think it causes many problems. We actually feel, that we care for our dear people, we want to do many things to say it in our actions, but we never say it in words. I think we are not alone, we just do not realise it. And I know, that our Lord loves us, He has said it many times in Bible, He proves it with His works, but do we say it in our prayers - I do love you, Jesus?

*Bro. Janis*

**KRASLAVA**

I am finding reading hard as my eyesight is so bad, and it is difficult to get a large print Bible here. I would so love to travel to Bible meetings but my health is too bad; I love you all!

*Sis. Valeriana*

**LIBAGI**

I am hoping to come to the study day in Riga, God willing. I am so very glad Duncan and Cindy are in Riga, they are a great help to us. I would love to go to Russia to see my mother and try to preach the Truth to her but the fare is so expensive.

*Bro. Vladimir*

**PILTENE**

I do not cease wrapping you up in my prayers as you continue to work for God in dangerous places like Pakistan and Afghanistan. I hope that even here I can be to others a comforting light in this darkness, and even if there is no response I hope I will remain faithful.

*Sis. Olga*

**REZEKNE**

I have two weeks holiday from work so I can write to let you know that I feel God working very actively in my life especially through what I pray for and His way of answering or working out those answers.

*Sis. Anna*

**RIGA**

Life here in prison is really difficult, especially as my relatives do not help me at all. I think of the places where I hear there are baptisms and I am with you all.

*Bro. Anatoly*

I arrived here OK. My life and work is somewhat hard, looking after an old lady who cannot walk at all. She was from St Petersburg before she came here, so we reminisce about what life was like in USSR. Please pray for me. I miss you all terribly, and wonder who is sitting in my place at the breaking of bread meetings.

*Sis. Tanya [currently working abroad]*

I am thankful to all brothers and sisters who organised the 'camp' over the Easter holidays. There was Bro. Graham Mitchel who introduced us to brothers and sisters in Africa through his video. It was so moving to see them and also to see brothers and sisters in the Philippines, but it was also terrible to see those about Iran and the devastation of Afghanistan. Bro. Marcus gave a wonderful talk on the tabernacle in the wilderness. We also watched the most moving and beautiful film about the life of Jesus Christ; it is the most wonderful film about Jesus I have ever seen. It was so nice to see our brothers and sisters again - too many names to list here. I just say 'Thank you' to the brothers and sisters who organised

this 'camp' and many, many thanks to our God and His Son.

*Sis Aija*



Photo: The Riga Ecclesia

### **TUKUMS**

I arrived OK here in Ireland but I am being made to work so extremely hard, and I think to return home to Latvia. I am having to work in the fields very hard and long work. It is also hard being here and not knowing English and trying to be understood. Please pray for me.

*Sis. N [currently working abroad]*

### **VILANI**

I am still very ill, maybe I will not recover. My sight has started to fail very badly. I am surely hoping for the Kingdom of God, it is my only hope. I manage to read some pages from the Bible each day but it is hard for me to concentrate. Please pray for me.

*Bro. Fyodyor*

## **news from lithuania**

### **LENTVARIS**

I am so pleased with the large print Bible sent to me, now I read and read so much. I am sorry to tell you that my mother is at the point of death, the doctors do not think she will last more than a month. Please pray for me.

*Sis. Lubov*

### **VILNIUS**

The Bible School was just excellent, I was very strengthened and look forward to our next meeting.

*Bro. Valdas*

I continue having very great problems and I do ask you pray for me and my son, as I pray for you. For example, recently, our block had a new door fitted, we each had to pay towards it but I truly have no money, and so they don't give me the key to the front door of our block. So please pray for me in this and many other problems.

*Sis. Tanya*

## **news from macedonia**

We are delighted to report the baptism of Brother D; may the Lord guide him to His Kingdom.

You cannot imagine my feelings, that I have been having after every denial of sin. I've been having a lot of dreams, but as never before. I have started a real internal combat, with the help of God. Thank you so much for letting me enter the life that God wanted us to have. I really find that *Bible Basics* has certainly been my personal manual for understanding the Bible. Thanks

and God bless you and your whole family.

*Bro. D.*

#### news from malta

We enjoy reading the Magazine. We have been to the CBM flat in Malta on our twice yearly visit. We now have Bro. Emmanuel, 82 years old, baptized five years ago approx., and Bro. Walter and Sis. Josephine, baptized 18 months ago; they are younger and came to us via a 'Fellowship' meeting. In Gozo there is Bro. Salvu who is very lonely and has had some 'persecutions' over the past five years or so. Some of his hay crop, used to feed his goats, was stolen and his doorway blocked during the Festa so that he couldn't leave his home and watch his crops. A few months earlier his cycle tyres (his only transport) were slashed for a joke(!) by the parish priest. Gozo is small and Salvu's village has three streets only, and a massive church, so all know he does not 'confess' etc. It is a joy to visit him also. We have so much to be thankful for.

*Bro. & Sis. G. Jenkins*

#### news from moldova

##### **CHISINAU**

I have finished the translation of *What is the Gospel?* into Romanian and I hope it is going to help people know the truth!

*Sis. Nastya*

I am so pleased that my daughter was baptized and for your visit. She is changing and I see that God is at work in us through your work, thank you!

*Sis. Elvira*

I am truly happy to be baptized and be your sister. I have many problems, I believe God will help me through. I am proud to be a sister of Christ.

*Sis. Ira*

#### news from morocco

We are delighted to report the baptisms of brethren H and O, and trust that the Lord will bless them and all His scattered flock in this Moslem land unto His Kingdom.

Thank you for your last visit, we were happy to meet you in Morocco, and to meet other brothers, I wish to meet you again in other city with new brothers, pray for us , we will do all in our power to reach people in other places to hear the message of our God.

*Bro. H*

I was very glad to become your brother by baptism. I have four friends here who need the *Arabic Bible Basics for Moslems*, this is a very important book for my preaching.

*Bro. O*

I am trying by all means to get people here to accept the Bible truth and to be baptized, it is a hard job, and we have such people interested in far cities where we need to travel to.

*Bro S*

#### news from norway

Bro. John Benson is going to visit all brothers and sisters in Norway, so he together with some other Christadelphians will visit me. We can speak, read the Bible and break bread together. It was very nice recently to read my favourite book Proverbs. I enjoy reading them. I think Proverbs was the first Bible chapter that I read when I got my Bible many years ago.

*Sis. Helena*

#### news from oman

It is encouraging to receive your mail after a long time. Alice and I are so happy to know about your welfare. I will give you the list to whom *Bible Basics* is to be sent. The ecclesia is growing well. Pray for this, as you planted the first seed in Oman. I am attaching the list of the ecclesia. Please pray for this. Please pray for us. All are sending their love to you.

*Bro. David*

#### news from pakistan

The Muslim extremists are behind those who are persecuting J's family. Brothers and Sisters of TTS have decided for me to hide for around two weeks. I am leaving TTS on Monday. Please pray for my safety. Brothers and sisters, we need your prayers and urgent help for case and other things including my two weeks stay somewhere. Please respond me as soon as possible. I am in need of your help. With much love and peace,

*Bro A*

I am very thankful for all your efforts. After reading your emails I am very much relaxed and feeling light. I believe that every situation has a time. I can foresee the wonderful time that *He* will use me abundantly to share His gospel among the lost and bring many to *His* kingdom. I believe that *His* provision will reach to me through you all on time. I know that *thank you* are small words to express my real feelings for all of you. You must believe that *He* is so pleased to you all when *He* enables you to share my aims and prove our true love for another. I love you all very much (2 Cor. 2:4) to let you know the depth of my love for you all. In His unfailing Love

*Bro. K* [currently on the run from persecution - he urgently needs our prayers]

Recently Moslem extremists killed a boy here. Please pray for Pakistan and for us to be able to even live here as Christians.

*Sis. Safina*

Here a young boy who is Christian drank water from the tap of a Mosque, so they told him to convert to be a Moslem, and when he refused, they torture him, they peel his nails and give him electric shock and send the body back to his parents. I am sure one day all Christians will be

killed here by Moslems. Pray for us.

*Sis. E.*

Today I baptized two women. I went to their colony, where we built a pool for the baptism. I asked many questions of them, to make it clear why they wanted baptism and understood the doctrines, did they feel a true love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and how they were dealing with repenting of their sins. At the end I baptized them, I was very happy, and they were too.

*Sis. S.*

### news from poland

#### **POZNAN**

I am hoping to translate some things to Belarussian over the Summer holidays.

*Bro. Val*

[Note: This will be our first literature in Belarussian language].

### news from russia

We are delighted to report the baptism of GALINA (Armavir); may the Lord guide her to His Kingdom.

#### **ABINSK**

I continue to have many problems with my health and with persecution here. Please pray for us here.

*Bro. S.*

#### **CHELYABINSK**

You know that we love you so much, you are welcome any time you like. I am not sure that we'll have Bible week-end in Chelyabinsk. It seems to me that the time is too short.

*Sis. Lena*

#### **EFREMOV**

I very much enjoyed some recent visits here and learnt much about God's word. I am enjoying a great correspondence with Sister Ludmila Kuritsyna, she is a true Christadelphian and very inspiring to me. I have truly much joy in the Lord.

*Bro. Oleg*

#### **IRBIT**

We are so grateful that you brought us to God, and that in your care for us we saw more of the face of Jesus Christ. We have distributed *Bible Basics* here and there are some who wish to be baptized whom we have been teaching.

Bro. Toly & Sis. Nadia

#### **JOSHKAR-OLA**

My great desire, as I think is true of so many of us scattered ones, is to be together, to take strength from each other, and so I pray for this to be the case and for it to be possible.

*Sis Elena*



Photo: A Group at the Russian Winter Bible School

### **KAZAN**

I just received a letter from Brother Don Styles from USA, I was much comforted. I am frustrated by lack of response to the Gospel here. Some visitors from CBM came here to see me and told me of their journeys around Russia.

*Sis. Ludmila K.*

Here we are fine. It is now about a year since we were baptized and it seems such a long time already. Life is still new for us. I am working through the books sent to me with much joy and learning a lot.

*Bro. Andrej*

### **KIROV**

I am reading the books sent to me each day and I would really love to have more such books, I have a great hunger for good explanations of the Bible. I send greetings to all.

*Sis. Ludmila*

### **OKTYABRSKIJ**

I feel that this world is so evil that unless we are going forward in our spiritual growth, then we will be sucked back into the evil of the world, it is so strong. People are concerned so much with things which we know now to be totally insignificant whereas, praise God, He has given us His Truth!

*Sis. Larisa*

### **POKROVKA**

When I hear about the situation with our brothers in Afghanistan and Pakistan, I realize deep within me that my own problems are not so great. But all the same they are there, like possibly losing custody of my son, my poor health, such low wages now, etc. I can only pray to God but I also pray to Him for my brothers and sisters more now.

*Sis. Svetlana*

**ROSTOV** We are fine here and disappointed by all divisions. I have been preaching to a Moslem person by internet, but he refuses to abandon Koran.

*Bro. Andrej*



Photo: Sisters. Ludmila K.& C working out a Bible passage

### **RZHEV**

I am very excited to hear about preaching in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Christadelphians have a hard time in truly growing here in Russia, there is so much against the acceptance of our

preaching. I pray for you.

*Bro. Sasha*

### **SANKT PETERBURG**

I continue to be encouraged by *Gospel News*, it is one of the pieces of literature I read each morning as I seek to start each day with a time for spiritual reflection and prayer to our Father in Heaven.

*Bro. Valerij*

### **SHCHYOKINO**

I have as always many questions. They are about many things. Such as why did the altar built of wood not burn up? Why does God say He doesn't ever change, but He does? Who are the spirits in prison whom Jesus preached to when He died? But beyond all these I do truly love God, and I love you, I am with you in my town here.

*Bro Boris*

### **TYMSK**

We are surrounded here by so much spiritual blindness. May God keep me and my family in His way so that we can come into His Kingdom of light and truth when Jesus returns. I ask the Lord to help me carry the many crosses I have here.

*Bro. Ivan*

**VINOGRADOVKA** I am feeling very lonely here. I am very grateful to Sister Ludmila from Kazan who writes to me and supports me in hard moments. I am reading the Bible very much but I feel very alone, and I missed seeing you all at the Winter Bible School.

*Sis. Galina*

## **news from serbia**

### **BELGRADE**

The new legislation about registering churches has now been passed here, and it seems only Orthodox, Catholics, Jews, Moslems, Lutherans and Hungarian Reformed have been allowed to formally register. I know this will make things harder for us as we by all means try to spread the Gospel to the dark world. I am excited to hear of baptisms in Morocco and the way people are brave enough to break with tradition. I am preaching to some Chinese here and would appreciate copies of Chinese *Bible Basics*.

*Bro. Vladislav*

I am very busy with my PhD work, and haven't had the chance to meet with Bro. William much. We are OK. Last time when Bro. Owen was here in Hungary, he put *Bible Basics* in the public library.

*Bro. Zoltan*

I am preaching by internet still. I have one Serbian man in Norway who is writing and I hope he will convert. That he even answered and replies to me indicates the work of God's Angels calling people.

*Bro. William*

### news from turkey

We dont forget you. We are very happy for new birth in baptism. We want to remain with contact with you. We so want to see you again. "for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls" (1 Peter 1.9).

*Bro. F. & Sis. R [ex-Iran]*

By God's will I am having to leave where I am now and move to another city in Turkey. For some reason our application for asylum in USA has been again turned down despite all documents in order and we are threatened to be deported to Northern Iraq. Please pray for us.

*Bro. H [ex-Iran and Iraq]*

### news from turkmenistan

I have returned from Saint Petersburg. I went to Russia to visit one translation company and was looking for a job. The situation with jobs here is getting harder. I was looking for a job in the field of translation or interpreter, or even child or old woman care. I went there as many people are going anywhere to find jobs. But I am *not* sad and everything is fine as God was with me and yesterday I came to Ashgabat. Take care and God bless you.

*Sis. G.*

### news from ukraine

#### **POLTAVA**

For a real believer in Jesus Christ, he has been taught to love one another, and always try to help in difficulties within one's possibilities. No *laws* any more. Just pure *love*. It is not for human beings to judge disciples in the family of Christ as that is possible only for one Person.

*Bro. A*

I am trying to work as quickly as possible on producing a new magazine in the Russian language, there is a great need for it.

*Sis. Ludmila*

I realize more and more how meeting with the brothers from England has truly opened my eyes to a new world, the world of the Bible and of the truth, of Jesus Christ, and of the far better life there is and the hope we can share. I want to say thank you.

*Bro. Gennady*

### News from the Americas

### news from st lucia

But truly it is God who gives the increase! We had our public lecture on the events surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus at the town hall on Thursday night this week, and we had

about 30 people attend. Many were contacts we knew, some were not. They came because of letters, posters, and newspaper ads. so the effort was not in vain. Our spirits were lifted through the roof and we thank you heartily for your prayers on our behalf. Although we had one heckler from the "Ancient Egyptian Order" trying to create trouble, no one was deceived, and a good sized crowd stayed behind for discussion following the talk. Among our friends we had, Linda, Keith (who drove us to and from), Eddie and Merlisha, Gabriel and Theresa, Percival, Laurie, and most of our brothers and sisters. We also had one contact, Madeline, whom we had never met but apparently used to come out frequently, she joined us for memorial and lecture on Sunday as well. We feel full with blessings, and very enthusiastic as we now turn our energies toward the Campaign.

Sunday we were graced with the presence of Brother Allan and Sister June Curry. Brother Allan gave a wonderful exhortation on *waiting*...something we are somewhat familiar with. He explained that throughout bible history God has asked his servants to wait, from Abraham to King David, to Jesus...so who are we to complain about St. Lucian time uh! We were further uplifted by Brother George, with his lecture following lunch, he spoke of the events in Daniel's image leading to the return of our Lord. We pray the day is soon approaching.

Thank you all again for your prayers, please know that you are in ours. We continue to be blessed by the lessons God is teaching us through our work here, and the people we meet. We tend to make the mistake of thinking we are teaching them but when you get right down to it, the receiving is very much on both ends. We hope that God will bring further increase to the seeds encouraged here, and we pray that as Allan and I head to St. Vincent on Friday to begin planting some more, they also will receive the water they need that will bring them to everlasting sustenance in His word.

With love in that blessed hope we share,

*Allan, Jess, Joe, and Kate.*

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it..."(Psa 127:1)..."for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb 11:10)

St. Lucia is very tropical; sunshine all year round; beautiful beaches, white sand, so come and pay us a visit. In our small ecclesia we have just four members – two brothers and two sisters helping to spread the gospel. I am a taxi driver (working in the Trouist Business) and meet people from all over the world The first question Tourists askes me is 'Where is your best place?' My answer, 'The Piton, about one-and-a-half hours drive each way' (see the picture). He said, 'How did this peak find itself there?' This is a volcanic formation a few thousand feet from the sea, up in the sky, the handiwork of God. My answer, 'There is someone much bigger than this pick, and that is GOD. He can fit into your heart and into mine. Let us just trust Him.'

*Bro. Michael Joseph*

Thank you for the book. I am very glad to hear from you. Although I am working, when I go home I am tired – it seems for ever. I miss you all and think of you often and wish I could see you more often.

*Sis. Julie Gonzaque*

## News from Asia

### news from china

There is no one wanting to be baptized at the moment. Some people listened to our meetings for almost a year, but they don't believe the gospel. Some said they need more time.

*Bro Y*

### news from malaysia

Thank you for your letter. I am still in the Welfare Home. It is due to my illness that I could not write sooner. I have had some brothers and sisters come to break bread, and they may come again, God willing.

*Bro. Joe Theseira*

## News from Oceania

### news from australia

Would you please arrange to send us *Bible Basics* for the Public Libraries. We have been checking on a copy which was placed in one of our Libraries and it is being taken out regularly. We are now anxious to place copies in other libraries which we have found do not have copies. Would you please send the copies to - The South Brisbane Ecclesia, P.O. Box 6077, Upper Mt. Gravatt, Queensland, 4122, Australia.

Comment: Several have been baptised as the result of *Bible Basics* in Public Libraries and we are pleased to supply copies for this work. Those who feel able to help sponsor this work in some 50 different languages can send donations to the Christadelphian Advancement Trust..

## We must thank our God in all circumstances

Firstly I would like to thank our heavenly Father who gave me this opportunity to write this to my dear Brothers and Sisters worldwide in Christ our Lord and Saviour.

I had a very stressful time recently but by the grace of our heavenly Father who has provided me with Brothers and Sisters it was not too hard for me.

I'm currently staying in a shack with my half sister and friend. As you all know we are living in a wicked community and I was assaulted by someone who threw a burning paraffin stove on me. I thank my God with great joy because He rescued me and I wasn't burnt as badly as I thought.

Because of that event I went to stay with Sis. Leonie and Bro. Paul Verster for some few days and it would take me many pages to explain to you the details of the love they gave me.

I believe we all know how weak we are in facing hard times alone, but what encourages me is the fact that I'm in Christ Jesus and I belong to the good family (the Ecclesia), indeed if it waeren't like that I couldn't continue in the way. I do feel weak sometimes and unstable-minded because of the circumstance, I face in this life, but I'm strong because of my brothers and sisters who are always standing by me .

Brothers and Sisters, we must be content for Christ's sake because our heavenly Father will pay back trouble to those who trouble us. So "we must give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess.5:18).

May our heavenly Father soon send His Son so that our joy may be fulfilled and my Brothers and Sisters be rewarded for the fellowship, love, comfort and the warm hands they gave me.

*Bro. Morgan Sibusiso Zondo ( Kempton Park, South Africa)*

### **Is Anything Too Hard For The Lord?**

Hospitality was very important among the people of the East and still is today. The three men mentioned in Genesis 18:12, did not ask Abraham for any refreshment. He went out to invite them (verses 4 and 5) and was generous to them in the extreme (verses 2-7).

Many of us face economic hardship, but let us not make that an excuse to avoid being hospitable. Read Hebrews 12:13 These were no ordinary men; indeed, the one speaking was an angel: verses 12 to 14 make this clear. This was God's special representative who came personally to announce to Abraham the fulfilment of His promise. Sarah was to have a child which, humanly was impossible. What a comfort to know that God can do all things and yet He cares about you and me enough to know our thoughts.

*Bro. Dzongai Sumburera (Gwevu, Zimbabwe)*

### **Sierra Leone Fraternal**



Above: Brethren squatting in front and the Brother standing on right are from Liberia. Standing at the back, some of the newly baptized Brothers and Sisters from Wanjama and Kenema ecclesias.

Below: Sisters preparing food for the fraternal.



### **Feel Love in our Hearts**

This love does not only imply romance or a marriage relationship, but the love we have in our hearts. 1 John 4:7-8 says, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God." This is clear yet difficult for many of us to comprehend.

I want to share an imaginary story about a blind woman who was desperate; with the loss of her sight she felt hopeless. She was always sad and depressed and sometimes felt she wanted her life to end.

One day a good man came her way as she was crossing a road and nearly met with an accident. The man managed to hold her when she stumbled. She wondered who he was and thanked him for saving her life. The man asked her if she felt his hands holding her and she said she did. After a short acquaintance they became friends and she told the man about her sadness. The man told her that although she could not see she could feel - she could feel the unseen thing, the love of God in her heart. This is something we can all have and experience if we trust in God's Holy Word.

By nature we all are weak one way or another, but the Lord said to the apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). Sometimes, brothers and sisters are judged by others for their wrongdoing, yet if they are repentant to God He forgives, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9); "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered" (Rom. 4:7); "be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

*Sis. Liberty Mandap (Hong Kong)*

### **Exhortation - Confession**

One of the reasons behind our gathering together to memorialize the death and resurrection of Christ is to obtain and celebrate the forgiveness of our sins. This was accomplished through the sacrifice of Christ. So we thought it might be useful for us to consider confession. For it is clear that confession must precede forgiveness. Through the use of some scriptural examples we

hope to clarify some of the characteristics that are related to confession, certain elements that must precede forgiveness. And then when we do admit our sins, certain obvious qualities that must accompany the confession that we make.

A young boy once told his parents about his crime before they found out. In other words he confessed to them his sin. There is something magical about this confession. Despite his parents being upset they were never quite as angry as they would have been if they had found out about the crime themselves. For some reason hearing their son admitting his mistake was less offensive to them. Confession of sin then is an important step that softens the blow of punishment. Confession of our sins is more useful than trying to cover them up.

Let's spiritualize this story. God is the father in the illustration, we are the young boy that has done wrong. We must turn to God and allow Him to cleanse us. Romans tells us that the punishment for sin is death. There is no point trying to soften death's sting by trusting in our own strength. Our only hope is to place our trust in God, in His merciful hands and confess to Him our sins, leading on to His forgiveness. The boy who brought his crime to the attention of his parents instead of hiding it, evidently understood certain principles that we would do well to remember when we bring our sins before God. Firstly the boy knew his position before his parents. If the boy thought that he himself was the ruler of the household, he wouldn't be worried about telling his parents about his crime. And this is much the way that the world treats God today, they deny His existence, thus establishing for themselves that they can do whatever they please.

In contrast to this we need to recognize that God is the supreme Ruler. He is the one who sets the rules; He is the one that has the power to enforce them. The boy who confessed his mistake realized that his parents were in control So recognition of God is essential to confessions that we make.

In Isaiah 6 we learn a valuable lesson. Isaiah before he starts his ministry to speak to the people, is presented with a marvellous vision of God. He sees God sitting upon a throne attended by creatures praising his name, and the vision causes Isaiah to confess his sin. In verse 5, after seeing the vision, Isaiah says "Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts".

The vision clarified in the mind of Isaiah the position of God in his life. He saw God as supreme; he saw that God was powerful; God had authority in Isaiah's life. This understanding was essential to Isaiah's confession.

If we can picture God in the same vivid manner, we too will be startled to confess our sins rather than trying to cover them up.

Recognition of wrong is another requisite for confession. To illustrate this let us consider the example of Judah and Tamar in Genesis ch 38. Judah was a man who had three sons the first of which was given to Tamar. The first son was so wicked that God killed him. And Judah gave his second son to Tamar as a husband. And the second son was also very wicked so that God smote him and he died leaving Tamar a widow yet again. So Judah promised to Tamar his third son, as soon as he was old enough to be given to her as a husband. But when the child grew Judah didn't fulfil his promise. So Tamar was left a widow without seed. Tamar decided to take matters into her own hands and dressed as a prostitute and sat at the side of the road. Judah came along that road, met her and unknowingly had an affair with Tamar his daughter-in-law.

Tamar became pregnant and was charged by the people with prostitution. Let us take up the account in verse 24 "And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in-law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt. When she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff.[the pledge] And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son".

So we learn from this that Judah recognized sin in others but he was blind to his own error. Without even giving Tamar a chance to defend herself he condemned her to death. He as prepared to judge her for the very sin he himself had committed three months earlier.

The great task then in this situation is to recognize ourselves as the sinners. It is impossible to confess our faults if we are blind to this fact. The light of Bible truth must be directed to examine ourselves. If always we direct this light towards other people we will never see our own sins. And if we do not recognize them how can we confess them to God?

It takes courage to admit wrongdoing. Saying, I was wrong, must be one of the hardest phrases to get our tongue around. It's very difficult to admit these sins to our heavenly Father. Imagine the Israelites under the Law of Moses walking towards the tabernacle, taking the sin offering. A person who walked that way with a female goat beside them would surely attract stares from people around. It would be humiliating. People would question what you had done.

Confessing our sins to others has always required great courage yet this is a command from God. James in chapter 5:16 says: Confess your faults to one another that ye be healed and pray for one another. So although this confession is difficult, the character of God makes it easier. Why not confess our sins to God who is willing to completely forgive us. God was willing to let His son die for our sins. There is no limit to God's love. So we must admit our faults to God in prayer. God already knows our sins before we confess them for He is everywhere present and He witnesses everything that we do and He will judge us for them. So admitting them to God can help us. What is there to lose? And there is no point whatsoever in hiding our sins from an all-knowing God.

We know then that a sinner who confesses his sins is admitting to several things:

- First of all in his confession there is an acknowledgement of God as a supreme authority in life.
- Second, he recognizes that he's done something wrong, that he's a sinner.
- And, finally, he recognizes that God is a merciful God who is willing to forgive.

But it's a big step to admit wrongdoing. A big step but a crucial one. And once we decide to make that step the Bible goes further to explain how we should proceed with our confession. Our confession must be accompanied by several characteristics.

There is a wonderful confession made in 2 Chronicles ch 33. A very wicked king of Judah was moved to repent by the affliction that God sent upon him. The change in character of king Manasseh is manifested in his prayer. Manasseh was a horrible king in his early reign. He became king at the age of twelve and one would hardly recognize him as being the son of Hezekiah. He ruined the orderly reforms that his father had made. He re-established false

worship in every corner of the nation. He built groves. He rebuilt the alters for the worship of false gods. He built an alter for worship of stars and placed it right in the temple. Manasseh stoops so far that he even cast his children to be sacrificed to false gods. And king Manasseh made the entire nation follow his evil practices.

That quick summary of Manasseh's life takes us up to verse 11 "Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God".

So the rebuke of the Lord against Manasseh in carrying him away to Babylon moved Manasseh into prayer. And it's no doubt that Manasseh turned to Yahweh and sought for deliverance. It was a major turn for this king. He turned 180 degrees. He no longer trusted in the gods of wood and stone but he made supplication to the Lord, no doubt asking God to forgive him of the sins that he had committed. Manasseh made a confession to God.

From this example we learn that humility must accompany our admission of sins. The king finally acknowledged that it was not of his own accord or power that he ruled this nation. Manasseh had to learn not to trust in his own strength, his own strength was taken away when he was taken to Babylon.

So we see that God will not accept confession from a proud person. God is willing to forgive even the most horrendous sin. There is no sin too large that cannot be forgiven. Take comfort in knowing that there is no limit to the mercy of God if we approach Him in the proper manner.

Finally, let us read a passage that we would all do well to memorize, two short verses from 1 John chapter 1:8-9 which says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness".

*Bro Emmanuel Mphambo ( Randburg, South Africa).*

## **Water Baptism**

Jesus commanded all those who believed in him to be baptized in water. Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt.28:18-19). To be 'baptized' means to be 'totally immersed'. When a person repents from his sins and believes Jesus died for him, he or she is to be taken to water, put right under it and brought up again.

Understanding Water baptism is the key to a victorious and liberated Christian life. The act of going under the water and rising up from it is a picture demonstrating what has happened to the Christian believer.

FOUR STAGES OF CHRIST'S WORK

1 He died... we died.

"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin - because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." (Rom 6:6,7).

2 He was buried... we were buried. "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death" (Rom.6:3-4).

3. He was raised... we have a New Life in him (Rom.6:4-5).

4. He ascended... I ascended in Him.

"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6)

WATER BAPTISM IS...

1. Our funeral service! A burial service is not to kill a man off. This is only performed when the man is dead already. And so, because we have 'died' in Christ, we bury our old life in water baptism.

2. Our resurrection to New Life. WE rise out of the water demonstrating and declaring you are a new creation in Christ (Rom.6:8-11).

In water baptism we declare to all our friends and acquaintances that we are no longer part of Adam's race and the kingdom of darkness; but that we are a new creation in Christ, belonging to the Kingdom of God!

*Bro Erick Mutai (Sosiot, Kenya)*

## **Signs of the Times**

### **Fighting between Christians and Muslims**

Fighting between Christians and Muslims in Plateau State Nigeria has increased to such an extent that in May the Nigerian President declared a state of emergency there, as recently hundred of people have died in these religious clashes. The fear is that the problems will escalate as they did in 2001 when in the capital city of Plateau State, Jos, a thousand were killed. There are Brethren and Sisters living in this area who had to flee in the 2001 massacres and we do need to remember such in our prayers and pray more earnestly for Jesus to return and deliver his people.

### **Malnutrition**

The Food and Agricultural Organisation estimates 842,000,000 people are undernourished, three fifths of them living in the Asia/Pacific area and a quarter in sub-Saharan Africa. In some areas the situation is progressively worsening. In Congo for example from 1990-2001 the food supply dropped by about 3% a year. In contrast to America where the food supply continually

increased over the same period. Whilst the FAO make recommendations for improving the output in poor countries. The only permanent solution is in the establishment of the Kingdom of God "Then shall the earth yield her increase" (Ps 67:6). So great will be the harvests that "The plowman shall overtake the reaper" (Amos 9:13); the people will not have the time to gather in the abundant harvest, before the time comes round for ploughing again. "I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field" (Ezekiel 36:29). These marvellous changes will be a source of blessing for all nations. Come, Lord Jesus, please come to feed the poor and needy and bring to an end the malnutrition of millions.

**"In the last days... men shall be... without natural affection... fierce"** (Tim3 v1-3). A leading article in a May (Sunday Telegraph) British newspaper was headed, "Passengers fear for their safety as violent crime on railways soars by 30 per cent". Where is all the violence leading? Ultimately the Kingdom when "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Micah 4:4). "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction" (Isa.60:18).

### **Israel: Annual Population Statistics**

Communicated by the Central Bureau of Statistics Spokesman Monday, May 05, 2003

On the eve of Independence Day 2003, Israel's population stands at 6.7 million. The Jewish population is approximately 5.4 million (counting for 38% of the world's Jews); the non-Jewish population is approximately 1.3 million (82% of these are Muslims, 9% are Christians and 9% are Druze).

Israel's population has grown more than eight-fold over the 15.5.48 population of 806,000.

Since last Independence Day, the population of the state of Israel has grown by 131,000, an annual growth rate of 2%.

Three million people have immigrated to Israel since 1948, with more than one million coming since 1990. 31,000 have immigrated in the past year. 140,000 babies were born in Israel during the past year.

Comment. The return of the Jews to the land of Israel is the fulfilment of such prophecies as:-

He shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth (Is 22:12). He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock (Jer31:10). In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely (Jer33:14-16) I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land (Ezek 36:22-24) I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, wither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them on nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel: and one king shall be king to them all (Ez37:21-22) I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country: and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: (Zec 8:7-8).

### **An introduction to God's Heavenly Law (Part 1)**

## Introduction:

As readers of the Bible we are introduced to God's law in both the Old and New Testaments and yet the majority of us have no legal background to appreciate the work of the Lord Jesus Christ within the context of litigation as defined by God's Heavenly Law (meaning that the law found in the Bible has its origin in heaven as the heavens are God's [Psalms 115:16]).

Although there is no need for us to become experts in law, there may be a need to gain some basic understanding of the mechanics of law with the sole purpose of appreciating how the Lord Jesus Christ has become the prime 'advocate' in interpreting the Heavenly Law, not to our condemnation, but to offer us life and peace.

So, if we had to ask a 'law student' about the term 'law', we would certainly be told that there are different types of law, such as contractual law, tax law, administrative law, maritime law, etc. We may also be informed that the 'law' consists of common law, statutes and case law. God's Heavenly Law is no different, in fact we will discover that man's laws are based on God's laws as God's laws came first.

The Heavenly Law has its beginnings as a common law in the book of Genesis. But what is '*common law*'? Well it is a primitive form of law, i.e. society formulates an informal communal law, and if we turn to the Bible we find, for example, that the instructions we suppose Adam gave to Eve while they were in the Garden of Eden may be classified as a form of common law.

If we wish to define common law further, we will find traces of it pre-flood as Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel, clearly had communal rules (based on instructions received from God) pertaining to behaviour, marriage, violence, murder, etc. Interestingly, even today no law states, "*thou shalt not kill*". Its origin is found with common law, and as students of the Bible we believe it had its beginnings in the book of Genesis with Cain and Abel. We know that Cain was a murderer (Gen 4:8) based on God's judgement at the time. Today, this judgement forms part of every society's common law and, maybe unknowingly, communities are in a way upholding one of the most basic laws of God, a common law dated back to Genesis 4.

Post-flood we find that common law develops further and we read of how Abraham's concept of sacrifices is expanded as he is commanded to offer his son, Isaac. We also discover that God's law makes provision for a specific priesthood as we read about Melchizedek and later Joseph – and all of this happened prior to God formulating a contractual agreement with the nation of Israel in the form of the tables of stone.

However, what should we try and glean when studying law? To my mind, within the context of the Word of God, we need to gain a basic understanding of how the 'law' operates, and in Genesis 26 we are given a glimpse of the mechanics of God's Heavenly Law.

Here we are introduced to various aspects of God's law. Notice how we are suddenly given detail about the law as if we are supposed to know that the law consists of various pillars: "*Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws*"(Gen 26:5). Now although it may be difficult to fully understand what this verse is actually implying, may I suggest that this section of scripture is in fact introducing us to the various forms of law.

What I am suggesting is that, like man's law, God's Heavenly Law consists of various pillars that modern scholars of the law also assign to the law. In other words, I am suggesting that we are told that Abraham was obedient to various forms of law, and these forms of law can be described as:

- Common law, and
- Old authority, and
- A specific law such as contractual law, and
- Case law (where a judge has interpreted and applied a specific law to a case between a plaintiff [claimant] and a defendant).

If our understanding of the verse is correct, well then we are told that Abraham is indeed a man of God. What we are suggesting here sets Abraham's obedience on a higher plane, and similarly we should ask ourselves the question: *How do I match up against God's various forms of Heavenly Law?* This question needs to be asked because James reminds us that "*whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*" (ch 2:10). Maybe we are now in a better position to consider the full meaning and impact of James' words and challenge to us.

### **THE MECHANICS OF THE HEAVENLY LAW**

#### **Jurisdiction as part of the mechanics of the Heavenly Law:**

Another aspect associated with the law is the very important aspect of *jurisdiction*. It is always critical to establish whether a court of law has the power of jurisdiction, i.e. has it authority to hear and judge a particular case?

In the Old Testament God provided cities of refuge, and the jurisdiction (influence of power) of the Law of Moses was not valid in these cities. Obviously this points forward to the Lord Jesus Christ, who nullifies the jurisdiction of the Law of Moses on our lives, thereby saving us all from the sure curse of death. We read the following in Romans 8:2, "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*"

Again, once we improve our knowledge of a specific field associated with spiritual matters we become so much more appreciative of what the Lord Jesus Christ did and still does for us. It certainly is a scary thing to know that a judge will show no mercy and proclaim the death sentence upon you and me. To then hear that there is a place of refuge, which falls outside the jurisdiction of this unsympathetic judge, makes us realise what a friend indeed we have in Jesus!

#### **Case Law as part of the mechanics of the Heavenly Law:**

In applying law and trying to give advice how a law will impact on a person, it is needful to study *case law*, as it not only refers back to the various laws, authorities, etc., but it also allows us to predict how the judiciary stands on certain legal issues.

As these principles are based on and come from, the God of Israel, it therefore stands to reason that we too can learn a great deal of God and His high standards if we consider the *case law* where Jesus is acting as judge and therefore referring to, and interpreting, God's Heavenly Law.

To purposefully express a point, we will consider two cases, not because the subject matter is a fundamental teaching of Bible study - which it may be – but because these two issues serve to illustrate what we are trying to establish, i.e. that case law plays a prominent role in matters associated with God’s Heavenly Law.

The following table, which deals with the first example, i.e. sabbath-keeping in the Old Testament, endeavours to highlight how case law encapsulates the other aspects of a particular law:

<b>Common Law:</b>	<b>Statutes:</b>	<b>Opinion:</b>	<b>Judgement:</b>
<p><b><i>Sabbath keeping instituted in the beginning:</i></b> And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. (Gen 2:3)</p>	<p><b><i>Sabbath keeping as part of the Law of Moses:</i></b> Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy... (Exo 20:8-11)</p>	<p><b><i>No legal opinion available on ‘sabbath-keeping’ at the time:</i></b> And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. (Nu 15:34)</p>	<p><b><i>Case law formulated on breaking the Sabbath both within the framework of common law and the Law of Moses (Torah):</i></b> And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. (Nu 15:35)</p>

Based on this table, it is clear that in the legal world, *case law* forms a very critical part of judging, as it indicates how the court and a judge interprets and applies law in practice. What is absolutely fascinating is how the Old Testament’s case law always results in death, whereas the New Testament’s case law always brings about hope. Let’s now do a similar exercise, considering adultery, and see how the Lord Jesus Christ, as a judge, ushers in a new case law and therefore improving on old case law:

<b>Common Law:</b>	<b>Statutes:</b>	<b>Opinion:</b>	<b>Judgement:</b>
<p><b><i>Adultery instituted in the beginning:</i></b> And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah,</p>	<p><b><i>Adultery as part of the Law of Moses:</i></b> And the man that committeth adultery with</p>	<p><b><i>Pharisees asking for Jesus opinion on the subject of adultery:</i></b> Now Moses in the law commanded us, that</p>	<p><b><i>New case law formulated on committing adultery within the framework of the Law of Christ:</i></b> So</p>

saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt. (Gen 38:24)	another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Lev 20:10-16)	such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. (John 8:5-6)	when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her... She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. (John 8:7, 11)
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Now that we have a very basic understanding of the mechanics of law we can begin to appreciate better the conflict which took place between the Lord Jesus and the champions of the Law of Moses, the Pharisees.

And is it not wonderful to witness our Judge in action, to taste his mercy, and to see how he introduces new case law without an objection being raised by the Pharisees! The woman we read of in John 8 had no hope of life, but with Jesus at her side she suddenly fell within a jurisdiction where the Law of Moses had no say. However, the Lord Jesus Christ, in formulating his judgement, refers to the Heavenly Law (of which the Law of Moses is a part), and so dynamic is the Son of God that he interprets and applies the Law of Moses to offer life instead of death.

We leave Jesus here, having learned so much, but also realising that the Lord Jesus has left us with a greater responsibility than before. If the Law of Moses required much detail in application, well then the Law of Christ requires much application in the smallest detail. None of us is without sin too, so we pray that God may instil in us a lasting memory to remember this case law as we deal with one another.

God willing, we will continue next time to consider the various options that the law may offer us, the choice of being judged or not, and then draw Part one to a conclusion. *(To be continued).*

*Bro Ronnie van Rooyen (South Africa)*

**Nepal from the eyes of a UK Missionary**

On arriving in Kathmandu, Nepal I was faced with a bittersweet feeling. The tree-covered foothills and Himalayan mountains are breathtaking and beautiful. However, the poverty and suffering that surrounds you, reminds us ultimately of mankind's disobedience and its consequences. It reminds us of the urgent need of Christ's return. It was an amazing

experience to meet some of my Brothers and Sisters in Nepal and learn what life was like for them in these turbulent times. Quite often the language barrier can be frustrating, but the power of a smile can be so encouraging, showing the love of our Saviour Jesus Christ and the

Power of the hope we share. The importance of talking to friends and relatives about God is evident in both ecclesias in Kathmandu. With no opportunity to preach outdoors, without the risk of imprisonment, both ecclesias have sprung in growth due to their conversations with interested friends and family, this is uplifting to us all as we strive to proclaim the Truth in our daily lives. Our trip to Nepal helped me realise how 'comfortable' life is in the UK and urged me never to forget the needs of our Brothers and Sisters living in hostile countries around the world. The passion for God and His righteous way I saw in those I met has uplifted my spirit and I look forward to the opportunity, God willing, meeting with them again in Nepal or the Kingdom.

*Bro Jonathan Fry (U.K.)*

### **Report from Nepal**

Nepal is a small country of only 141,577 square km and has around 20 million people. Nepal is a meeting place of two religions, Hinduism and Buddhism. It is interesting to know that the number of gods is greater than the number of people who live there. Officially, Nepal is the only Hindu Kingdom in the modern world. Kathmandu is the capital city of Nepal, since the joining together of the three cities in the Kathmandu valley in 1768 by King Prithivi Narayan Shah, who is the forefather of the present king of Nepal. It is only in recent times that Nepal was opened to people from other countries and then Christianity came to Nepal. There was, and is, a fear for the rulers that the country might lose its culture and religion if Christianity was to take hold. Christianity was a completely new religion to this country when it came in and there has been a great struggle for freedom of religion and for people to understand that this is the truth. The people who changed their faith before 1990 were put into prison and there was much persecution and suffering for those who stood firm in their beliefs. It was in 1987 that Christadelphians came to Nepal from the UK. The first to be baptised were Bro Kishan Gurung and Sis Kalawati Gurung by Bro Peter Fry when he and his family came in 1992; this baptism was immediately followed by that of Bro Sher Thapa. The Truth has flourished since then and there are now two ecclesias in the heart of Kathmandu, Bulbule which has 39 members and another small ecclesia, Dhumbharai, which has eight members. The ecclesias are close to each other on the north side of Kathmandu. We can see that the truth has grown and that the Almighty Father has never stopped working in the lives of those, who live here and has abundantly helped and strengthened them to do His work. But it is still difficult to preach openly because one can be charged if found converting, so the best way is to preach to our relatives and friends.

Unemployment is great in the country and our Christian lives in the ecclesia are affected by this. We are grateful to those brethren and sisters who have left their footprints, who have always prayed for the Truth to prosper here. They have come to visit us from all over the United Kingdom and we having loving thoughts of them all. Many have come and stood beside us and have helped both spiritually and physically. Those lovely brethren and sisters are always in our mind. We hope to see them in the Kingdom if we do not see them in the flesh again. Though there is no peace in the country and there is great political unrest, there are still brethren who have a strong

desire to come and visit us. There has been no harm done to travellers. There is much poverty and there is no peace. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" and we look forward to that day when Christ will come and restore the Kingdom Of God , and God's will be done in the whole earth.

*Bro Satyadeep (Dhumbharai Ecclesia)*

### **One Spirit**

Our faith in the Gospel is based upon the Bible, and we came to it by rejecting the false views of many mere men. We are warned very clearly by Paul that in the last times, many especially bad false teachings will arise, and from such who teach them, we must turn away (2 Tim. 4; 3:1). If we are to be true followers of God's word, then we must take these words of Paul very seriously. We know we are in the last times, and so we must be aware that these things will happen. We are also all aware that there are many who call themselves Christians who do not even teach what the Bible says and are organizing their churches and teaches in order to attract power and money to themselves.

So I wish to draw our attention to the teaching of the Bible about the one body, because this also is a main doctrine of our faith. We must take this as seriously as we take any other doctrine of the Bible. Any who seek to destroy this beautiful doctrine are destroying the faith which is the Gospel. Jesus died because through His death He would gather together in one the children of God. If we are divided, then we are making His death for nothing. This is why I ask all brothers and sisters to take seriously the command and the Bible teaching to live in one body and with one and the same spirit between us. The purpose of Bible reading for us is that we find the truth, we find the true way to live, so that our way of life is what God wants. He wants us to be one, to learn to accept each other, and live with each other in one spirit. Ephesians 4:1-6 is a very beautiful passage of the Bible, about how there is only one faith, one hope, one baptism, one body. We must "walk worthy" of that calling, Paul says, which means that we must be one, otherwise we are not walking worthy of the calling of the truth we have been given. The ecclesia is the one body, the one temple, where God lives. It cannot be that there are two bodies or more. Each part of the body must be allowed to work with the other parts of the body, otherwise the body will destroy itself. The Lord Jesus Christ wants to work through us, because we are His body. We must be ready for Him, we must allow Him to work through us. Amen.

*Bro. Gennady (Poltava, Ukraine)*

### **Give Respect to Get Respect**

Someone has not acted according to what you expected. They have slighted you in their behaviour. They have ignored you or been short in their responses etc. You feel that you have not been given the proper respect you deserve. You feel let down.

What are your feelings towards yourself? How do you behave towards yourself? Do you always remain in the high stage of self respect and create thoughts that are lofty and pure? Are your

actions noble and beyond ulterior motives? Are your words always soothing and uplifting or are they of the degrading and 'cutting down' variety? How is your self respect?

It is always easy to expect and demand respect from others. It is popular to criticize others for not being respectful or for being rude or for not showing the proper appreciation. It is less popular to demand respect from ourselves. Without self respect we can never gain respect from others. Without self respect we will always be performing self defeating actions.

With self respect we become the elevated ones; we become lovely in behaviour. And because of our vision and actions we become the foundation of our community. We cannot get respect by asking for it and we only receive it when you give it to others.



Photo: Abwad and his Brother Atsianji, the sons of Bro Modest Gwademba

*Bro. Modest Gwademba (Tiriki, Kenya)*

### **The Sermon on the Mount**

That which is called the Sermon on the Mount (Matt ch 5) is a searching and powerful utterance of Jesus. The very high standard that Jesus sets can only be appreciated by those who are called by God and who accept the Word of God without question. It shows clearly the outlook and the attitude of the mind of Christ, and it is impossible for us to appreciate these ideals without understanding Jesus. Therefore to those who are prepared to accept the invitation of Jesus to forsake all and follow him there is no greater guide than these words that he uttered.

The opening words, called the Beatitudes, are designed for life, and although we probably know them by heart, do we have them in our heart? Although there is a vast difference between the speed and tensions and temptations of today and those of the days when Jesus taught in the land of Israel, the challenge to obey the words of Jesus remains just as strong. The words of Jesus are not so much a set of rules as a set of principles which are timeless in their application and demand our wholehearted response in spirit rather than the letter of the law.

The Sermon on the Mount gives directions. The words that Jesus speaks are not nice separate ideals, but different aspects of the complete new man in Christ. All the words of Jesus are essential. It is a waste of time for us to say that we apply parts of the words of Jesus and forget other parts.

So whilst we analyse the qualities that Jesus sets before us one by one, we must not lose sight of the whole picture presented to us. That which Jesus wants us to do is based on his own character. The words "blessed are" refer ultimately to the blessings of the future Kingdom, but inasmuch as the disciple strives to live the perfect life, there are wonderful blessings for those who in their ways and characters love God and keep all His words.

The first words are 'the poor in spirit'. The word poor indicates being destitute and implies the words recorded by Isaiah 57:15, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." We recognize our helplessness and our unworthiness, and if we are wise we throw ourselves upon the love and mercy of God. Poverty of spirit is the opposite to natural wilfulness.

We follow Jesus during his greatest mental emotional trial in Gethsemane. When he knew that the greatest hour of his suffering was near, he prayed, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, so great was the struggle within him. Then from his heart he uttered these words which we ourselves are often reluctant to say, "not my will, but thine be done".

It is hard for us to say those words, especially if they are going to cause us grief or pain, but we must ultimately remember that God does know what is best for us. So the first words of Jesus tell us the first requirement of the true disciple. And this requirement is emptying ourselves of pride, of wilfulness, of the things that the flesh desires, and this is necessary before we can fill our minds with the things that our Lord shows are important in God's sight, to make ourselves more like Jesus every day.

So Jesus says, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Why should a brother or sister be blessed for mourning? It appears a contradiction in terms. We grieve realising our inadequacy in keeping to the high standard set by Jesus. This grief must have the sincerity of Paul when he exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom 7:24-25).

That which is in the mind is vitally important. As a man thinketh, so is he. In our minds, in our hearts, in our desires, in our works and faith, it is essential that we serve God. We are of course saddened by the grief and evil around us in the world, and whilst we pray for the day of redemption, we see the example of Jesus, who took away the misery of thousands by healing them. He gave comfort even to those who walked away from him. Paul says, "Do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith" and Jesus is our example. (Gal 6:10).

In Matthew 7:12 the Lord Jesus Christ says, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Paul said in Galatians 6:7-9, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Paul tells us in Galatians 6:2, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." Also in chapter 5:22-23, he says "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law".

Paul says, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:

and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

*Bro. Joseph Oppong (Shama, Ghana)*

### **Preaching the Gospel**

Whenever God chooses a people, He not only satisfies them with the hope of glory, but graces them with a ministry, a service, a work in His name.

Within a couple of months of their leaving Egypt, God told Israel through Moses "You shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an Holy nation." (Exod.19:6). They were to minister God's Name and holiness to the nations so that His Name would be honoured.

They failed to uphold the honour of God and God said "They have even defiled my holy name by their abominations: wherfore I have consumed them in mine anger" (Ezek.43:8).

### **AN ELECT RACE**

In spite of the overthrow of Israel and Judah, in spite of their sufferings as people, they failed to learn any lesson from their experiences. When Jesus came to bring them renewed life and salvation they rejected him. It is written that the Kingdom was to be taken from them and given to other people (Matt.21:43). Peter wrote "You are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of God's own possession, that you may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

We have the hope of glory, but we have the task that Israel failed to fulfil, to show forth the Name, honour and purposes of God. We have to cry, to proclaim, to herald, to preach the good news of Christ and the Kingdom of God, as well as the goodness of the loving Father (Rom.10:5).

### **HOW SHALL PEOPLE HEAR?**

The Apostle Paul posed an ever present problem in regard to the richness of the Lord's mercy towards people who would turn to him. How shall they hear without a preacher? who will proclaim to the people the wonder and the ways of God's love? (Rom.10:14-15, Isaiah 52:7) "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things."

He does this not only to show how wonderful this task is, but that it is the duty of every child of God to proclaim this good news. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel" (1Cor.9:16). There is such wonder in our call that it would dishonour the love of God to withhold it from others.

If, as Paul wrote, God raised up Pharaoh that His name might be published abroad in all the earth (Rom.9:17), what does he expect of us, His saints, whom He had raised to heavenly places in Christ? The Father expects that His children will preserve the majesty and honour of His name in all that they say and do.

Paul wrote that servants should count their masters worthy of honour "that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed" (1 Tim.6:1). Humility, modesty, love, and the goodness of God must be portrayed in the lives of His children so that His honour is sustained. That is the imitation of God (Eph. 5:1).

## **THE WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD**

In our lives we preach or proclaim the wisdom and the knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways (Rom.11:33). James wrote, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

We are heralds of Jesus, our Head, who is to come again. He was the perfect word of wisdom of God made flesh. He is the peacemaker, He is our righteousness, and every one of us dishonours God if we withhold from others His arm of salvation.

Today the world longs for stability, for peace, for solutions to economic problems, for the hope of a brighter future, but it finds only discord, darkness and self destruction.

## **PREACHING PROGRAMME**

This is a programme every ecclesia and individual should be fully engaged in. The coming of the Lord is now much nearer than when we believed. If we preach true doctrine to people then we should have less time for unprofitable and foolish questionings. How then should we preach? We should love in deed and in truth (1 John 3:18). It is true that we should preach by example as well as by word. The integrity of our response to our daily work and the service we give to any who need our help are witness to the compassion of a loving God to all men.

## **PERSONAL WITNESS**

Our faithfulness to our ecclesia preaches more strongly than our words. The constancy of an aged sister who walked along the street Sundays and week nights to her meetings in all weathers, after several years aroused the curiosity of a middle aged couple who stopped her to ask where she went - and two more were added to God's household. In health or in sickness, living or dying we preach Jesus Christ. Invite more friends to your home Bible study.

## **THE VALUE OF LEAFLETS**

Leaflets left on a bus or train have sown seeds that have yielded fruit. Give them to everybody who can read.

## **EVERYONE CAN HELP**

What matters is that each of us should strive in ways that best suit us to witness to God's truth and love. There is joy in the possession of these divine gifts and satisfaction to be enjoyed in this life for everyone who is prepared to sacrifice for them, for such "shall receive a hundredfold now in this time ... and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:30).

We bear the Name of God, our Father, we have received His wisdom, we have been redeemed by the Lord Jesus and we need to prepare for his coming Kingdom. Let us be wise in loving and generous in giving the life - giving gospel to all who will hear. (Daniel 12:2-3) "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt ... and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

*Bro. Charles Daka (Mufulira, Zambia)*

## **The Value of Seminars**

The meetings held during seminars are very helpful because they have helped in getting to know each other as we share in the word of God and the fellowship of the brethren. As seen from the photo, last year it was very wonderful to have the brethren come and join in fellowship. The brethren gave each other turns to bring the understanding in exhorting each other for good works.

Another encouragement is that God is pleased when people come together and praise him unlike when they are divided. I emphasise to my fellow brethren to have real love, where giving is concerned, and many other things. Agape love comes from the depth of the heart, where forgiveness is granted, loving people unconditionally whether one is working or not, whether one is a widow, an orphan, etc. The greatest love that one can ever receive is that from our Father, who freely gave His only begotten son to come and die for us on the cross, so that if we believe in him we should never perish but have everlasting life. I can proudly say that the meetings that we have been having have really helped me and the entire family because we are able to reflect on the love of God each moment these meetings/seminars come along. We praise God for this.



Photo: Standing left is Bre Herbert, Arnold, Ozious, a friend and Bro Davies, kneeling Iron Zulu, Sis Mary and Sis Theresa.

*Bro. and Sis. Herbert Tigerepasi (Lusaka, Zambia)*

## **Notes on the Daily Readings - September 1-5**

### **SEPTEMBER 1 - 1 CORINTHIANS 15**

#### **The Resurrection**

There will be no need to write of the doctrine of the resurrection nor to show that it is the key to the fulfilment of the promises - of the covenants. We wish to write on two points in connection with it:

The nature of the raised body. There have been differences concerning this; some have said that it will be like the body of Adam before he sinned, and yet others that it will be already a changed immortalised body. If the former, then a change must have taken place before or at the resurrection, for the body entered into the grave a corrupt body which Adam's was not before he sinned. Paul says (v. 42) "it is sown in corruption".

But when he says (v. 42) it is "raised in incorruption", does not this indicate that a change to incorruption has taken place? If this were so, then why should those who are thus raised stand

before the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10) and moreover what of those who are alive when Christ returns and who certainly have bodies of corruption?

The change follows a process indicated in Christ himself who died, rose and revived (Rom. 14:9). This is the order to be followed by those who are subject to a resurrection. They are raised with a body like that they had before. Together with those who are alive, they stand in judgment to receive in body the things done in the body (2 Cor. 5:10). The righteous will be revived - He "shall also quicken your mortal bodies" (Rom. 8:11). The wicked will not be changed and therefore die "the second death".

### **SEPTEMBER 2 - 1 CORINTHIANS 16**

Aquila and Priscilla

From incidental references one can trace somewhat of the life and character of Aquila and his wife Priscilla, for both Luke, in the Acts, and Paul in his epistle, mentions them. They were among the Jews who had been banished from Rome by Claudius, and one writer says the Jews were expelled because they often created disturbances because of "Chrestus". If this name (a common one) is the same as Christos, then the disturbances were amongst the Jews because of the teachings of the early Christians.

It would certainly seem that Aquila and Priscilla were already Christians, for Paul soon became known to them in Corinth, a meeting helped by the fact that they were tentmakers like Paul. They journeyed with him to Ephesus (Acts 18:19) and afterwards returned to Rome (Rom. 16:3). Both when at Ephesus and Rome the ecclesia met in their house. They were able even to instruct Apollos in "the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26) and it is clear that they had risked even their lives for the sake of Paul (Rom. 16:4). And here Paul adds that "all the churches of the Gentiles owed thanks to them."

They must have been two great stalwarts among the early Christians, showing the virtues of hospitality, of ability to teach, of fortitude and courage and were "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7).

Anathema Maranatha (v. 22)

There is really no need for a capital 'a', and the sentence should read: "Let him be anathema" (accursed). Maranatha is a separate expression and means "The Lord cometh".

### **SEPTEMBER 3 - 2 CORINTHIANS 1 & 2**

All the promises are in him yea. By this the apostle means that all the promises made to the fathers as especially stated in the covenants of promise, receiving their affirmation or fulfilment, in Christ. As Paul says when writing of the promises to Abraham (Gal. 3), the seed promised was Christ, even as Peter said concerning the Davidic covenant, "God ... would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts 2:30). The word "Amen" in the same verse (2 Cor. 1:20) means "so be it" in the sense of fulfilment. James uses the same word at the beginning of a sentence where it is translated "Verily" and where it means "of a truth" or "truly", and is a call for the exercise of implicit belief in the words that he should speak.

2 Cor. 2:14-16.

This refers to a Roman triumph when the victorious general was accorded a triumphal procession through Rome - he being seated in a chariot behind which notable captives walked

chained together. Incense was scattered as the procession proceeded and flowers were strewn before the chariot. This incense and sweet smell is the savour (or odour) of verses 15 and 16 - to the victor an odour of joy and life, to the captives an odour of death.

Verse 17 - "Corrupt the word"

An allusion to the dishonest vintners, who diluted the wine with water. Paul therefore declares that he was not afraid to speak the whole counsel of God whether it offended or not.

#### **SEPTEMBER 4 - 2 CORINTHIANS 3 & 4**

The Two Ministrations

Paul had shown that the law of Moses - even though a ministration of death (because it could not give life) - was glorious, yet not so glorious as the faith which is in Christ Jesus, but many of the Jews of his day rejected Christ and to demonstrate their error Paul quotes the incident of Moses and the veil (Exodus 34:29-35).

When Moses came down from the Mount with the two tables of stone, his face shone so that the children of Israel could not look upon him, he therefore put a veil over his face. Paul in this chapter shows that this was a highly figurative action. Paul writes (v. 13) that Moses put a veil over his face "that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished", or, "that the Israelites might not see the end of the fading splendour", as it could be rendered. By Moses placing the veil over his face, the Israelites did not see the glory fade, the reason being that they were under the Law and had to keep it. But when Christ came and fulfilled the Law, the time had come for it to fade, but many Jews refused to recognise this and contended that a keeping of the Law was necessary for salvation. In this way the veil was still upon their hearts.

By contrast the apostle likens the knowledge and understanding of the "new testament" (or new covenant) as a beholding with "open face" (v. 18) the glory therein revealed; the glory of the risen Christ - to which glory he trusted that he, together with all true believers, should be changed, when he "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

#### **SEPTEMBER 5 - 2 CORINTHIANS 5,6,7**

"Present with the Lord" (5:8)

Peter says that Paul wrote "things hard to be understood" which may easily be misunderstood. (2 Peter 3:16). Misunderstanding often comes when a sentence or verse is taken out of its context or when other passages of scripture are not brought to bear upon it.

"Absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" is often quoted to support the doctrine of immortal soulism. But the setting of this saying shows that Paul taught something quite different. He says (5:10) that we must be judged and as a result of this be rewarded "in body". The reward in body which Paul desired was to be "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (v. 2) - to be clothed upon "that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (v. 4).

However, he had already taught the Corinthians that this change would be when Christ comes (1 Cor. 15:23), so that being "present with the Lord" must wait until the second coming. Nevertheless, he desired earnestly for the time to come when this body wherein he

groaned being burdened (v. 4) should be changed, for then he would be present with Christ. For this he laboured so that he might be accepted (v. 9).

"God was in Christ" (5:19)

This is often taken from its context to support the doctrine of the trinity. But if God were actually in Christ how was it possible for Christ to say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" or for it to be said that "he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared"? (Heb. 5:7). There are two persons here, and one (the Son of God) wholly dependent upon the other.

It therefore means that God was working in and through Christ so that the world might be reconciled to Him. ("Made to be sin for us" will be dealt with when writing on Galatians 3

### Repentance

This word often means "change of mind", but sometimes another word is used (also translated repentance) which really means "without carefulness", that is, without "limit or meanness". When Paul wrote (Rom. 11:29) that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" the second word is used, and in v. 10 of ch. 7 both words are used, so that the verse should read, "For godly sorrow worketh a change of mind to a salvation - without limit".

### Prison Work Update

On Sunday our ecclesia (The SF Peninsula Ecclesia) included you in our opening prayer. We always ask for prayer requests each Sunday. We also prayed for the prisoners who are seeking God's word and for a few brothers and sisters who are sick. Bro. Jesse Warner gave the prayer.

You had suggested that our ecclesia send Bible Basics to the libraries in prisons a few years back. I did that for the State Prisons and Federal prisons as you may know. It is interesting to note that I have never heard from any prisoners this way. I have learned that these prisons are often in "lockdown" because of gang rivalries or some unrest and at these times the inmates are not allowed out of their cells. The library is closed. When the inmates get out, they are happy to be able to walk about and be in the yard. I find the best way to preach is by contact. Since we have now established Bible Basics in a few prisons, the inmates know we have a prison preaching effort and they help spread the word. Some inmates do write back and thank us or ask us questions. Then there are others who just write off for the book. Sis. Helen Pyper in New Zealand has offered to write to some of these inmates and I have sent her a name. She is very busy herself. One inmate asks Bible related questions to me and to Sis. Meryl Robertson who is writing him too.

It was good to hear from you and that you had a prison contact from the Thailand prison library. We are getting referrals to Bible Basics in the prison by word of mouth and by coupons I insert in each BB I mail to an inmate. [The total of prisoners we have heard from now is over 100.] I also receive referrals from Sis. Mary Warner through the Internet, when someone requests BB be sent to someone in a prison. Sis. Mary referred an e-mail to me in February for a request for BB by a wife for her husband in a San Diego Prison. I mailed the book to him and he began to read it. I sent him a follow up letter and just heard back from him this week. He was so inspired by the book that he wrote to his mother to write off for the book. The prison referrals

come to me because I now know how to get the books accepted into the prisons. I have connected with Sis. Jean Cheetham in New Jersey who is also doing some prison work on the East Coast. Then I had prison contacts in Alexandria, Virginia County Jail and wanted someone closer to do the follow up work. Bro. Jesse Warner directed me to a sister in Virginia who is happy to be helping with that. We pray that the Lord will work through us to instruct and direct these inmates to see God's word more clearly and change their lives.

Recently Bro. David M, in the Salinas Valley State Prison, had his sister and her family visit him from Canada. While they were out, they were able to purchase a TV and cassette player for David from a special store, which supplies items to prisons. We are told we can mail in cassette tapes to David now, about four at a time so they go through the packaging department, so he can listen to exhortations and study tapes. When David acquires about 12 tapes [maximum], he must then turn them over to the Chaplain when he is finished with them. The Chaplain will give him a voucher or receipt for the cassette tapes, which will then let David receive some more cassette tapes.

Earlier this year we had a mini calendar created by a couple in our ecclesia who are graphic artists. This calendar was at the request of a brother who happened to be in the San Jose County Jail at the time. He is out now. On this calendar were all the months, but at the bottom were Bible verses on one side and a coupon for Bible Basics on the other. These were printed up in 100 or so copies. I sent half to the brother in the San Jose County Jail and half to Bro. David in the Salinas Valley Prison. It took ages for these calendars to be approved at the jails. As of today, I have only received requests from these calendars from the Salinas Valley State Prison. Bro. David said he put them in the Chapel at the prison. I don't know what happened to the calendars in the San Jose County Jail as I have not received any requests from there yet.

Comment : This is a very valuable work capable of considerable expansion world-wide. We have been associated with three baptisms of prisoners, one in Malawi, one in Trinidad and one from our local prison, it is a work that can be done from the armchair. There is also active prison work being done in Africa.

*Sis Marilyn Seagoe (USA.)*

### **A Thought For A Christadelphian School**

Last year a week before "Christmas" my wife and I received a letter from arguably the best Catholic boarding school for girls not only in the Copperbelt province but also in the country. Actually it was a grade 8 acceptance letter for our 12-year-old 2nd born daughter, Ruth.

"I share in your joy as I inform you that your daughter Ruth has been offered a place in grade 8 as a border at our school," the letter read in part .

"Fatima Girls' High School", the letter continued, "is a Catholic Mission school that promotes Christian values. All pupils who accept to come to this school are obliged to attend our religious activities. No other religious activities are allowed in the school without the consent of the management board. Pupils who violate this rule will be given a transfer letter".

The foregoing three sentences hit us painfully. At least they will make any Christadelphian blink or not blink at all!

The likelihood of Ruth becoming imbued with pro-Catholic and anti-Christadelphian ideas? I repeatedly asked my wife, a former Catholic. She merely shrugged her shoulders, indicating a lack of alternative school for her.

Because reasoned discussion, not outraged denunciation, is the way to make progress, I sought audience with the management board. Alas, the management was and still is intolerant of other religions, especially non-Trinitarians like ours.

“Ruth, remember we live in the world but we are not of this world,” I exhorted her as we bade her farewell at the school. She respectfully nodded. Is it going to be easy for her, I could not help asking myself as we headed home.

Ruth is now back home for a month-long holiday. And while we are happy with her academic performance, we are worried about her spiritual compass. But we are not alone. Another brother in the ecclesia is equally not happy with his son’s spiritual disarmament at a Seventh day Adventist boarding school.

If something justifiably exemplified the biblical aphorism that “he that walks with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed” (Proverbs 13:20), I cannot think of a better one. But the question must be: For how long will our precious gifts – children - remain under the spell of unwholesome spiritual influences?

My brethren and I are determined to go further: to introduce a Christadelphian school. A tall order indeed. But as our Lord taught, “Which of you shall have a son fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up?”(Luke 14:5). So with God’s help and yours it can be done. And, yes, we seriously believe it will help towards a sound life of holiness and that this will make Christadelphians and our position attractive to people. So if this provokes intense interest rather than a hallow laugh I can be contacted for details at mmilk3@yahoo.co.uk

Comment . This is quite a serious problem, some of our Children are attending Moslem Education Institutes where they are obliged to study the Koran. Others like this 14yr old daughter of a Christadelphian who is sad and lonely, writes “One regulation of this school is to follow the Catholic faith, to pray with the rosary on a daily basis and sing praises to Mary – always a plastic Mary is placed in front of us. I am really hurt in heart by this worship. In prayers I always keep quiet because I do not trust them, but we are usually forced to do so” The Isolation League, are contacting this girl and trying to help her, is there any means by which we can help such with a home Schooling Project?

*(Bro Emmanuel Phambo, Randburg, S.Africa)*

### **A Message From Israel**

Shalom! The Christadelphians living in Israel send you great greetings! We are writing this letter to our dear brothers and sisters in California! May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus (2 Pet. 1:2).

Many thanks for your letter for the Christadelphians in Israel. Our country is small. Its area is one twentieth of the size of California. It's population is a quarter of the size of California. There are mainly Judaists here and also Moslems and some Christians of Catholic and Orthodox

churches. Christadelphians are only a few dozen people. These are the believers who in recent years were prepared for baptism by the work and correspondence and writings of our brother Duncan Heaster, and were baptized in the river Jordan. Even in the biggest cities here we are only a few people but we don't feel cut off from each other. Two or three times per year we are invited by the English brothers to a Bible School. In between these times we have been visited by our brother Jesse Warner who has hired a car and gathered us together and has visited us at home and held other meetings thanks to God's will. These really turned out to be blessed meetings. Also sister Natasha in Karmiel, who was baptized before her coming to Israel from Ukraine, arranges meetings for the breaking of bread and other studies in her home and also in other places. On 14 February 12 people gathered together in Tel Aviv. We read together from the Scriptures, offered prayers to our Lord, had joyful fellowship, and made the breaking of bread ceremony in the name of the Lord Jesus. How we are blessed to have such a wonderful family in Christ! We see the truth of the words, that if one part of the body suffers, then so do all the others; if one part of the body is blessed, then all other parts rejoice (1 Cor. 12:26). We are joyful to know you are strong and vibrant in the faith. We wish you only peace and joy!

With love in Christ

Bro. Vladimir  
May 2004

*Bro. Vladimir (Petah Tikva, Israel)*

### **I'm waiting for an answer from the Almighty**

I'm waiting for an answer from the Almighty

I asked for strength – and God gave me difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom – and God gave me problems to solve..

I asked for prosperity – and God gave me a brain and brawn to work.

I asked for courage – and God gave me obstacles to overcome.

I asked for love – and God gave me opportunities.

I received nothing I wanted – but I received everything I needed.

*Bro. Dan Mponde*

### **Chisape Ecclesial Hall**

Pictures taken during the construction of their hall.



(1) Foundation and bricks (plus the finished toilet). From left Bre. Tafirenyika Marison, Weston Kamota, Leon Kadema and Rajabu Mweha.



(2) During plastering, Bro. Weston Kamota, left, with the builder. (3) Finishing point of roof. This was done in November 2002. We would like to thank our Heavenly Father for the power He gave us during the construction. We were only four brothers, plus the builder. We spent seven months doing the work; God saved us all without any of us getting ill.

Bro. Weston Kamota

*Chisape Ecclesia*

### **Let us Not Worry When Neglected**

*Reference to Gospel News Nov/Dec 2003, regarding our Bro. Batak Swalik of Kampala, Uganda, who cannot communicate with his mother because of changing religions. Also his mother stopped assisting our Brother in any way. Maybe the Lord God, our Heavenly Father, is testing you to see your faith, if really you have believed in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Let us see what the Lord Jesus says in Matthew 10:32-36 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven. Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace, but a sword. For I am come to turn a man against his father, daughter against her mother. A man's enemies will be the members of his own household." Also Matt.6:25-31 where Jesus says, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them; are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin, yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of those. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or What shall we wear?"

Psalm 37:1-6 says "Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong, for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they soon die away. Trust in the Lord and do good, dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust in him and he will do this, he will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."

Psalm 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble." Psalm 119:76 "May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promises to your servant." Psalm

86:1-7 "Hear, O Lord, and answer me for I am poor and needy; guard my life, for I am devoted to you. You are my God, save your servant who trusts in you. Have mercy on me O Lord, for I call to you all day long. Bring joy to your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you. Hear my prayer, O Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. In the day of my trouble I will call you, for you will answer me."



Photo: Bro Harris Mulongesha

*Bro. Harris Ndonga Mulongesha (Ndola, Zambia)*

## **The Spirit of Man**

We all agree that God created everything we know and everything we don't know. Out of what did He create it? – out of His Spirit. As we sieve the very dust of the ground through our fingers, we know that God has made even this out of His Spirit.

We are told God is everywhere present "by His Spirit" and we can appreciate how this is very true for all things, everywhere, are made out of, and sustained by, His Spirit.

If God should withdraw that Spirit back to himself then all His creation would disappear, as Job says in chapter 34:14, 15 "If He set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His Spirit and His breath, all flesh shall perish together and man shall turn again unto dust."

Unfortunately, in general, there is confusion in people's minds about the spirit of man, the breath of man and the soul of man. Let us go back to the original Hebrew and Greek words to establish their true meanings:

Ruwach (Hebrew) is translated variously as breath, air, wind, spirit. This shows that breath and spirit are interchangeable. It is the translators who choose to use breath or spirit according to their own beliefs.

Pneuma (Greek) is the New Testament equivalent of ruach and can be translated as breath, spirit, air, wind.

Nephesh (Hebrew) indicates animal soul and is translated soul.

Psuche (Greek) is the New Testament equivalent of nephesh and has the original meaning of animal soul.

Genesis 2:7

The dead creature of clay became a living creature (animal soul, nephesh) because God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life or the spirit of life. This is the spirit of man.

Ecclesiastes 12:7

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit (ruwach) shall return unto God who gave it.

At death, a man again becomes like Adam BEFORE God breathed the breath of life into him, just the dust of the ground, and the breath or the spirit (ruwach), whichever you like to call it, returns to God.

Zechariah 12:1

“...saith the Lord which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit (ruwach) of man within him.” Here, Zechariah is re-affirming that all creation – the heavens, the earth and man are all the result of God’s Spirit – including the spirit (ruach), or breath, or life force in man. Zechariah understood creation and is re-emphasizing the means of the creation of man by God. The word ruach can have no other meaning.

Ezekiel 18:4

“Behold all souls (nephesh) are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die”.

This soul – nephesh – is the same Hebrew word as describes man after his creation in Genesis 2:7 – a living soul (nephesh). All creatures that God created are His, including all human beings. But notice that any soul (nephesh) is capable of death and will die. This is simply repeating what God had told Adam that if he sinned by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he (a living soul) would become a dead soul. Scripture always backs itself up – never does it contradict itself.

Psalms 31:5

“Into thine hand I commit my spirit (ruwach): thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth”. This is a prophecy of what Jesus would say as he died after hanging six hours on the cross. He said these words as recorded in Luke 23:46. Jesus understood God’s word more than any one and would know that this phrase in Psalm 31:5 referred to his last words and so repeated them – “Into Thy hand I commend my spirit” (pneuma, Greek) – my spirit of life – my breath. Pneuma is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word ruwach and both mean exactly the same – breath, spirit, air, wind. The spirit of life or breath or air or the spirit of man returns to God who gave it. Jesus was exactly the same as all other man and women in this respect, the breath or spirit of life from God kept him a living creature.

Acts 7:59

“And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”. Stephen understood, as did Jesus, that he was about to die and that his spirit (pneuma) of life would return to God. He called out to Jesus to receive this because in verses 55 and 56 he had seen Jesus standing on the right hand of God. He knew that all power and authority had been given to the now immortal Jesus and so called out to him as an intermediary between man and God.

Acts 2:27

“Because thou wilt not leave my soul (psuche) in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” This is a direct quotation from Psalm 16:10 – again a prophecy about the death of Jesus. From both these quotations we understand that the soul (nephesh – Hebrew, psuche –

Greek) of Jesus went to hell after he had died. Hell is another word that is translated from sheol – Hebrew, Hades – Greek meaning the unseen state or grave. In other words – the dead body of Jesus was buried in sheol (the grave). But because he had not sinned, God did not leave his body (nephesh, psuche) to corrupt, as happens to other dead creatures. He revived the body of Jesus with the Spirit, this time to EVERLASTING life. He is the only man into whom God has breathed everlasting life.

Proverbs 20:27

“The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly”. Because man has the spirit of life from God, he can absorb light or enlightenment from God (His word) whereby we each can search our inward motives and our deeds. Every man has this ability to scrutinize himself. Proverbs 24:20 tells us exactly the same thing, The candle of God’s enlightenment or the spirit of life in the wicked “shall be put out”. They will die even as Adam was warned so long ago.

One Corollary

Because the spirit of man is the life of a man, the word spirit (ruwach) is often used to describe various facets of his character.

So we can have a perverse spirit, a spirit of jealousy, a sorrowful spirit, a lying spirit, a wounded spirit and so on.

*Sis. Clare Wood and Bro. Isaac Kapa (Tongaren, Kenya)*

### **Is Anything Too Hard For The Lord?**

Hospitality was very important among the people of the East and still is today. The three men we read about in Genesis 18:12, did not ask Abraham for any refreshment. He went out to invite them (verses 4 and 5) and was generous to them in the extreme (verses 6 and 7).

Many of us face economic hardship, but let us not make that an excuse to avoid being hospitable. Read Hebrews 13:2. These were no ordinary men; they were angels, bringing a message, verses 12 to 14 make this clear. They were come personally to announce to Abraham the fulfilment of His promise. Sarah was to have a child - humanly impossible. What a comfort to know that God can do all things and yet He cares about you and me enough to know your thoughts and mine.

*Bro. Dzingai Sumburera (Gwevu, Zimbabwe)*

### **Enter the Kingdom of God**

We all want to be saved and to be in the Kingdom of God. The thought of being alive for ever and ever is interesting to think about, and it is this that motivates us to believe and to be faithful about what is being preached to us. There are conditions laid down for us to enter into the

Kingdom of God. We listen to what is being preached, believe and are baptised and live a life in a continuation of faith all the time until we stop breathing.

While we live by faith, there are always obstacles which are not pleasant to face. These come about when our faith is concrete in our Lord Jesus Christ. We have the example of Paul in Acts 14:19-22: "But Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium; and having persuaded the people, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city supposing that he was dead. But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the Kingdom of God."

When people know that we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, they sometimes create problems which will bring us tribulations. Paul faced the very same situation, and he was stoned and dragged away, his enemies thinking he was dead. These tribulations strengthened his faith in Jesus Christ.

The truth should be found as a sign upon our hands and as frontlets between our eyes, and written on the door posts of our houses and on our gates, so that people will know of our belief. Our behaviour will be easily noticed. So it is this truth and belief in Jesus that will cause opposition and bring us tribulation.

We learn of the first death that came about when Abel's sacrifice was acceptable to God while his brother Cain, the killer was not accepted, because it was not what God had laid down, which was the cause of his envy, resulting in the death of Abel. Abel suffered because his sacrifice was accepted by God. There are so many Cains these days who will bring tribulation upon us and cause us suffering.

During Paul's time, the Jews persuaded the people of the city to stone him. Likewise, in these days others will persuade the people of the land and those in authority to bring about tribulation to believers. And for those who believe in Jesus Christ this is a good indicator that a believer is fit for the Kingdom of God, because it is written, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account."

Later on, Paul appeared before king Agrippa. He felt fortunate to be able to defend himself against all the accusations which were made by the Jews. Paul's appearance to the king shows how tough it was going along the road to the Kingdom of God. Being accused and brought before the king for trial were the tribulations that our early brothers went through.

During the trial, Paul said that he himself had opposed the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and he did this in Jerusalem and some of our brothers in those days were put to death. So we can see just how tough the narrow road to the kingdom is.

In other parts of the world, some are safe, while other brothers and sisters are going through many trials. When such problems are faced we only have to ask our Lord Jesus Christ to strengthen us to continue on the Kingdom road.

Shadrach, Meshech and Abed-Nego were thrown into a burning, fiery furnace because they believed God and did not worship an image made by man. They believed in God only. If we are to be saved, we must follow Christ and, by following him we must expect problems, he said:

“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Jesus very well knows the way we are to travel. Those who persecute us are against Christ, and Jesus will deal with them, for he said that he is with us to the end.

*Bro A D Liwawa (Neno, Malawi)*

### **Pressing Towards the Prize**

You do not have to live very long in this world before it becomes clear that nothing lasts for ever: Dad and Mum, who you so loved, have ended up under the ground and are no more. Those clothes picked up on sale are in the hand-me-down box; at home the roof eventually leaks; the appliances and tools break down and need fixing as well as replacing and relationships we think will endure often fall apart; all seems futile. To most of us, nothing makes us feel more helpless than the thought of dying one day; this end of our earthly life confronts us with the issue of what lies beyond. The Bible says it is either eternal life in the Kingdom of God on earth or an eternal grave. The good news is: Jesus died and rose again. His resurrection guarantees that believers in Christ will rise out of the ground to live for ever (John 11:25-26). How?

First, the requirements for eternal life have been met by the life and the death on the cross of the sacrificial Lamb. Jesus was then resurrected. There is nothing we can do about this: the miracle has happened.

Second, the way to the Kingdom of God is not by works but by faith (Eph. 2:8-9), our response to the death of Christ, and God's loving offer of forgiveness, through our Lord Jesus (Acts 16:31).

Salvation is a free gift of grace that meets our every spiritual need. This means we can endure hardships here and now. We can live with broken and ruined bodies for a while; we can face loneliness, heartache and pain for a season. There is another life to come. If we have put our trust in Jesus, eternity will be nothing for us to worry about.

*Bro. Alex Chami (Nkansi Rukwa, Tanzania)*

### **'Wine is a Mocker'**

There is a very large body of verses especially in Proverbs where we are warned about the danger of alcohol. But we are also warned about the dangers of keeping company with those who abuse alcohol: “Hear thou, my son, and be wise...Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags” (Prov. 23:19-21). The wise king Solomon spoke these words to each of us, we are his “son” if we wish to be the children of wisdom. In my country, and also in other neighbouring countries such as Russia, Belarus etc., we have a very large problem with alcohol abuse. Any event of life, be it sad or happy, is celebrated with alcohol and drunkenness. Weddings, funerals, going to the army, returning from army service, moving to a new house, are all met with hard drinking. Indeed, buying or getting anything new is an excuse for such drinking. At the time of drinking, there is no thought for the future. Prov. 23:29-31 says “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath complaining? who hath wounds without

cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek out mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly: at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange things, and thine heart shall utter froward things". All who live in the Ukraine can testify that this is so true, and those who drink know this to be true, and yet still they do it.

Alcohol leads to lack of self control, and most robberies and murders are committed under the influence or under the need to obtain alcohol. Alcohol takes away any desire to aspire to the higher, spiritual things which we are asked to aspire to. Physical degradation is apparent throughout our population as a result of alcohol. The sin of alcoholism is therefore because it destroys the body as well as because it leads us to lack of moral control. This is why the Bible says that abusers of alcohol will not inherit the Kingdom of God, because of the unspiritual way of life that it leads to (1 Cor. 6:9,10). The same apostle Paul who wrote this is the one who is often wrongly quoted because of his words to Timothy, that he should take a little wine for his stomach's sake. But clearly this cannot be used to justify the abuse of alcohol. We should not be filled with wine, but with the Spirit of God (Eph. 5:18). Lk. 21:34 says that in the last days, the hearts of people will be full of alcohol, and this is why they will not be looking forward to the coming of Jesus and they will not be ready for him, and this is a situation we see fulfilling around us very much in this land.

Let us be aware, then, that from God's viewpoint, alcoholism is put together with theft, adultery and murder. It is very serious. The priests on duty and the persons who took the nazirite vow were not allowed to drink alcohol (Lev. 10:9, Num. 6:1-4), and we too are on duty for God as a nation of priests. Our judgment must never be clouded. There is forgiveness of course for alcoholics, always the way is open to repentance. Repentance is about a new way of life, and this is the hope for alcoholics, that they, too, can truly share in the new life which God makes possible.

Comment: Duncan has written a booklet "Living with Alcoholism – Some Suggestions for Christians" available in several languages.

*Bro. Gennady (Poltava, Ukraine)*

### **"He Whom the Father Loves, He Chastens"**

Hebrews 12:1-11 has some words that touched me day and night, so I want to share them with others. There are two important words in this passage: "endurance", which is the ability not to break under pressure and "discipline", the willingness to let such pressure so positively affect us that we will be better able to do what we should. We have the example of a runner to illustrate these. The spectators around the field encourage him as he tries to break the records of those who have run the race before him. For us, these are fellow believers today and those who have lived the life of faith before us.

Sin is the great obstacle to winning this race. We therefore need the endurance to resist all the pressures and temptations to sin. At the same time we will submit to the discipline of God which will strengthen our resistance to evil. These will be painful and sometimes long. But we should know that God is doing it out of His love for us.

*Bro Dzingai Sumberera (Gwevu, Zimbabwe)*