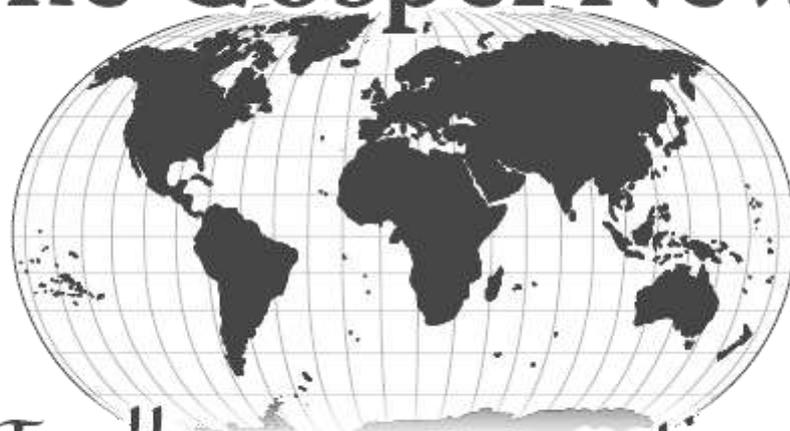


# The Gospel News



“To all  nations”

## **EDITORIAL: More on the Road Ahead**

My March/April editorial 'The Road Ahead' aroused much interest and constructive comments which we hope to expand upon in future issues of *Gospel News*.

Whilst membership numbers are not necessarily an indication of spiritual growth, they are substantial enough to indicate trends. In the first five years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century [1900-1904], there was a net increase of about 1,355 in the number of Christadelphians in the United Kingdom. That is, when you compare the number of baptisms against the number of deaths and withdrawals from fellowship, there was a growth of 1,355. A century later, what do we find happening amongst Christadelphians in the U.K. in the last five years? There is a stark contrast. There has been a substantial *decrease* every year; in both 2000 and 2003 there was a decrease of 156 both years. Comparing numbers of new members against numbers of deaths and withdrawals, our community reduced by about 780 members in the last five-year period. Such a substantial reduction, in an ageing community, with fewer young people being baptised and retained in fellowship, demands serious consideration. It is failing in our duty to ignore these facts by shutting our eyes to them.

The commonly held view is that this is a 'sign of the times', with people just not being interested. I submit that this is unfounded and contrary to the facts. Overall there are more baptisms world-wide today than ever before; internationally we are an expanding community.

Statistics of religious decline in the U.K. for 'Christian' organisations like our own show our decline to be greater than the average, perhaps indicating a particular British Christadelphian problem, which may also account for the United Kingdom's decline being greater than that in N. America and Australia.

The CBM Guide for 1999 shows that there were then 6,214 Brethren and Sisters in Africa. The 2004 Guide shows a gigantic expansion to 12,932 – more than doubling in five years. Whilst this phenomenal growth is exciting, in case the success encourages complacency, in percentage terms it is only half the increase seen in Eastern Europe. The CBM Guide shows 241 Eastern European members in 1999, rising to 921 in 2004, a threefold+ increase. Whilst the numbers may go up or down, projecting the present rate of growth in Africa and Eastern Europe for the next 30 years indicates there could be 3,908,641 Christadelphians, yes, nearly 4 million, in these parts in contrast to a further decrease of 4,680 in the UK, by present trends. The fact is, this is the pattern of growth that has been achieved in the last five years. Pessimists think it will not continue. The same pessimists five years ago thought such an explosion as has occurred ridiculously impossible. Optimists feel the chart on the next page could even be an underestimate, especially if other areas expand. The Christadelphian Advancement Trust has played a part in furthering the gospel of recent years, thanks to the generous support of so many and the Lord's blessing upon the work, without which all would be impossible, we hope to continue to work with all the other Christadelphian organisations and individuals to preach the gospel to all nations.

**CURRENT INCREASES PROJECTED FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS.**

AFRICA

EASTERN EUROPE

1999	6,214	241
2004	12,932	921
Next 5 years	26,898	3,518
10 years	55,947	13,483
15 years	116,369	51,333
20 years	242,047	196,092
25 years	503,457	749,071
30 years	1,047,190	2,861,45

Let not Africans or Eastern Europeans boast in their numerical increases. Further research indicates great potential in Asia and South America where the surface has barely been scratched (at the moment). So let us all banish the pessimism and replace it with confident optimism. The Truth is triumphant and penetrating into the four corners of the earth – the potential is enormous.

In emphasizing the need for increasing commitment, one must not underestimate the very substantial amount of work being done by so many today, but every dedicated missionary worker confirms that the harvest is great, but the labourers few.

Within Christadelphia there is some apathy, lack of real commitment and even at times antagonism, towards forwarding this vital saving work, to give the perishing the hope of salvation. Personal prejudice, infighting and internecine conflicts appear to be crippling us. This should not be.

With the above background let us start to consider a few African readers' comments and suggestions of the 'road map' ahead. Bro. Raphael Mkeya of Tanzania made a number of thoughtful and positive suggestions, he wrote:

*"It is rather depressing to know that membership in Britain is declining sharply...This pushes me to ask the question, Why is membership decreasing in Britain? Britain is supposed to be the main stem of the faith. If the stem is thinning, do you think the branches will hold? This calls for more work at home than abroad."* - Bro Raphael Mkeya.

The need for "more work at home" is certainly very true. However, substantial national and local efforts and regular meetings are held in the UK, much money is spent, very often with little or even no apparent results, but the work is persisted in. The CALS does a grand job on their national advertising. The Seminar principle adopted over the past years has had results, but by far and away the most effective way of preaching is by personal contact, as the results over the past hundred years indicate. Owing to materialism and the growing decline in interest in UK Christianity, some find it awkward to make a more personal witness. However, the stark fact is that Christianity in Britain is in decline. In the last five years 2,600 churches have closed and with congregations shrinking the demise is likely to escalate. This is not the pattern worldwide where active belief in 'Christianity' is expanding.

### 'CHRISTIAN' CONGREGATIONS

	1970	1995	% change
Africa	247,110	551,700	+123
Asia	192,100	993,400	+417
S. America	128,200	419,000	+227
China	52,400	425,960	+694

As the majority of our converts have a 'Christian' background, indications are that, whilst we have to preach everywhere, we need to focus greater attention on areas where we are likely to get the best results. When the fishermen-disciples had fished all night and caught nothing, they were surprised because they were doing their 'normal thing'. However, at Jesus' command to "cast the net on the other side of the boat, and you will find some" (John 21:6), they caught a great multitude. This can well be the lesson for us today: to cast the net on the other side of the sea of nations where we will find we can catch men.

It was when Jesus told the men to "launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch" (Luke 5:4) that they caught "a great number of fish." Bro. Harry Whittaker, commenting on this, says, "There was initially a marked reluctance on the part of the twelve to 'launch out into the deep' of the Gentile sea (Galilee of the Gentiles), but ultimately there came such a 'haul' of converts that they were quite inadequate for the situation. So it became necessary to call others to their side that the harvest of this Gentile sea might be gathered in" ('Studies in the Gospels' ch. 29). So let us all take Jesus' teaching to ourselves in these days.

Even at the present rate of decline, and should Jesus not return for some years to come, there will still be a few thousand Christadelphians in Britain. There is a deep understanding and commitment to the truth, with many having years of experience in dealing with all sorts of problems, organizing of meetings etc. This is something which is and can be of enormous benefit in establishing the truth in new areas. We are pleased to be able to work together with those of you abroad as we see the truth growing in your areas. We must say, as did John the Baptist when Jesus commenced his ministry, "He must increase, but I must decrease". We are privileged to help you become strong, dynamic ecclesias, which should ultimately become independent communities with which we are all in fellowship as the one body of Christ.

It is understandable that from an African point of view some see Britain as the "*main stem of the faith*" because most of the initial work in Africa was done from the UK. Those in the Philippines seem to see the Australians as their "main stem", whilst in S. America they would see it as N. America. Like nations that over the centuries rise and fall, so, too, have the centres of the truth: Jerusalem, then possibly Central Europe and today probably Australasia, Britain, and North America. Maybe these areas will also soon, have 'had their day'.

I would like to emphasize that *established* Christadelphian ecclesias in whatever country of the world, are not under the control of any other country or body. They are each totally independent and autonomous, but united together by their understanding of the word of God, the basic teaching of which is expressed in our '*Statement of Faith*'.

There seems an attitude held by some that the truth is primarily for English-speaking people; that they are some kind of superior 'chosen race'. But this, of course, is not so. The gospel is for all people of the world, which embraces all nations. Only 320 million have English as their mother tongue, that's less than 20% of the world's population. The redeemed will have come "out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Rev. 5:10 NKJ) or "every tribe and language and people and nation" (ESV). If it were to be an average, only 20% of them will have had English as their native tongue. Hence the need for our literature in all languages. *Bible Basics* is available in 50 - plus of the major languages and an acceleration of the work is needed.

In the business, political and religious world there is a desire for 'centralized' control which, from a human point of view, has some merit. It is most undesirable, however, for Christadelphia to have such a 'hierarchical' system. Bro. Roberts wrote in the *Ecclesial Guide*:

*"Ecclesial independence should be guarded with great jealousy, with the qualifications indicated in the foregoing sections. To form 'unions' or 'societies' of ecclesias, in which delegates should frame laws for the individual ecclesias, would be to lay the foundation of a collective despotism which would interfere with the free growth and the true objects of ecclesial life. Such collective machineries create fictitious importance's, which tend to suffocate the truth. All ecclesiastical history illustrates this".*

One of the major limitations to true independence in Africa is *poverty*. Not everyone is poor, many are materially independent and they and their families do not suffer undue hardship. The same goes for Biblical knowledge and practise; some are great students and mature expositors of the word.

However, an increasing number are trapped by the downward spiral of poverty. Because of this they are unable to obtain a balanced nourishing diet thus making them prone to disease, but they lack the resources to obtain proper medical treatment. Consequently they are physically weak, unable to work the land satisfactorily or to obtain good employment. This results in them being unable to afford education for their children and thus the poverty trap continues. So, apart from helping those in the mission fields spiritually, we should also be helping them out of the poverty trap to material independence and healthier living – something that cannot be achieved overnight. However, part of the solution is to think of ways of addressing their medical, nutritional and educational needs and suggestions of how to achieve this are welcome. On page 17 we start to look at some help with the medical problem.

In summary, each part of the body of Christ needs something from other parts of the body in order to function properly. Remember how every person received the same amount of manna, even though the stronger gathered more, and the weaker gathered less (2 Cor 8:14-15). This happened because there was a sharing of the resources they had gathered - resources, which God had given. And so there was, what Paul calls in his commentary upon this, an "equality". And this is the unity, which there could so easily be amongst us. It is this unity, not uniformity but true *unity*, which is my daily prayer.

*Marcus Heaster*

## News from Africa

### news from cameroon

#### **BAMENDA**

I got your message and I was very happy because I like reading from you over there because the message you people send to us this way is good. You see we in Cameroon are very interested in knowing the Bible and knowing it for the purpose as doers and not only hearers but we really need your help to always write to us - myself for example. I was baptised a few months ago, so I really need somebody to really build me up, and thank Bro Doug from Australia who has been a great help.

*Bro Gilbert*

#### **EPEN BANGEM**

With sadness and regret we announce the falling asleep of our dear Sis. Hannah Ntube on Sunday 11th. July 2004 as soon as we had breaking of bread with her. Our Sister was baptised some years ago and served the ecclesia whole heartily and faithfully to the Lord. It was a good opportunity for her to remember the Lord's death by partaking of bread and wine before her death, though we miss her we know our Lord will also remember her at his return on the resurrection day.

*Bro. Brain Ebong*

#### **TOMBEL**

I payed a visit in Tombel where my grand-mother lives, I got in touch with some people who I told about our doctrine after a long conversation they accepted the truth and three are doing the 40 lesson courses.

*Bro. Brain Ebong*

### news from congo

We were pleased to receive 6 copies of French *Bible Basics*, two Swahili hymn books and a Bible in French. Brother, we thank you for your letter of 20 January 2003, received belatedly on 2 April 2004 via our brothers in Goma; may God bless you in what you do for us in Masisi. We have no building for our meetings. Mostly these take place in the shade of a large tree and passers-by occasionally make fun of us, we appeal for help to build a meeting place.

We are unable to travel from one place to another, which involves walking several hundred kilometres by road; we would be grateful for help to facilitate us getting about. We would be very happy to go to other African and European countries on preaching campaigns.

If possible we would like someone to send us "Une Vie de Jésus" (12 books) and "Gospel News" in French and Swahili, because the majority don't know English, not forgetting that among those interested, are widows and people displaced by war.

*Bro. Edmond Rajabu.*

## news from egypt

How are you? Really I miss you and I hope that all of you are very well. I am so sorry for being unable to tell you my latest news which badly affected on our meeting in Cairo. As for the last three months I was in *prison* and I was committed by *anti Islamist* case which the court here judged on me. The details are that I had encouraged an Islamic friend to be Christian and be baptised. But unfortunately a third person told the police about that and they arrested me as I am encouraging Islamic persons to change their religion, and I was taken to *jail* as a penalty for this case. As a result I had no way to contact you or my family. Now they cancelled my job from the government and I am suffering from everything around me now. Please, trust me and do not leave me.

S.

*Comment: We surely should remember all this in prayer. We have again lost contact but are doing all we can to help.*

## news from ghana

### **CAPE COAST**

First and foremost, I am very glad to write to you this morning from Queen Ann's Point, Ekon, near Cape Coast, but I apologise for the long delay. It will interest you to hear that the Cape Coast Ecclesia has now moved to Queen Ann's Point, Ekon. We need your prayers about this; we are using the Oguaa Senior Secondary Technical School. I need two large print New King James' Bibles for the work we are doing. We are O.K. here, getting on well with God's work, and God willing we hope to get some additional baptisms soon, but it all depends on hard work, prayer, love, faith and hope. My thanks go to brothers and sisters world-wide who help to spread the gospel in areas where it has never been heard.

*Bro. Lawrence Nkrumah*

## news from kenya

### **AHERO**

Faith is not complete without works. The faithful men mentioned in Hebrews 11 all believed God. Abraham abandoned his native land to be a sojourner in an unknown country. Abel offered in sacrifice the things God required. Noah laboured and built the 'saviour' ark. Their deeds made them 'rich' in God's sight. Nicodemus had to learn and believe about baptism. We all have to have faith and action too. Jesus was born as the only begotten Son of God, the sacrificial lamb to take away sin. In Golgotha the Lord said, "It is finished". What was finished? His whole life of sacrifice and then the sacrifice of himself when he was crucified and his blood poured out. Faith and works go together.

*Bro. Nelson Otieno*

### **BARICHO**

When I think of leadership, I always remember when the children of Israel asked for a king who would go before them and fight their battles, refusing God as their King. But God did not leave them, although He let them have a king. Likewise nowadays, not only in countries, but also in churches, there are still battles for leadership. Leadership means nothing. True believers know what they are after – everlasting life in God’s Kingdom; they do not fight for leadership. An elder in an ecclesia is only there to help guide the ecclesia. We believe in one Christ and we all want to be in God’s Kingdom here on earth when the Lord Jesus returns.

*Bro. David Kabaya*

### **BUNGOMA**

I thank you very much for the books. I and my wife, Gladys, have enjoyed, and still enjoy, reading them and we are drawing topics to teach in our Malondo ecclesia in order to share the knowledge with the Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

*Bro. John W. Muyala*

We are enlightened that *Gospel News* is quite independent and this has cleared doubts amongst us who, like other brethren, thought it might be replaced by the Bible Missionary. May I inform you that some of the youth here are very willing to have the Bible Correspondence Courses from UK.

*Bro. Patrick Sawa*

I am sorry to announce the falling asleep of our beloved Brother in Christ Benedict Miruka, who was buried on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Very many Brethren and Sisters were able to attend the funeral and the burial. From verse 1 of Romans ch. 6, our Brother Benedict rejected the continuance of living in sin where grace could not abound. Verse 3 tells us that our Brother was baptised into Jesus’ death. He was buried with Jesus by baptism into death through water. That as Christ was raised up from death by the glory of the Father, even so having come out of the water he had also to walk in newness of life. Bro. Benedict is resting in the grave awaiting the likeness of our Master’s resurrection on the day when he will descend from heaven with a shout and the trump of God and with His holy angels (1 Thess. 4). Our Brother leaves his Sister widow and seven children; we ask them to keep strong in *the* faith. We hope to meet our Brother in God’s Kingdom which will soon be established on earth.

*Bro. Clement Fwamba Mateba*

### **GISAMBAI**

It is a great pleasure to me to thank all concerned with my baptism at our Givungi Ecclesia, for it has strengthened me spiritually. I have now realised the real meaning of baptism (Rom. 6:3,4; 1 Peter 3:21). Since we claim to be followers of Jesus Christ, he was himself baptised, Paul was baptised and the converts to the early church were baptised. We have repented and God has granted us forgiveness (Acts 2:38). And thus we are united with Jesus Christ and will not be enslaved by sin. We will reign with Jesus when he will come the same way in which he went to heaven (Acts 1:11) and will set up a Kingdom that will stand for ever (Dan. 2:44). Thanks a lot for sending me *Bible Basics* which is really assisting me in improving my Bible study. I do appreciate receiving *Gospel News*. Actually, I have come to realise the truth and the whole truth through reading *Gospel News*. I’ve come to believe that Jesus Christ is going to come (Luke 24:29-31). As I meet with my fellow Brethren and Sisters and we devote ourselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers (Acts 3:42) we pray when Jesus Christ comes he will find us ready.

*Bro. Joseph Luseno*

### **ISHIARA**

All in all I am fine and still struggling in this mortality, but fully assured that it is going to be very soon and this mortality will put on immortality, when Christ our Lord and King reappears with all his majesty – Amen. May you soon come, Lord Jesus.

*Bro. David Aphaxard*

### **KABABU**

Numbers 13 and 14 are sad chapters if used as a sign post to our walk towards the Kingdom of God. The events shown prove that the Israelites were not ready for the great purpose that Yahweh had in store for them. Truly it was so. Consider Psalm 81:11-14. The Israelites were not hearing the voice of Yahweh as they walked towards the promised land. God promised them the inheritance of the land, but it was only depending on them listening to His voice, but as we read through these chapters we note that the unfaithful were wanting to walk by sight and not by faith. Deuteronomy 1:22 shows that the chosen of God sent a deputation to Moses asking that spies should go first and search the land, reporting on its condition and the strength of its inhabitants. Though Yahweh agreed to this, it was not good. Compare 1 Sam. 8:6,22 with Hosea 13:11 – the Lord permitted what they wanted, but not what He liked. Brothers and Sisters, as we are the body of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, let us ignore sight-walking towards the Kingdom and have total faith in God's promises, casting all our care upon him (Mark 11:22; Matt. 6:25), realising that God knows our needs beforehand and will provide. Let Jesus dwell in our very hearts in all our ways (Eph. 3:17).

*Bro Samwel Masawa*

### **KAKAMEGA**

Thank you for your letter together with the booklet of model questions and answers re. baptism which I have found very useful guidelines. I have now received material from the ALS - many thanks. I am now making good use of this and would appreciate any further supply. I am waiting for the *Bible Basics* in Kiswahili. I have a student who doesn't speak nor understand English but can speak Kiswahili fluently. I also have a group of seven children aged between 3 and 14, but lack Sunday School material. It would be of much benefit if you could send me suitable material for them.

*Bro. Gibson A. Azare*

### **KITALE**

It is apostolic exhortation to "behold, the goodness and severity of God". Both these sides of the Divine character have to be recognised before we get a wholesome and scriptural view of Him with whom we have to do. Both are amply illustrated in the historic doings of God with His people Israel. It is with the latter illustration we are now thinking about. Isaiah 58 brings before us the severe side of God's character and at the same time reminds us of some important lessons we are liable to forget, and upon the remembering and carrying out of them will depend our ultimate individual acceptance with Him. The prophet is commanded to "Cry aloud, spare not: lift up the voice like a trumpet and show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins". The prophet was not sent to the surrounding heathen, to tell them of their sins, but to Israel, God's own people. Sin is by no means confined to those who know not God. The need for condemning sin exists as much, and in a certain sense more, within the house of God

than in the outer darkness.

*Sis. Lydia Fuchaka*

### **LUUYA**

Our Brethren at Luuya ask if the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month is mentioned in the Bible. At first sight we read this as December 25, and the answer, of course, would have been no, because the names of the months in the Bible are in Hebrew and different to the English months, as the chart shows. There is no command to celebrate Jesus' birthday on December 25<sup>th</sup>. The mention of shepherds tending their flocks indicates that Christ's birth could well have been in the spring. December 25<sup>th</sup> was the time of a pagan festival, which was adopted to celebrate the birth of Christ. The question still remains: Is the five and twentieth day of the twelfth month mentioned in the Bible? We are indebted to Bro. George Wabwile and Bro. Wycliffe Wasike of Kenya for bringing this verse to our attention.

*The answer to this question is at the bottom of the Kenyan News.*

### **MASMBWENI**

Looking at it from a personal point of view, the qualification required to enter the Kingdom of God is a very simple one – love. Yet, think of Jacob's sons, they hated Joseph (Gen. 37:8. But was it wise of Joseph to explain his dreams to them? And what about his father's view? (Gen. 37:11. We also think of David (1 Sam. 17:28); his brothers hated him, but he was chosen by God. Jesus also was hated of his people, because of the things he did and said (Matt. 27:1-2). However, God loves everybody (John 3:16) and we must do the same.

*Bro. Benedict Masai*

### **MBITA**

I am happy to tell you that faith is real. Earlier this year we went to Sindo beach where we witnessed the baptisms of three new Brothers (1) *Jactone Okime* (2) *Elkana Othoo* (3) *Othoo Michael Orié*. Let us stay close to God, that is the way to find the Kingdom.

*Bro. Jared Oketch*

### **MSAMBWENI**

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ. I am happy being a young Sister in the truth. I am interested in meeting and sharing this wonderful hope with others. Please can you send some magazines about how a young Sister can grow in the truth.

*Sis. Patricia L. Maing*

### **NAKURU**

I cried when I read from your letter that in New Zealand three children had three days' fasting because they wanted to feel what true hunger was like. I cannot imagine people going without food for days despite having well stocked refrigerators. This is a challenge to we people in Africa, in poor countries, who may depend on support from our western Brothers. Time has come to say no, and also provide from our pocket for the spread of the gospel, remembering the poor widow who threw two coins into the treasury box. Jesus commented that she had given more than anyone else. For ourselves, we were blessed with three kids, but unfortunately one fell asleep after birth. We received some mosquito nets, 15 in number, and distributed them amongst ourselves. We were so happy to have them as we live in mosquito-infested areas and malaria drugs are very expensive. I received the booklet 'Withdrawal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit'; what a nice debate it was. After receiving it we went through it with our Brothers and Sisters; it arrived at the right time, since we were planning a Bible study and invited our Bible

students surrounding Nakuru. Any other booklets which will help us will be gratefully received. I am an artist and I move from one market to another selling Mosaic pictures carrying some verses from the Bible. Whenever I share the word of God with someone, it sometimes seems odd when I explain that tomb, hades, hell etc. mean the same – grave. By reading my Bible regularly I stay well informed and my journey towards the Kingdom of God becomes easier.

*Bro. Peter Thuo Kariuki*

### **NDHIWA**

We see Jesus, walking along the dusty roads, standing where people stood; stopped for a weeping woman, a blind person, for a wealthy loner, a beggar etc. He restored them with compassion and left them rejoicing, forgiven and with new sight. But he never healed easily, mark that carefully – “Power went out of me”, he said when the suffering woman touched him. The Healer never healed without pain. In Bethany, tears were streaming down the face of our Saviour as he stood with Martha and Mary and called Lazarus from the grave. Most costly of all was the cross of Jesus; that is where we see the highest form of *love*. The glory of Jesus shines from the depth of the bitterness, the suffering, the injustice, misery and loneliness of the cross. But there our transformation began, because the cross demonstrated in shining letters, ‘This is how much God loves’. The cross carried that love to the point of death, and through it into resurrection. As Jesus showed *his* love to us, let us also display this word *love* on our backs – Ruoth opaki.

*Bro. Leonard Mboya Lar*

### **NYERI**

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, for by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” When we meet at the Lord’s table to remember his sacrifice we should remember the example of the faith of those of old times, some of whom are mentioned in Hebrews ch. 11. Abraham and Sarah had a child when they were old. Faith is often tried, and we have an example of this when Abraham was told to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Moses kept the Passover and the Israelites passed over the Red Sea as by dry land. Even the walls of Jericho fell down after seven days – by faith. When we come to the time of Jesus we see that women received their dead raised to life. Jesus bore the agony of the cross – this was the supreme example of faith. For those Brothers and Sisters who may feel lonely, being perhaps one or two in number, if we have faith in the work of the gospel, God will add more and more Brothers and Sisters to the fellowship of Christ. So let us love each other and have faith “for without faith it is impossible to please Him” (Heb. 11 6).

*Bro. Alex K. Mwaniki*

### **PALA-SARE**

I am worried that the \*snap I sent of the ecclesia has not yet been published. I met with our Bro. Philip Lawrence and his wife, Sis. Kate, in April at Migori. In South Nyanza we have six ecclesias, but due to time, Bro. Lawrence combined Okumbo and Kababu at one place. Through God’s mercy two Sisters were baptised. I hope, trust and believe that one day Brothers from UK will visit Okumbo ecclesia. Please send Jan/Feb *Gospel News* which I did not receive.

*Bro. John Kine*

\*Sorry for the delay John.

### **SIAYA**

My new working station is at Siaya, about 250km from Migori; its far away, a different environment and hot weather conditions. I miss my Brothers in Migori. I send my greetings to people in Uzbekistan, Tashkent and Bro. Oleg and encourage him to stand firm in the Lord who will protect him all through his mission. God bless you all.

*Bro. Kennedy Kirinya*

### **SUNA-MIGORI**

Thank you for your letters that I've been receiving. The teachings they contain are very good and inspiring. I've been able to know the feared beasts, of Daniel and Revelation, the current world situation and that the Lord is coming soon in a cloud, with power and great glory, bringing with him justice, righteousness and order and subduing all evil. What a wonderful day it will be when we will rejoice with our dear Lord! We are a group of people in our faith. The Migori ecclesia is very far from here, so we decided to site a building near us to enable us all to attend Sunday services.

*Bro. Peter Omoga*

### **TONGAREN**

The Bible tells us that many people will be judged when Jesus returns. Paul says that Jesus Christ will judge the living and the dead (2 Tim. 4:1). Responsible people are those who know about God, whether they have rejected him or obeyed Him. All those shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ and each will give an account of him/herself to Christ (Rom. 14:10,12) Not all responsible people will be saved (see Luke 13:28). People who have never known about God will not be raised for judgment because they are not responsible to Him. Daniel tells us that many (*not all*) of those who sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting destruction (Dan. 12:2). Faithful believers can look forward to this wonderful blessing. God is going to send Jesus Christ to bring peace to the world. After resurrection and judgment those who are saved will enter the Kingdom of God as priests to preach the word of God to all nations. If we serve God now we will belong to Him in the day when "there shall be no more death" (Rev. 21:4). May God bless all who do the will of God.

*Sis. Nancy Nasimiyu*

Because Jesus said the gospel should be preached to every creature, we should encourage people to devote themselves to the work of the Lord, especially by translating the gospel into native languages (Matt. 28:19-20). A good follower of Christ should not mock or neglect any translation of the word of God, instead he should do the corrections to make the translation suitable for the benefit of coming generations. Let us unite world wide to assist in every way in translating the gospel into the native languages of the world.

*Bro. Isaac Kapa*

Calendar in Ancient Israel

Answer: The 25<sup>th</sup> day of the twelfth month is referred to in Jeremiah 52:31.

## news from malawi

### **BLANTYRE**

There are a lot of people in my ecclesia who would like to receive *Gospel News*, but unfortunately they do not have proper addresses. If you could add some copies and send to me I will deliver to Brothers and Sisters.

*Bro. Brian Kachereh*

### **JALI**

Thank you very much for sending me the entire book dealing with Revelation, following my past question from Revelation ch. 13. I beg you to continue sending me gospel material as the Kingdom of God is around the corner.

*Bro. R.K. Mapersa*

### **NTCHEU**

As I am not working I am at my wife's village. I am very privileged to visit our old and new Brothers and Sisters in the country. We endure happily all the difficulties because of our Lord Jesus; we always pray for the moment for him to come. Thanks to God who showed us the truth. There is a friend here who is a Moslem and he is interested to have *Bible Basics for Moslems*. In Malawi there is freedom of worship; we do not have such things as 'Moslem communities' (Mark 8:35). I am very busy, especially this week: I am sending some duplicated books to Brothers and Sisters in various parts, in and outside Malawi. I have already sent the 'Testimony' magazine to Brothers in Malawi and the book, 'Back to the Bible' to a friend.

*Bro. Emmanuel Chitalo*

### **SALIMA**

Thanks a lot for publishing my exhortation in *Gospel News* July/August Issue. Let me take this opportunity to let you know of the baptisms of four people in Salima-Malawi. In my last letter I mentioned they were expected to have taken place in July but they took place on the 1st of August, 2004. Brother Austen Frank Nyirenda, Sisters Emily Mayimba, Gladys and Eunice Mphambo are the four. There are three more people who are on their way to baptism very soon, God willing. We thank God for His work and calling.

*Emmanuel Gerald Mphambo*

## news from nigeria

### **ENUGU**

I was exceedingly happy when I received a book titled *A womans Place?* The book is very exciting, to those that believes the truth. As i was reading the book, I remember a magazine given to me by Bro Goddy Nwosu. It was a debate between Bro Duncan and Rev. Henry. Please Bro. I would like you to send to my sister wife a copy of the Igbo *Bible Basics*, for she likes to read Igbo version of the Bible.

*Bro Golden Onuoha*

*Comment:* We still have stocks of the Igbo *Bible Basics* and are happy to send copies to anyone who can use them for preaching purposes.

### **OBORO**

The new Ikwueke Oboro ecclesia was carved out from Okwe Oboro ecclesia after we had waited

patiently for 13 good years. we travel there every Wednesday and Sunday from a distance of 80km, rain or shine. We labour together in the Master's vineyard. Now we ask Brethren and Sisters in Christ to pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified. This little effort of ours is the way God has revealed Himself to us, with the opportunity to show brotherly love. We ask for help in building the ecclesia while we wait for our Master's return.

*Bro. Friday Enyiogu*

We have left Okwe for a new ecclesia at Ikwueke Oboro; this is because we trekked almost 5km and made it impossible to attend Memorial services regularly. I am requesting teaching materials to enable me to carry out teaching properly.

*Bro. F.E. Umesi*

## news from tanzania

### **ISAKA**

There are many of us living in isolation and would dearly love the overseas visitors to come to our homes. I appreciate they visit ecclesias and therefore see more Brothers and Sisters, but those of us who live away can feel left out. I congratulate Bro. Simon Uswege on coming to visit me and we were very glad of his coming. We need to do more to visit each other so that the bonds of fellowship may be strengthened.

*Bro. David Nestory*

### **KIBIRIZI**

We are on the very hard and heavy task of building our own ecclesial hall.

### **KIGOMA**

We thank Almighty God for His love in enabling members of Lugufu 1 ecclesia to organise a Bible seminar; this was in June and was attended by members of Lugufu 2 ecclesia and friends and we were strengthened in the Scriptures. We discussed the following subjects: (1) The Basis of the Christian gospel (Bro. Isidore E. Mwibeleta) (2) Jesus Christ Son of God not God the Son (Bro. L. Buluma) (3) God and Death (Bro. Rehani Pascal) and (4) How we can Inherit the Kingdom of God (Bro. A. Iyunga). You may know that life in this refugee camp is very difficult as we face a severe shortage of food and other things. But Jesus Christ said "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from God" (Matt. 4:4). We need your prayers and support for our work. We at Lugufu 1 have been blessed by the visits of Bre. John Owen and Alistair MacDonald (B'ham. UK), Benoit Mukendi (Arusha, Tanzania) and Samuel Alinot (Rutale, Kigoma, Tanzania). Their words of exhortation strengthened us. They visited the ecclesia of Lugufu 2 when one contact from our ecclesia, Mr. Ekyoci Esengya, was baptised and also a lady from Lugufu 2 ecclesia. May God bless them on their walk towards His Kingdom.

*Bro. Isidore E. Mwibeleta*

### **KIGWA**

I am very sad to inform you that our dear Brother Andrew Michael fell asleep on March 21` at the age of 63. Our Brother was baptised at Kigwa ecclesia. We were delighted to welcome visitors from the UK. We thank you for sending us *Bible Basics*; Brethren and Sisters were very happy, especially those that use the Swahili language. These will increase our knowledge.

### **KILOSA**

Christ and Nicodemus, a well educated Jewish leader, discussed the important question of how a sinner can become a new man – born “of water and of the spirit”. This is the most serious question a person will ever face – a question of life and death. I am thankful for *Gospel News* by which I am gaining knowledge from the views of Brethren and Sisters from all over the world, which helps me in the race towards the Kingdom. I have learned from Paul that nothing can or will separate me from the love of God which is manifested in Christ our Lord. I would like to thank Brothers and Sisters from New Zealand for sending me a bookmark which shows the joy and love of the angels in heaven on the occasion of my baptism, which encouraged me a lot.. I need more help spiritually to win the race.

*Bro. Alick J. Noah*

### **MBEYA**

I am very sorry to inform you that the P.O. box I use to receive *Gospel News* was closed because the owner was not in the country. When he returned he opened the box and there was a big consignment of *Gospel News* and your letter.

*Sis. Atupakisye Jabir Mwaijonga*

### **MIKUMI**

The world we live in is structured around the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). “Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4). In African countries a number of people depend on witches. The Bible says that God is the source of all power and from Him comes good and evil. God does not force us to obey Him but has given us the choice of death or life, blessing or curse. God depends on us to work with Him to save people who are still following false teaching. If we do that without fear, we shall succeed and be rewarded at the second coming of Christ to the earth. All of us must deeply pray life-long for others and teach, person to person, the true gospel and invite our friends to our meetings. Every Christadelphian must have his/her goals in missionary work; without a goal we will never succeed.

*Bro. Robert Mwaseba*

### **USAGARA**

The boy, David J. Rufano, fell asleep on April 18 at Bugando Hospital. He was 11 years old and was not baptised due to his age, but he was a member of Usagara Sunday School. He was in a bus accident on his way to the ecclesia. He was my second child.

*Bro. Jactor Rufano*

Comment: Bro. Jactor, we are distressed to hear of this tragedy, and all readers will remember you and your family in their prayers.

### **UVINZA**

I would like you to report the loss of Brethren and Sisters from our Lugufu ecclesia; this is due to them being resettled in the USA by the UNHCR, they were all accompanied by their families. We pray the Lord will care for them in their new settlements and beseech the Brethren in the areas to welcome them and encourage them to continue with the task of preaching. May we meet together in the Kingdom of our Lord.

*Bro. Bernard Wabene Ikola*

I have enjoyed *Gospel News* because it exhorts me and makes me feel the brotherhood’s love for the truth world wide as members of God’s household. There is a very urgent need for us to

keep on preaching the gospel message to all the human race. The gospel provides us with the message of immortality, which we are looking forward to receiving from Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
*Bro. Shadrack Ngambi*

## news from uganda

### **BUSIA**

Sister Betrice has been working with AGOA but is now planning to take up full-time education.

### **KASESE**

God sees every corner of the earth and knows all activities. His eyes are never shut, nothing is hidden from Him (Heb. 4:13). He is ready, in justice, to forgive those who accept their mistakes and come to Him. Rewards and judgments will be given on what we have done (John 5:29). Let us try to be blameless. God will not judge us on what others know but what He knows; He is faithful and just to forgive (1 John 1:8,9), and Jesus is coming soon (Rev. 22:12).

*Bro Remegio Kule*

### **KIGANDALO**

Some critics of the Bible claim that it contradicts itself. Is this true? No, it is not. If we should ask these critics which parts of the Bible are contradictory they usually have no specific example in mind. When examples are mentioned, they often turn out to be cases where different Bible writers tell the same story from different angles. For example, on one occasion Jesus miraculously healed the manservant of a Roman army officer. In the account by Matthew we read, "When he entered into Capernaum, an army officer came to him entreating him, and saying, Sir, my manservant is laid up in the house with paralysis, being terribly tormented" (Matt. 8:5,6). Jesus then agreed to go and heal the man. In Luke's account we read, "When he (the army officer) heard about Jesus, he sent forth older men of the Jews to him to ask him to come and bring his slave safely through" (Luke 7:3). Once again, according to Luke's account, Jesus agreed to go. Is it a contradiction that one account says the army officer asked Jesus, and the other says that he sent older men of the Jews to represent him? A reasonable person would not think so. This is typical of what happens when two honest people tell of the same event. To Matthew the important thing was that the army officer made the request of Jesus. Luke merely added the detail that he did not ask him personally, but sent Jews to represent him. This is similar to the way we often speak. For example, we may say that the Mayor of a certain city built a new road. Now, did the Mayor build the road himself, or was the road built by a contractor, using many workers and engineers? Obviously the latter was the case. Nevertheless, it is not wrong to say that the Mayor built the road since he was the one who initiated the work. Similarly in this instance, the army officer made a request of Jesus, but he did it through certain representatives.

*Bro. Bernie Osenda*

## news from zambia

### **KAZEMBE**

Presumably Christadelphians world-wide have felt dumbfounded at the brutal murder of

Brother Faris of Afghanistan (Marc/April 04 GN). What a cruel world and what a big loss! He just chose the right path that could lead him to eternal life, but someone has cut his life short. "Blessed are the dead who died in the Lord from now on" (Rev. 14:13). Anyway, I am conveying sympathy to the bereaved family of Bro. Faris who, at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, will be with us rejoicing and performing angelic songs. Brothers and Sisters world-wide, the best prize that life offers is the opportunity to work hard on the Divine word and by proclaiming it. Have no fear of anything, it's a *go, go forward*. Death is referred to as a sleep, or rest, both for the righteous and the wicked, but the reward of the righteous will be at the resurrection to eternal life at the coming of Christ. "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, that's why the world hates you. Remember, no servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sins...They hated me without reason" (John 15:18-25). Those are friends of the world, for the Bible says, "You want things, but you cannot have them, so you are ready to kill" (James 4:2). "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray...In fact, a time is coming when any one who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me" (John 16:1-3). This is no different to the death of Bro. Volodya (May/June 2001 GN) who was shot with a low impact bullet 19 times and finally beheaded. And why? Because of man's jealousy and hatred; lovers of money had fulfilled their desires.

*Bro. James Mwanda Kambobe*

### **LUSAKA**

It was really sad to hear of the loss of our Brother Faris of Afghanistan. Anyway, *Gospel News* is really encouraging; I find the articles really interesting, therefore may God bless the work and all who contribute to it. May His name be praised for, in His mercy, He has given us a new birth into a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish.

*Sis Esther Muntete*

### **LIGHT IS SWEET**

Light is sweet and it pleases the eyes to see the sun. However many years a man may live, let him enjoy them all. God has given us a great light to walk in towards His Kingdom. He has given us His word to guide us so that we do not stumble.. We should always read the word of God, which is our daily bread, which gives us light and strength, as it is written, "How sweet are your words to my taste. Sweeter than honey to my mouth". Therefore, since the word of God is sweet, it is the only thing we can depend on, for it is the lamp to our feet and the light for our path (Ps. 119:103-105). We should prepare our minds for action, be self controlled and set our hope fully on the grace to be given when Jesus Christ is revealed. As controlled and set our hope fully on the grace to be given when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires we had when we lived in ignorance, but just as he who called us is holy, so we should be holy in all we do, for it is written, Be holy, because I am holy. Since we call on a Father, who judges each man's work impartially, we should live our lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

Let us fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man (Ecc. 12:13). Now that we have purified ourselves by obeying the truth, we should love one another deeply from the heart, for we are like living stones which are being built into a spiritual house, to

be a holy priesthood, therefore we should live lives which are pleasing to God and meditate on His words (1 Peter 1:22; 2:4-9).

Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You, too, be patient and stand firm, depend on God's word, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door (James ch5).

*Sis. Esther Muntete*

### **MUFULIRA**

God gave Adam and Eve everything they could wish for in the garden of Eden – plenty of food, no fear. They had total freedom. The serpent said to Eve, You shall surely not die. You shall be like God knowing good and bad, and she ate of the forbidden fruit; she was the first to think of doing wrong. Let's compare this with the temptation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He had thoughts running in his mind tempting him to prove that he was the Son of God and given the power to turn stones into bread etc.

Eve had the thinking: 'Why has God forbidden us to eat of that tree? Maybe He is hiding something from us. Maybe that is the source of His power and we shall be like God, knowing good and bad if we eat of it, as the serpent said.' It was up to Eve what she did and it is up to us to choose what we do: in Adam all die, but in Jesus we can have eternal life. If we continue sinning we shall die – it is the same spiritually as naturally. There is a physical lion that we see and fear and there is a spiritual lion. Daniel was saved from the physical lion through the power of God and Jesus has defeated the spiritual lion. We can be deceived by our thinking, but it is up to every individual to choose; we need to pray without ceasing for God to protect us. Just as we move away from vehicles which could kill us, so we have to be alert to spiritual danger.

*Bro. Kingfred Sikazwe*

As Brothers and Sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose name is above all other names, we have to keep our hopes alive; we have to acknowledge the Lord. One thing we have to ask from the Lord: it is that we may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives, to behold the pleasantness of the Lord and look with appreciation upon his love.

*Bro. Sakala William*

I am glad to tell you that this year the Lord has blessed us with a very good harvest. I went to the farm where I joined my parents. We did the farm work for at least five days; I came back to the Saturday to prepare myself for the fraternal at Kitwe. This was another wonderful day, as we met beloved Brothers and Sisters from other parts of the Copperbelt province. The Sunday School at Mufulira is doing fine. We are receiving new faces of children whose parents are yet to be of our Christadelphian 'family', but they permit their children to attend the classes. We also conduct youth meetings every Sunday after service, but due to lack of materials most of the youths find it boring to attend; we do pray that one day we shall be able to get some. Sometimes three attend, sometimes 4-8. We start our meetings with a prayer and songs and hymns, followed by general discussion, then health matters and end with a Bible quiz. I find this very interesting myself and really do encourage my fellow youths to meet with us. We believe the Lord will answer our prayers.

*Bro. Silas K. Chishimba*

**BANKET**

When we are trying to live according to God's plan it is important to realise that God's timing is perfect – it is never too late or too soon. When we enter the presence of the Father with a sense of urgency, we expect God to be carried away with the urgency, as we are. How easy it is to become impatient with God, especially when we are in a hurry and He is not. When Thomas refused to accept the proofs of the resurrection offered by his fellow disciples, the living Lord did not immediately appear to him. Eight days were to pass before the disciples were together again and only then, at the appropriate moment, did Christ reveal himself. There must have been days of remorse, of hope, of bewilderment, of sorrow, of faith and doubt. But when Christ came to Thomas he drove away every doubting thought and filled the disciple's life with the positiveness of praise and thanksgiving. God's timing is perfect. We must have confidence in it, even if everything seems to go wrong because we are kept waiting and it seems as though God is not co-operating with us in our plans. He may want our plans to collapse so that He can present us with something better.

*Bro. David Yelulani*

**CHEGUTU**

**Slow Me Down, Lord.**

Ease the pounding of my heart by  
quieting of my mind.

Steady my hurried pace with a vision  
of the eternal reach of time.

Give me, amid the confusion of the day,  
the calmness of the everlasting hills.

Break the tensions of my nerves  
by the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory.

Help me to know the magical restoring power of sleep.

Teach me the act of taking minute vacations, of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from The Good Book.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may grow towards my greater destiny.

*Bro Innocent Bandare*

I have a problem: my NIV Bible was lost by my young brother who had borrowed it. Please, if you have an old one, can you send it to me? I also need more *Bible Basics*. We must always turn to God in prayer. I am sending a picture of my family. We are very happy that God has revealed His purpose to us. I now know, and have the confidence, that everything is possible with God.

*Bro. Farai Phiri*

**CHINHOYI**

I would like to thank you for your letters you send which encourage me so much. I have received the Key Cards and *Gospel News*, which are so helpful to my understanding of the Bible. I belong

to Chinhoyi ecclesia, which is about 65km from where I live, but that does not prevent me from breaking bread. I break bread with my wife, Sis. Joyce and Sis. Eneres (Bro. David Yelulani's wife). We have three contacts who are learning the truth; I hope they will be baptised before the end of this year, as they now attend regularly with us. *Gospel News* is a source of inspiration and uplifts my spirit and I feel a sense of 'togetherness' with brothers and sisters world-wide.  
*Bro. Obert Wiki*

If we use our time on worldly things death is coming our way. If we are following the Lord Jesus wholeheartedly, then life after death is coming our way. We must be ready to meet the Lord Jesus for judgment. To some this will be a day of weeping and gnashing of teeth, but to the saints, joy. God is good; He has told us everything so that we may decide for ourselves. It is a shame that some spend lots of their money and time on worldly things – people, buildings, cars, etc - but do not want to spend this present life on obeying the commands of our Lord God, so that, by His grace, we may inherit His Kingdom and see the Lord Jesus and stay with him. Surely there should be none of us who does not want to see the Son of God, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ!

*Bro. Moses Ajiweka*

How much should we give to God? Many Christians, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, find that giving one tenth is a good way of deciding what we should give; this then helps us to know how much we have to live on. And remember, tithes and offerings are not only money, but include produce, time and skills. The New Testament does not command us to tithe, it asks us to decide in our hearts and to give generously. Why not ask God in prayer about it? For those Christians who are quite rich, one tenth may seem small compared to Jesus speaking about the widow who put into the temple treasury two small coins. She really gave more than the rich people who gave large amounts, because, unlike them, the woman had nothing left. Let us be like those who Paul wrote to in Corinth – put aside for God every week, as a gift of fellowship. God will surely bless us greatly as a result.

*Bro. Gift M. Lungu*

Comment: Our readers are in such varying circumstances, many are in real need. We have to provide for our families, but for some, 10% would be far too great a burden. We do not have to tithe, but give our lives to the Lord and our substance according to what we have.

### **CHISHUMBA**

The Brethren are happy as friends who completed the 40-lesson Course were interviewed at Chishumba by Bro. Pakali from Kariba and Bro. Waston from Chisape. Two who were interviewed and baptised are Maggic Vheremu, wife of Bro. Steven Tedza, and Joseph Naoromazasi. As we know, there are difficulties in life to be overcome. To do so we must believe the word of our Heavenly Father. Anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it (Mark 10:15). At harvest time we get what we have planted. If we do not work for our Heavenly Father we will harvest nothing. "I am the Lord, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness; I bring prosperity and create disaster. I the Lord do all these things." If we forget the Son of Man who died for us, we will never get the prosperity from God.

*Bro. Ngoni Chikwata*

### **DETA**

God sent the apostles and prophets, who were guided by the Holy Spirit, to preach and they did so. People like Elijah, John baptist and Jonah. Jonah tried to run away, but the power of God did miracles. After being swallowed by the whale he went straight to Nineveh to preach. No

Brothers or Sisters can say they haven't heard the good news.

*Bro. Fungai Phiri*

### **GWERU**

My tears are for our Bro. George Constantine in jail in Trinidad. He and all of us must pray to the Lord that He will deliver him. We know that God sent His angel to save Daniel from the den of lions. Again, my tears are for our Brothers in Iraq.

The Bible is unlike other books. It contains loving instructions from God. If we apply what the Bible teaches we will benefit greatly; we will increase our love for God and will draw closer to Him, the Giver of every good gift and every perfect present. We will come to know how to approach Him in prayer. During times of trouble we can experience His help. If we harmonise our lives with the standards set out in the Bible, God will give us everlasting life. Those who gain Bible knowledge are free from the misconceptions that dominate the lives of millions. For example, knowing the truth about what happens after death. The Bible's teaching of the resurrection gives comfort to those who have lost loved ones (John 11:25). The godly principles in the Bible show us how to live in a way that brings physical benefits, e.g. being "moderate in habits" contributes to good health. By cleansing ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit we avoid damaging our health. If we apply God's word we will be happier people. Bible knowledge helps us to find inner peace and contentment and gives us hope. It helps us to cultivate such appealing qualities as compassion, love, joy, peace, kindness, etc. Do we ever wonder about the future? Bible prophecies show us where we are in the stream of time.

*Bro. Dzingai Sumburera*

### **HARARE**

The truth has shown us the way to the Kingdom. At one time I used to run away when my brother used to say, Jimmy, are you coming with me to church. He kept on talking to me about how God could help me. We are now four members in our family in the ecclesia.

*Bro. James Zvitete*

### **KARIBA**

I write to acknowledge receipt of the Shona version of *Bible Basics*. I enjoy the truth much more than anything, despite the difficulties are are going through. Our meeting in Kariba is growing, with more students joining us. God willing, they will be added to our number in due course.

*Bro. Joshua Pakali*

### **KAROI**

I am now doing my studies in motor mechanics in the Municipality of Kariba; I did the theory at Magunje VTS and am seeking for help to get motor mechanics text books in both diesel and petrol engines, if any one could help me.

*Bro. Davison Mupariwa*

I live in isolation; my closest ecclesia is Chisape which is about 35km away, so I break bread once or twice a month with my fellow Brothers and Sisters, but most of the time I'm alone at home. I do not meet others weekly because of the transport costs.

*Bro. Rajabue Mweha*

### **KWEKWE**

The reason for me writing to you is that my sister, who was a Christadelphian, has died. I used to read *Gospel News* until my sister fell asleep. I understand some time ago she had asked Duncan a certain question to which he replied, but at that time she was not feeling very well and

then died. I would like, personally, to continue receiving *Gospel News* because it helps me to understand the truth and the things around the world as well as to know God Himself. I am a boy aged 24.

*Mandara Musambakaruma*

### **MASVINGO**

I would like to thank God for His powerful call. Since I started to worship Him I have understood the joy and peace of true Christianity and am glad that I was baptised (on March 28, 2004). Brethren and Sisters here are keen to spread the gospel as Jesus instructed. I am thankful for *Bible Basics* as it has revealed to me something anew, as I was very confused before and I have now found the Bible much more profitable. This gives me the hope of inheriting the Kingdom of God on earth. I could not turn down the hope I have of Jesus' second coming and waiting for him. Brethren and Sisters here send their greetings.

*Bro. Simon Mudavose*

### **MPANDAWANA**

I have found a help meet. I am now married to Ratidzo. As I am writing this letter she has just entered our room and asks me to send warm greetings to you and to all Brothers and Sisters world-wide. May God bless our marriage.

*Bro. Tarirai*

### **MUTARE**

We have more than 25 students at present in Mutare, some are on the first lessons and others have already finished the 40-lesson course. We are praying hard so that those who have finished the lessons will be successful when interviewed by Sis. Ruth Moore. We are really working hard so that the truth is known in the whole of Mutare and other parts. The main problem we are facing is travelling to visit the students as they are far away from our homes. If God wishes, one day we will have a bicycle to use to help with our travelling and preaching.

*Bro. Gilbert Tevere*

### **ZVISHAVANE**

We here greatly appreciate the good work you are doing, which is the Lord's work – so keep it up.

*Bro. Sibangani Maka*

## **News from Europe / Eurasia**

### **news from azerbaijan**

An Iranian refugee brother here writes:

My mother came here to see me. I'm happy that despite all of my weakness she says she notices some positive differences in my behaviour after I became Christian. You should know that I always pray for you so hard. I really love you and hope that one day I will be able to prove it to you as much as I can, not only to say but in acts! Yesterday I was thinking about the resurrection and I thought it would be so horrible if I am not resurrected and given eternal life,

and had to go back to the grave for ever. So I asked God to help me and make me stronger in my belief and faith. Hope that things go better for all of us. I always give thanks to God because of having you and because of the possibility of being in the Kingdom. Also about having my mum here too! You know as long as she is here I don't feel alone any more. Thank you that you count me as a friend and brother too.

#### news from belarus

##### **BARANOVICHI**

I just opened my Bible and started reading from Matthew 27, I found it was about the crucifixion. For once I saw Christ very real before my eyes. All our problems are in a small way like what He went through and we also will come through them.

*Bro. Leonid*

I am so sorry for not writing. I have had a heart problem, the only possible advantage is that I might get a small invalidity pension. I have contact with Bro Leonid here when I can, and there are some people here with whom I am seriously talking about Bible doctrines.

*Sis. Larisa*

##### **IVATSEVICHI**

The majority of people in this country are under a great and huge cloud of darkness. I am trying to share with them the truth through directing them to *Bible Basics*, but everyone is so concerned with their total lack of money, and so tempted by all that is brought here for sale from the West. This life is not ours at the moment, but all of you with me shall inherit the Kingdom of God if we see beyond all this.

*Bro. Aleksandr*

##### **VYAZMICHI**

I am making progress in teaching the Gospel to my husband and to another man in the village. I think that I was called to know the truths I know, so that I can tell them to other people here.

*Sis. Nina*

#### news from bosnia

Basically I am doing good, my ulcer doesn't hurt so much. I am going to see doctor next week. I don't eat much lately, not because I don't have money, but because I need to save some, as I need to get into School next year and must pay for it. Our new brother that was baptized is doing fine and is memorizing many Bible verses, he recently memorized 50 of them, and we're having much fun fellowshiping together!

Last few days I have been trying to teach my friends what the "kingdom of God" is, what the purpose of it is and how we can find the Truth. When I told them about the kingdom of God, they looked at me as if I was weird. Some of them are really hard with this subject, but I am getting to them... Sometimes they say a lot of things to make fun of me, but I don't care, I'll just keep preaching.

*Bro. A*

### news from georgia

#### **ABKHAZIA**

Here in this very unique and unstable, even hopeless, region, I am trying to be a light in the world. I received *the books* and they are my daily food.

*Bro. Guram*

### news from ireland

I am working very hard here. My mother has died and I was unable to return to Latvia to the funeral. So it is all rather depressing for me here.

*Sis. Nadia*

### news from israel

#### **BEER SHEVA**

We were so much lifted up in spirit by the magazine that over 1000 brothers and sisters have been baptized now in the former USSR. We are very proud of you all. This great success is the great justification for those who preach. Here Viktor is almost blind now and we are merely holding on in love and faith.

*Sis. Nina and Bro. Viktor*

Please pray for every one of my family in our difficulties- Vladimir, Natasha, Artem, Svetlana, Igor, Mikhail and my husband Gennady. I am receiving many letters in English but I completely do not understand them. It is important for us all that we act and live from our hearts in faith and hope and love.

*Sis. Anna*

### news from italy

*We are pleased to report the baptism of TESFAY, a refugee from Eritrea currently living on a railway embankment in Rome; may the Lord bless and guide him to the Kingdom.*

#### **ROME**

Praise be to God! I received legal permission to live in Italy and also legal permission to work for one year. Thanks a lot for all who have helped me.

*Bro. Naizghi [ex-Eritrea, Sudan and Libya]*

### news from kazakhstan

*We are delighted to announce the baptism of REGINA and NATASHA; may the Lord guide our new sisters towards His Kingdom.*

#### **ASTANA**

My son, Brother Kolya, is going to enter the university in Astana so I am travelling there at times. God bless.  
*Sis Tanya*

#### **KOKSHETAU**

We remember always the warm love and care we have been shown in bringing us out of darkness to light. There is very much gossip now coming to us but we always hold to what is true, what we know ourselves is true, and try not to let any gossips break apart our fellowship.  
*Sis. Svetlana*

### news from kyrgyzstan

*We are delighted to announce the baptisms of ALEKSANDR, BAKHRAM, ANVAR, DMITRY (Bishkek), JACOB (Batken) and ALEKSANDR (Talas). We thank God for the growth of the Gospel in this beautiful land, and trust there will be a people here prepared for the Lord's return.*

### news from latvia

*We are pleased to report the baptisms of Sisters VEE, LIDA, ALLA, TANYA, TAMARA, SOOLA and Brothers GUNARS and SASHA; may the Lord bless and guide them to the Kingdom.*

#### **BENE**

I appreciate being invited to the Bible School in Jurmala, but I really cannot come as we just have to gather our harvest at this time so we can survive through the Winter. However through this short note I am sending greetings to all. May our Father Himself and His Son keep you all.  
*Bro. Nikolaj*

#### **JEKABPILS**

Things are so hard for us as my brother Sasha has such problem with his leg, he may lose it. So he can't work. We feel we have gone from one problem to another recently. We are holding to our faith but we feel we are being very much tested.  
*Bro. Sergej*

#### **KRASLAVA**

I am so glad that I have been baptized although I am lonely here. However I am supported by the cassette tapes which I play all the time. My age and health don't allow me to travel at all. My bones are weak, or they feel so weak. I am hoping for the Kingdom to come soon.  
*Sis. Valerijana*

#### **KUBULI**

Life is hard here as we have had to leave the flat we had because of high bills. I find a little work,

but I am too weak to work much and also there is little work in this village. One feels at times as if nobody understands how we feel, this is why I am glad Jesus was a poor man who can understand.

*Bro. Petris*

### **LIBAGI**

I try by all means to spread the truth here, but maybe I am a poor preacher, I am finding people simply aren't willing to take the Bible even in their hands. I find it is easy to speak to our brothers and sisters about preaching but harder to do it each day.

*Bro. Vladimir*

### **VILANI**

I am sorry to tell you that my former wife died recently, this was unexpectedly more painful for me than I would have thought, especially as it seems not so long ago that I buried my son. I continue to hope myself for the Kingdom of God when at last this sad life will end.

*Bro. Fyodyor*

## **news from lithuania**

### **SIRVINTOS**

I am happy to be in contact again, and I hope to come to the Bible School in Riga.

*Bro. Vlad*

### **VILNIUS**

As I said before, I am still very much thinking of our brothers in Bosnia and I look forward to seeing them again soon.

*Bro. Valdas*

## **news from moldova**

*We are delighted to announce the baptism of ZHENYA in Chisinau; may the Lord bless him in his walk to the Kingdom.*

### **CHISINAU**

I have just finished re-reading *Bible Basics*. I can't express enough my gratitude for this great Truth which God has shown me through you. I love you all.

*Sis. Natasha*

It is becoming real to me that because I have been baptized, I truly have people whom I can call my brothers and sisters. I really do have a new family. I tried reading by the *Bible Companion*. To be true, I found this hard, so I am reading daily in other ways.

*Sis. Irina*

Now after my baptism I realize how true it is that only those who believe *and* are baptized will be saved as it says in Mark 16:16. I see now that outside of Christ there is nothing at all. I am eager to read all I can, to grow in my faith, to see greater things. I so look forward to seeing you again

here!

*Sis. Valya*

#### **news from norway**

Not so long time ago we all were in Latvia. It was a very nice trip; Linda was glad to see her grandmother. Thanks for *Gospel News*. I pray for you and read the Bible regularly.

*Sis. Helena*

#### **news from russia**

*We are delighted to report the baptism of SERGEJ in a distant part of Siberia. May the Lord bless His witness in that place!*

#### **ABINSK**

We are really in a very hard situation, as I have no work, and must vacate the house we are living in as the landlady has returned. We simply don't know what to do, and we could soon end on the street.

*Bro Sasha*

#### **ARMAVIR**

I am very, very happy to finally have been baptized! I am involved in setting up a voluntary organization in order to help handicapped people here, and I can do with whatever support anyone can give. I so want to share the Gospel.

*Sis. Galina*

#### **EFREMOV**

I have been placing advertisements for *Bible Basics* on lamp posts and bus stops here, with tear-off slips for people to post away. I notice many of them are torn off each day, and some people told me they had posted them to Moscow. I was then very sad to find the address on the slips was wrong and the people hadn't got the book. This depressed me for a while but I am determined to try again.

*Bro Oleg*

#### **IRBIT**

We truly have such great problems again, unless we pay our utilities bill on this apartment, we will be thrown out onto the street. So we are in great stress. Our only joy was to hear that our daughter Natasha has finally been baptized. We are so joyful because of this, but our daily problems remain.

*Sis. Nadia*

We are so happy to have been baptized! Also happy that our daughter Kristina was baptized, although at present she is in a sanatorium. We really believe we will receive the eternal life when Jesus returns. We are very much believing this, it changes our lives.

*Bro. Vladmir & Sis. Svetlana*

**JOSHKAR OLA**

Every day I remember the brothers and sisters whom I know and love. I am so glad to hear that you are still baptizing people all over the world.

*Sis. Elena*

**KAZAN**

I so much like reading this magazine. The best thing for me are the letters from brothers and sisters. Even when I can't meet with others, as my circumstances are hard at this time, I can feel one with you, and see how we all suffer and how everything is moving us all towards the climax of the return of Jesus and the coming of the Kingdom.

*Bro. Ramil*

It lifts me up very much to get a call and to know that there are true Christadelphians still who do the work of God and are spreading the Truth. As I write this I am looking forward to our meeting here tomorrow for breaking the bread. I am finding it hard to convert people here, it is not as it was in Kazakhstan, and this depresses me.

*Sis. Ludmila*

It was so good to see Brother Duncan again here and to have baptisms of more people. My prayer is that they will read each day and will grow closer to God and enter the Kingdom of God with us. We are all with you.

*Bro. Andrej*

**KHVOJNAYA**

I have moved here from my previous place, I spent all my money on the fare here, as I have a place to live here which will be warm in the winter unlike where I was. Please pray for me.

*Sis. Katya*

**KIROV Obl.**

We are facing many problems here, in winter it is so cold, in summer, so hot. We have no refrigerator and it is so difficult. I am feeling very close to God. I will not go to the Bible School in Moscow, but I am with you and reading very much.

*Sis. Tanya*

**KRASNOGORSK**

I want to thank you for your help with helping me to get alternative service. You are a great example to me. Now I will soon begin that alternative service. I do not know where I will be sent apart from that it will be very far from my home, nor is it clear what they will make me do. Please pray for me. I am very determined to be faithful and to take my Bible with me and to be one of those who inherits the promises as said in Heb. 13:7.

*Bro. Leonid*

**RZHEV**

I am eager to distribute leaflets here as I can. I truly count those few brothers with whom I correspond in the truth, to be my closest friends.

*Bro. Sasha*

**ST. PETERBURG**

It is a great example to me that you continue preaching with all obstacles and I believe God will bless this. I greatly respect the brothers and sisters in Ukraine for the literature they send me.

*Bro. Valerij*

**SHAKHTY**

I have finally returned home from a long trip away working. I was happy to find several requests for *Bible Basics* awaiting me, from leaflets and advertising here.

*Bro. Andrej*

**SHCHYOKINO**

My sister came to stay with me recently, and during that time she read through all my Christadelphian books. She was formally involved with the Baptists but I am very confident that she will come over to us. I am totally with you.

*Bro. Boris*

**TALITSA**

I am very unwell now. I have problems with my heart and my blood, and I have been unable to work for 2 months and I think I will be unable to work for at least another 3 months. This means my wife and I have very little income. We just don't have enough money for any treatment nor for living. Please pray for us and help us.

*Bro. Sasha*

Comment: Our prayers and care are certainly with our dear brother, who has been a faithful preacher of the Truth and elder of the ecclesia in Talitsa for a long time.

**TYMSK**

I am so happy to tell you that my friend Sergej was baptized! He is from Altayskij Kraj, so far from any of us. I am grateful that you sent him and others literature, and it is always a joy for me to hear from my friends and relatives that they have correspondence with you. I know you do thorough work with them and I hope that more of them will come to be baptized too.

*Bro. Ivan*

**VINOGRADOVKA**

I am trying to work in my garden while it is summer so that I will be able to eat better in the winter. Sister Ludmila from Kazan supports me so much by writing to me. I would love to come to a Bible School but it is many days on the train to travel from here, and I cannot manage it any more.

*Sis. Galina*

**YELEC**

I have almost finished the translation of the booklet about Alcoholism from Russian to Esperanto. May every blessing be with your work.

*Sis. Nina*

**news from serbia****BELGRADE**

I am concluding that human pride is the biggest source of conflict, be it shown through anti-semitism, civil war as we had here, or in divisions amongst believers. We live in a very proud world, and we must be separate from this. I have many plans to spread the Gospel here but again human pride is what comes in the way of people responding. I recently met with Bro Zoltan and it was very nice.

*Bro. Vladislav*

### news from turkey

*We are delighted to report the baptisms of MOHAMMED and CHENOOR [from Iran] and FERHAT [from Bosnia]; may the Lord bless them in their walk to the Kingdom.*

I am currently trying to secure my documents here. Please pray for me. All takes so long. I am with you in faith and the Hope.

*Bro. F.*

I was sorry not to be able to come to the meeting in Istanbul. But I and my family will try by all means the next time.

*Bro. Marz and Sis R*

### news from turkmenistan

Please pray for my sister she is very sick now. We bought many remedies, ointments but they did not help. I feel not confident yet to baptize someone but the people are working through with *Bible Basics*.

*Sis. G*

### news from ukraine

*We are delighted to report the baptisms of GALINA and ZOYA in areas where there has previously been little response to the Gospel; may the Lord bless them in their walk to the Kingdom. We are also very pleased to announce the baptism of BOGDAN who is currently working outside of Ukraine.*

#### **POLTAVA**

I am continually writing articles and I enjoy seeing them published in English in *Gospel News*. This magazine is so important to us here. I would love to attend the CBM Bible School in Moscow but this year we are asked to pay something for it and I cannot afford it.

*Bro. Gennady*

I would like to dispel any doubts which any have that any of us here are thinking of leaving the Christadelphians and starting another church. No, never! I for one love the Truth and all the doctrines and will never leave. I am getting letters from many brothers and sisters throughout the former USSR, there is a great unity amongst us due to common problems and situations we face.

*Sis. Luda*

### news from uzbekistan

The *Morning Star* was a great encouragement to me. To know there are many other brothers and sisters like me in the world. Here life is so hard. I constantly fear that they will take away my pension from me or reduce it, and already I even at my age have to do any spare job I can to get money for bread. I ask you to pray for an old friend of mine, whom I so want to be baptized, and I am teaching him.

*Bro Oleg*

#### READ ONLY IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR GOD

God, when I received this e-mail, I thought...I don't have time for this. And, this is really inappropriate during work. Then, I realized that this kind of thinking is... Exactly, what has caused lot of the problems in our world today. We try to keep God in church on Sunday morning... Maybe, Sunday night... And in the unlikely event of a midweek service. We do like to have Him around during sickness.. And, of course, at funerals. However, we don't have time, or room, for Him during work or play...Because... That's the part of our lives we think...We can, and should, handle on our own.

May God forgive me for ever thinking...That... there is a time or place where...HE is not to be FIRST in my life. We should always have time to remember all HE has done for us.. If, You aren't ashamed to do this...Please follow the directions.

Jesus said, "If you are ashamed of me, I will be ashamed of you before my Father."

Not ashamed? Pass this on ONLY IF YOU MEAN IT!!

Yes, I do Love God. He is my source of existence and Savior. He keeps me functioning each and every day. Without Him, I will be nothing. Without Him, I am nothing. But, with Christ, HE strengthens me. (Phil 4:13)

This is the simplest test. If You Love God... And, are not ashamed of all the marvelous things HE has done for you... Send this to ten people and the person who sent it to you! I don't think I know 10 people who would admit they love Jesus. Do You love Him?

#### THE POEM

I knelt to pray but not for long,  
I had too much to do.  
I had to hurry and get to work  
For bills would soon be due.

So I knelt and said a hurried prayer,  
And jumped up off my knees.  
My Christian duty was now done  
My soul could rest at ease.

All day long I had no time  
To spread a word of cheer.  
No time to speak of Christ to friends,  
They'd laugh at me I'd fear.

No time, no time, too much to do,  
That was my constant cry,  
No time to give to souls in need  
But at last the time, the time to die.

I went before the Lord, I came,  
I stood with downcast eyes.  
For in his hands God held a book;  
It was the book of life.

God looked into his book and said  
"Your name I cannot find.  
I once was going to write it down...  
But never found the time"

Now do you have the time to pass it on? Make sure that you scroll through to the end.

Easy vs. Hard.

Why is it so hard to tell the truth but Yet so easy to tell a lie? Why are we so sleepy in church but right when the sermon is over we suddenly wake up? Why is it so hard to talk about God but yet so Easy to talk about nasty stuff? Why is it so boring to look at a Christian magazine But yet so easy to look at a nasty one? Why is it so easy to delete a Godly e-mail but yet we forward all of the nasty ones? Why are the Churches of Christ getting smaller but yet The bars and dance clubs are getting larger?

When you receive this, say a prayer for the person that sent it to you...That's all you have to do...  
There is nothing attached...

This is so powerful...

Just e-mail this to ten people and watch God's answer to prayer work in your life. Do not stop the wheel, please... Of all the free gifts we may receive, Prayer is the very best one...

There are no costs, but wonderful rewards...

GOD BLESS!

May God keep you and bless you. If this doesn't give you chills, nothing will... this message is very true. Hope you are all as blessed as I was from this story.

I wonder how many people will delete this without reading it because of the title on it?

There once was a man named George Thomas. One Easter Sunday morning he came to the Church carrying a rusty, bent, old bird cage, and set it by the pulpit. Eyebrows were raised and, as if in response, Pastor Thomas began to speak... "I was walking through town yesterday when I saw a young boy coming toward me swinging this bird cage. On the bottom of the cage were three little wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I stopped the lad and asked, "What you got there, son?" "Just some old birds," came the reply. "What are you gonna do with them?" I asked. "Take 'em home and have fun with 'em," he answered. "I'm gonna tease 'em and pull out their feathers to make 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time." "But you'll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do?" "Oh, I got some cats," said the little boy. "They like birds. I'll take 'em to them." The pastor was silent for a moment. "How much do you want for those birds, son?" "Huh?? !!! Why, you don't want them birds, mister. They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing. They ain't even pretty!" "How much?" the pastor asked again. The boy sized up the

pastor as if he were crazy and said, "\$10?" The pastor reached in his pocket and took out a ten dollar bill. He placed it in the boy's hand. In a flash, the boy was gone. The pastor picked up the cage and gently carried it to the end of the alley where there was a tree and a grassy spot. Setting the cage down, he opened the door, and by softly tapping the bars persuaded the birds out, setting them free. Well, that explained the empty bird cage on the pulpit, and then the pastor began to tell this story.

One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation. Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, and he was gloating and boasting. "Yes, sir, I just caught the world full of people down there. Set me a trap, used bait I knew they couldn't resist. Got 'em all!" "What are you going to do with them?" Jesus asked. Satan replied, "Oh, I'm gonna have fun! I'm gonna teach them how to marry and divorce each other, how to hate and abuse each other, how to drink and smoke and curse. I'm gonna teach them how to invent guns and bombs and kill each other. I'm really gonna have fun!" "And what will you do when you get done with them?" Jesus asked. "Oh, I'll kill 'em," Satan glared proudly. "How much do you want for them?" Jesus asked. "Oh, you don't want those people. They ain't no good. Why, you'll take them and they'll just hate you. They'll spit on you, curse you and kill you. You don't want those people!!" "How much?" He asked again. Satan looked at Jesus and sneered, "All your blood, tears and your life." Jesus said, "DONE!" Then He paid the price.

The pastor picked up the cage he opened the door and he walked from the pulpit.

Notes: Isn't it funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Isn't it funny how someone can say "I believe in God" but still follow their own desires. Isn't it funny how I can be more worried about what other people think of me than what God thinks of me.

I pray, for everyone who sends this to their entire address book, they will be blessed by God in a way special for them. And send it to the person who sent it, to let them know that indeed it was sent out to many more.

## **News from the Americas**

### **news from brazil**

#### ***CUIABA***

I think it is time to keep on our good work. We are always open to positive criticism. The general comment I hear from the people I talk to about the Truth is that it seems that we have truly Bible based and challenging doctrines but we miss a missionary vision. Of course they know nothing about what is being done in Africa and in East Europe, etc, however they have a point: as far as we are concerned there is almost no missionary action here. But I don't say it as a criticism. I say it as a very practical question: what can we do? How can we join our presence here with your experience abroad? We are not looking for money, though we need funds for the things we have in mind. We are looking for partnership with our fellowship. Alone one loses very easily the vision of a work. Thank you for your attention. Remember us in your prayers.

*Bro. Roberto*

## **The Kingdom of God Here on Earth**

The Lord Jesus Christ on his return to the earth will reign from Jerusalem and rule the world with justice and establish universal righteousness.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and he will bring justice to the nations, and the government will be upon his shoulders. He will be called Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. For this is what the Lord says: he who created the heavens, He is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited. He says: “I am the Lord, and there is no other. I, the Lord, speak the truth; I declare what is right. Those who hope in me will not be disappointed.” Terror will be removed. “The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. Be glad and rejoice for ever in what I create.”

Jesus saves us, not because of our own righteousness, but because of his mercy towards us. So that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs of the hope of eternal life. For nothing is impossible with God. It is impossible for God to lie.

The Lord will create a new order upon the earth – “Just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, and to overthrow, destroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and I will remember their sins no more.” “Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing.” I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security.” I will restore the fortunes of the land.

“This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar – the Lord Almighty is his name.” “Only if these decrees vanish from my sight,” declares the Lord, “will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation.” Jacob will again have peace and security.

Our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed to us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed, when the will of the LORD is done on the earth as it is in heaven.

“In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be.” “Your desecrations will be the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south.” For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Praise be to his glorious name for ever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus.

*Bro. Joshua Pakali (Zimbabwe)*

## **The Real Value of the Gospel**

The Gospel, or Glad Tidings, is the most wonderful news, yet the current world has so many preachers of different ideas, whose doctrines are different even though they claim they are based on the Bible. One may wonder why we have so many churches and sects yet the Bible is just one. So people are confused and give up searching for the Truth.

Since the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden, God planned a way of reconciliation with the human race. Eventually He sent His only begotten son so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16). God, the Creator of the universe and the controller of all that happens on earth, is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, therefore if we want a share in His Kingdom, we should worship Him in spirit and truth and live according to His will.

Some theological scholars argue about whether God answers prayer or not. My answer to them is that God does answer prayer, no matter how long it takes. An atheist once said that God does not answer the prayers of all, but just a few people. But there is the case of a certain young Christian who was leading a righteous life and God blessed him with a lot of wealth. Eventually he forgot his Creator; not bearing in mind that all his belongings came from Almighty God. So the things we pray for may not always be for our ultimate good.

The gospel gives us hope beyond the grave. It transforms us to immortality in the Kingdom of God which Jesus is about to establish here on earth. Therefore we should not give up the habit of reading the word of God which builds us spiritually and inspires us. We should also be passing the gospel on to others who do not know the Good News (gospel) and therefore cannot bear fruit for Almighty God (Psalms 96: 7-13).

*Bro. Samuel Wanga (Nakuvu, Kenya)*

### **God Heals Those Who Are Broken-hearted**

Before I was converted to the Truth, I did not know that God can really heal. But when I started reading God's word, I found that He is the only one who

can do so: "He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds" (Psalm 147:3). He healed me when my heart was broken and all my sins were forgiven; that's what He means by binding their wounds.

The Bible says that it is God who calls us after we truly read His word and obey what it says. If we accept that God is the Saviour in our life, even though we are sick and in difficulties, He will make sure that we are ultimately healed. His words continue in Isaiah 30:26 and Leviticus 13:18, and Psalm 103:37. "Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases." We see that whether we are a sinner or have a serious disease, if we come to God, we will have our sins forgiven and will be healed.

Remember that all of us were sinners but when we came to God sins were forgiven, we are now new creatures by doing what pleases God and His son Jesus Christ.

In Exodus 15:26 God warned Israel not to go against His commands, else He would bring upon them all the diseases of the Egyptians.

In the Acts of the Apostles 9:32-35, Peter arrived at Lydda. There he found a man who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years. With the power of the Lord Peter healed the man. As a result, all people who dwelt at Lydda turned to the Lord when they saw with their own eyes that God has such power and authority.

*Bro. Peter Wabwire (Busia, Uganda)*

### **An introduction to God's Heavenly Law (Part 3)**

#### **Introduction:**

We have discovered that the Lord Jesus Christ, while standing between God and us, has created new case law that has brought us closer to God. We used a modern day term known as “arbitration” to try and explain how Jesus’ role, as an arbitrator, is so much better if compared with the Pharisaic role, which is based on litigation. In the letter to Timothy, we learn that the biblical word used to illustrate Christ’s role is the word “mediator” (1 Timothy 2:5), which suggests that our Lord Jesus is a *go-between* or a *reconciler*.

In other words, whatever our transgression, if we should decide to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, then we can rest assured He will reconcile us to the almighty Father.

#### **Law or Faith:**

Christ’s ability to reconcile us to God is certainly good news. However, if the “Heavenly Law” is good, should a person not try to obey, for example, the Law of Moses (which was received from God) in order to be a true Christian?

This was the same question the Galatians pondered during their time, and it seems as if Paul argued that the only sound basis for life in Christ is faith and not works as the Law of Moses demanded.

In Galatians chapter 3 Paul puts before us the case which claims, “*those who depend on obeying the Law live under a curse...*” (verse 10, Good News Bible). It therefore seems as if the Old Testament was destined to end in a curse if there was no hope of divine intervention heralding a new age of faith (see Malachi 4:6). When Paul discusses the choice between “law or faith” he says: “... *no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for. The just shall live by faith*” (Galatians 3:11).

It seems as if there is really no choice should one be asked to choose between “law and faith”. Yet to this day, many people still prefer to choose the law above the challenge to exercise faith. No wonder Paul called the Galatians ‘foolish’, as he cried asking “...*received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*” (Gal.3:11).

It is a question some of us even battle to answer correctly today, and may it be suggested that very few people in the Old Testament, while serving God, came to realise that the law was only a schoolmaster. One man, while in sin, realised that the law had serious shortcomings - and his name was David.

#### **Sacrifices taking away sin:**

King David knew that according to the law, almost everything could be purified by blood. But as the writer to the Hebrews highlights, the things associated with the law were copies of the heavenly originals (See: Hebrews 9:22-23), and copies are not as ‘potent’ as the original.

David found this to be true when he sought forgiveness for the sin involving Uriah the Hittite and Bathsheba (see: 2 Samuel 11:2-21; 12:9). Not only did David commit adultery and murder, but also both his sins were intentional. Turning to the law and the sacrifices David found that the sacrifices had serious limitations.

Imagine being King David, and seeking reconciliation by means of the provisions of the Law of Moses. The sacrifices covered the following scenarios and David may have eagerly sought a way to obtain forgiveness from God.

Type of Offering:	Reference:	Scope of Offering:
Burnt Offering	2 Chronicles 7:1 cf Lev. 1:8-9	Done as an expression of complete dedication to God
Sin Offering	Leviticus 4	Applies when admission of an offense is made, and the offender desires to seek forgiveness (v2,20)
Trespass Offering	Leviticus 6:2-6	Sins listed: lying and deception (v2), lying and swearing falsely (v3)
Peace Offering	Leviticus 7:11-38	Linked to thanksgiving (verse 12); fellowship (v 16)
The Red Heifer	Numbers 19	Context: He who touched a dead body is unclean, and without purification the temple is defiled (v 11, 13, 16)

Having considered the complete spectrum of possible sacrifices, David found that for his specific sin linked to Uriah and Bathsheba, God does “...*not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; you do not delight in burnt offering.*” (Psalm 51:16).

When one considers law, context is everything, and here the context of David’s position is he is guilty of bloodshed (Psalm 51:14) and, given the context, the sacrifices as detailed in the Law of Moses seem to fall short in being able to deal with David’s unique situation.

This is not surprising, as the Law of Moses clearly stipulated that David’s sin deserved only death and no mercy:

Committing Adultery::	Committing Murder
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<p><i>“And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that comitteth adultery with his neighbour’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”</i>(Leviticus 20:10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>v Part of the ten commandments: Thou shalt not kill (Exodus 20:13)</li> <li>v Discussing the cities of refuges: Outside the cities of refuge, the murderer shall surely be put to death (Numbers 35:16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 30, 31)</li> <li>v Context of cities of refuge: Cities of refuge only apply if the person killed someone accidentally (Numbers 35:6,11)</li> </ul>
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But what if David was repentant? What if David experienced a godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10) that made him change his ways (2 Corinthians 7:9), i.e. acknowledging his sin (Psalm 51:3 cf 2 Samuel 12:13)? Would this allow David to receive God’s mercy and would it allow him to be washed clean (Psalm 51:1-2)?

These are the questions David must have had in his mind as he reached out to reconcile with his God. He knew that he had trespassed the commandments, and surely the purpose of the sacrifices was to make clean that which had become unclean? Yet the sacrifices offered David no assistance. The sin offering as detailed in Leviticus 4 creates the following context: “... *if a person sins **unintentionally** against any of the commandments of the LORD in anything which ought not to be done, and does any of them*” (Leviticus 4:2 New King James Bible). Clearly the sin offering could not help as it only dealt with unintentional sin, and David’s sin was intentional. What about the trespass offering? We saw it listed specific trespasses, such as lying, deception and swearing falsely (Leviticus 6:2-3), and again adultery and murder is not covered. Even if David looked towards the day of atonement, he would have discovered, like the writer to the Hebrews, that the atonement only catered for the people’s sins committed in ignorance (Leviticus 16 cf Hebrews 9:7).

David’s sin relating to Uriah and Bathsheba, and his subsequent godly sorrow and repentance, illustrates that the Law of Moses was only a copy of a greater Heavenly Law. The Law of Moses was a copy as there was no provision for intentional sin. As the writer to the Hebrews also illustrates “...*sacrifices could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.*” (chapter 9:9 NKJB).

The Law of Moses therefore did not cover intentional sin and, more importantly, it was incapable of dealing with the worshipper’s heart, i.e. clear his/her conscious.

**Seeking a reconciler in faith:**

For David it had become very clear that the Law of Moses was not a full and faithful model of the real Heavenly Law, but only a faint outline of the law that includes sacrifices of righteousness (Hebrews 10:1 cf Psalm 51:19).

These sacrifices of righteousness could only be done in faith, and as David sought restoration (Psalm 51:12), he discovered that “*the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart (and) these God (does) not despise.*” (Psalm 51:17).

Unlike the Law of Moses, the original Heavenly Law has provisions, which can remove the guilt or consciousness of a person’s sin because the actual sin is removed! (Hebrews 10:2, 4). This is the restoration David sought (see Psalm 51:12) when he consulted the Law, its sacrifices and offerings.

In his seeking, David in faith discovered the arbitrator, i.e. the true reconciler who is able to reconcile us to God – despite our sin. In Hebrews 10, the writer refers to Christ when he quotes from Psalm 40, and the context here is the sacrifice of Christ, and how this sacrifice can take away sin. In verse 5 of Hebrews 10 we read that Christ too realized that God does not want sacrifices and offerings, should we seek true reconciliation with our God. What does God require then? God requires that we seek to do His will (Hebrews 10:7). David made this discovery in Psalm 40:7-8, and in order to be reconciled to God, he had to reach out to the promise of the Lord Jesus Christ and, in faith, seek to follow him.

### **Conclusion:**

Could it then be possible that part of the reason why David is listed as a man of faith is the insight he gained when he was weak *in sin* and he became strong when he discovered that through faith in the promise of the Saviour alone, one could achieve restoration (Hebrews 11: 32, 34, 39)?

Years later, and in the time of the New Testament, we find that the writers allude to the fact that reconciliation, although it has nothing to do with the law, is achieved when God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21) and the Law of Moses and the prophets gave witness to it and David saw it... and believed.

Romans 3 makes it very clear that the law declared everyone guilty before God (v 19). The question then is how does God put us right with Himself? Faith in Jesus Christ is the answer, and Romans 3 lists ‘faith’ seven times in the NKJB – and there is much to learn:

1. Verse 22: Righteousness is achieved, not by the law, but faith in Christ.
2. Verse 25: Our sins can be forgiven through our faith in Jesus Christ.
3. Verse 26: God puts right every sinner who has faith in Jesus.
4. Verse 27: Our redemption is therefore not of works but by the law of faith.
5. Verse 28: We are put right with God through faith, and not by the deeds of the Law.
6. Verse 30: Jew & Gentile will be put right through their faith.
7. Verse 31: Faith does not do away with the Law, but through faith the Law is upheld.

The aim of the Law was to reveal the righteousness of God, that despite it only catering for sin for example done in ignorance, today through faith in our mediator, i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ, irrespective of the type of sin... “*there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...*” (Romans 8:1).

*(To be continued) Bro Ronnie van Rooyen (South Africa)*

## **Daniel's Training in Babylon**

During the reign of Jehioakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. He held the people hostage and carried them off to Babylon. The king then ordered his chief palace official to choose intelligent handsome young men and have them trained in the language, literature and knowledge of the Babylonians. Among these were Daniel and his three friends.

Though Daniel obtained training in the affairs of this world and was elevated to a position of ruler in the kingdom of Babylon, he never compromised his loyalty with his God. When he was commanded to worship man rather than God, he stood his ground and showed his total allegiance to his God by defying the order of the king, which was punishable with death. God rescued him miraculously from his impending death. This is a lesson for us, brethren and sisters. Even if we are trained to do deals with the affairs of this world, we should not compromise our faith in God.

I mean, brothers and sisters, the appointed time has grown short, from now on let those who deal with the world be as though they had no dealings with it, for the present form of this world is passing away (1 Corinthians 7:29-33). In addition, when we are faced with persecution for our faith, we should not despair: "The Lord will rescue us from every evil attack and will bring us safely to his heavenly kingdom, to him be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

*Bro. Joshua Mushili (Kasama, Zambia)*

## **Pogradec, Albania**

Pogradec is situated on the South-East of Albania. It is a beautiful place where air is fresh and clean and it's a town of flowers. There is Lake Ohrid with hills and mountains; the lake is ideal for immersions. Because of wars our country has had a long 'pause' in faith. However, a lot of people are interested and everyone belongs to a religious group.

This beautiful earth is old, but the living God has always existed. In the beginning the living God spoke. Think of it – God made the earth, the sun, moon and the stars and the planets by simply giving the command. At first the earth was completely empty – no tall mountains or green valleys. The earth was without form and there was total darkness. There was no life at all. We see that God is eternal, all-powerful, intelligent, personal and the source of life. God owns the world.

As Christadelphians in Pogradec, we are gradually growing in faith through the Bible especially, but also through *Bible Basics*, the *Christadelphian Isolation League* and *Gospel News*.

Brethren and Sisters struggle with the problem of their preaching being rejected. It may be we have preached zealously, distributed leaflets, placed advertisements, tutored people and spoken to our family and contacts about the truth and ultimately – no response. However, we are taking spiritual food into our minds through the word of God. It helps us to grow in faith more and more and to stay strong and we will continue in this way. We have chosen to be Christadelphians.

Vision is about understanding ourselves: what we want to do, what good has to be done and to know what it entails and it may mean some research before we set the vision before the meeting. We all need to be able to see the picture for the future to visualise for ourselves the new horizon and how we, individually, may fit into the view and hence what part we need to play.

Now, when we share together a prayer for the bread and for the wine there are choices to be made. It is all about cleansing our hearts and minds, ridding them of bad thoughts and ideas and putting the past on one side and seeking forgiveness for things done wrong and seeking for grace to do the right. Purging and cleansing is hard and is only achieved by a washing by the word of Life; only this can overcome the fleshly mind.

The worship brought to the 'table' is of "sincerity and truth". As we break the bread and drink from the cup, we marvel that so much was accomplished on our behalf and offered to us in return for the homage and praise of our hearts. As we break bread and drink wine together we think of the love that has been shown to each of us, so that we might rejoice and go to our houses justified, as did the sinner, with joy in our hearts, knowing that one day we will have the wonderful privilege of standing before Jesus and looking at his smiling face. God bless us all.

#### FEARLESS EVANGELISTS.

To the thoughtful mind the greatest argument for the resurrection of Christ must always be the fact that Christianity rose with its founder. Nothing but resurrection can explain the transformation of the men we saw running in panic from Gethsemane into the fearless evangelists of the Acts of the Apostles. These cowed, despondent men stood forth in the city they dreaded and faced rulers and people alike, indicting them for slaying their Lord, announcing his resurrection, and baptising thousands of repentant Jews who trembled at their words. Before, they had been in mortal fear of arrest; now they were to go forth boldly facing imprisonment, persecution and death, and they were to go forth gloriously, counting it joy to suffer for his sake.

*Bro Melva Purkis – A Life of Jesus*

*Sis Buturie Kadra (Pogradec, Albania)*

#### **Review: 'Where there is no Doctor'**

This book, published under the auspices of the Hesperian Foundation, is an excellent guide to all aspects of health, both preventative and curative. There are over 400 pages packed with practical advice, reinforced with numerous line drawings. The author is not a medical doctor but that is probably a good thing because it means that there is no medical jargon. In view of the emphasis on the importance of prevention and the importance of first aid (e.g. in snake bite) the book is strongly recommended whether or not a doctor is available. How else, for example, would we find out how to make a pair of crutches from a branch of a tree!

The book is available in over 50 languages with appropriate variations to suit different needs in different countries. The edition under review is designed for Africa and, as well as dealing with tropical diseases, deals with matters such as African herbal remedies, taboos and witchcraft. I will go through the book systematically, highlighting important points and offering suggestions and emendations. This will give the reader a summary of the scope of the book.

The introductory *Advice to Health Workers* is good for all because it lays the foundations for healthy living.

**Ch. 1 Home Cures:** I have even stronger reservations about the use of purges and enemas. Purges should not be used for poisoning and the home use of enemas is practically confined to relieving obstructive constipation in the elderly.

**Ch 4. Healing** without medicines is an important message, especially for Africans, who tend to be addicted to pills and injections and we all need to be reminded that diarrhoea needs FLUIDS – not medicine – and that healthy foods are better than vitamin tablets.

**Ch. 7 Antibiotics:** importance of limiting the use of antibiotics: Western doctors are beginning to heed this advice!

**Ch. 10 First aid:** Good advice generally, but the author has the wrong concept of fever and shock. Fever is part of nature's defence against infection so should only be treated if it is very high, which is only likely to occur if children are over-clothed. Therefore always use clothing which a child can kick off and do NOT give Paracetamol to lower the temperature. High fever may cause fits in susceptible children, but there is no evidence that it leads to permanent brain damage or epilepsy. Shock is also a defence mechanism – the body cools the skin to divert blood to the deeper vital organs. So no attempt should be made to warm the shocked patient until blood loss has been stopped and the blood volume has been restored by oral or injected fluids.

In dealing with patients who have stopped breathing, we should first ascertain if they have a pulse. If the heart is not pumping it is no use blowing into their lungs – we need to do chest compressions as well as artificial respiration.

The author correctly emphasises that nearly all bleeding from wounds can be stopped by elevation and local pressure, but fails to mention that in the case of nose bleeding a cold pack applied over the forehead helps by causing reflex constriction of blood vessels inside the nose.

In the case of abrasions and closed wounds, we are correctly advised that AIR is the best 'dressing', but for open wounds dry gauze is not to be recommended because it will stick to the wound and make changes of dressing very painful. Honey is naturally sterile and because it retains moisture it is a very good open wound dressing. For those who have deep or dirty wounds, and have not been previously vaccinated, I would certainly (not 'perhaps') advise both tetanus antitoxin and tetanus vaccination.

"Put a burned part in cold water at once". Yes, very good advice, but the cooling should continue FOR AT LEAST 10 MINUTES in order to prevent blistering. Thin plastic gloves (used by food handlers) are ideal for burnt hands. 'Cling-film' is an excellent first aid dressing because, inside the role, it is sterile. Deep burns can also be dressed with honey.

Regarding fractures of limb bones, I would not advise "forceful traction to separate the broken bones". Bones heal more readily if the broken ends overlap so the aim should be to restore alignment by correcting angulation and mal-rotation. A little shortening is a small price to pay for rapid and sound union. In the lower limb the easiest first aid splintage is achieved by binding the broken limb firmly to the opposite limb from the toes to the groin. There is no need to include the trunk.

Reduction of a dislocated shoulder is well described, but there is no mention of how to reduce a dislocated hip by laying the patient on his back, bending the hip and knee to 90 degrees and pulling the limb upwards while an assistant holds the pelvis down.

A common problem for first-aiders is whether a 'sprained ankle' should be X-rayed. If there is no tenderness over the bones AND the patient can walk there is no fracture.

The otherwise excellent section on snake bite should start by insisting that cutting, sucking or squeezing the wound should be strictly avoided because this only serves to spread the poison.

**Ch. 11 Nutrition:** Sound advice on healthy eating, but iron tablets should be used with caution, especially in children. Iron cooking pots and iron-rich foods are much safer. But a serious omission is the absence of any warnings about the role of salt addiction in high blood pressure which is especially common in Africans. Although salt restriction is advised for swollen legs (p. 187), there is no mention of the important role of salt in aggravating diabetes. We are correctly advised against milk for peptic ulcers and there is a brilliant drawing of a baby taking in a bottle of cow's milk and giving out a large amount of diarrhoea!

**Ch. 12 Prevention:** There are echoes of the Law of Moses in advice to bury faeces and how to construct a pit latrine to prevent the spread of gastro-enteritis and human parasites. We are reminded of the dangers of living in close proximity with animals, especially dogs and pigs, in order to avoid acquiring animal infections. The Bible statement "without are dogs" is good medical advice! There are very good descriptions of the life cycles of various tropical worms and how to break these cycles.

There is a good section on drug abuse, but I would put more emphasis on the fact that the so-called 'pleasure' from drugs is illusory. Very quickly the 'pleasure' becomes nothing more than the urge to take another 'fix' in an attempt to relieve the displeasure of being without the drug!

**Ch. 13 Common ailments:** Do not lower the temperature in cases of flu because both flu and cold viruses stop multiplying at 40 degrees centigrade. That is why steam inhalations can abort a cold. The advice not to blow our noses needs qualifying because the sinuses become infected if we create high pressure in the nose by pinching both nostrils at the same time. We should blow down one nostril at a time or, better still, create a negative pressure by sucking the secretions into the back of the throat. Nature did not design handkerchiefs!

The advice not to suppress a productive cough is obviously sensible and it is interesting to note that it has recently been shown that cough medicines are no better than placebo.

**Ch. 14 Serious Infections:** Good accounts of Aids and TB. Rabies can develop very soon after a bite on the face or head and it is such a terrible disease that in these cases I would not wait for confirmation that the animal was rabid before giving anti-rabies injections. The account of modern leprosy shows that it is an infection of nerves and bears little resemblance to the skin disease called 'leprosy' in the Bible.

**Ch. 15 Skin disorders:** Tumbu flies, which burrow into the skin, spread by laying their eggs on clothing put out to dry. Aren't they clever! Ironing the clothes will kill them.

**Ch. 16 Eyes:** Abrasion of the cornea heal better without an eye pad. Blinking repeatedly washes the eye with tears which are antiseptic.

**Ch. 18 Genito-urinary:** A good chapter on sexually transmitted diseases with the right message – ONE PARTNER FOR LIFE. So much better than the wicked and dangerous advice given by the British government, which is – use a condom.

**Ch. 19 Midwifery and neonatal care:** Excellent advice with emphasis on giving control to the mother. Midwifery is one area where a doctor can be counter-productive, as shown by the fact that in the developed world over 20% of babies are born by Caesarean section. I have reservations about the method of circumcision illustrated because it could lead to excessive removal of skin and even to slicing off some of the end of the penis. Such accidents do happen and are especially regrettable when the operation is being done solely for ritual reasons.

With regard to the third stage of labour, emphasis should be placed on the importance of bringing the baby to the breast immediately after birth because this encourages expulsion of the placenta (see p. 295).

**Ch. 20 Family planning:** More emphasis should be placed on the effectiveness of breast feeding as a contraceptive, providing suckling takes place AT LEAST every four hours and for a minimum of 80 minutes a day and continues for as long as contraception is needed. In this way intervals of several years between children can be achieved.

**Ch. 21 Childhood problems** In rheumatic fever nowadays some strains of Streptococcus have developed resistance to penicillin, so in the absence of response give cephalosporin.

Finally, let me emphasize that, notwithstanding the number of my suggested emendations, this book contains vastly greater numbers of excellent recommendations and is thoroughly recommended.

*Bro (Dr) Alan W. Fowler (Bridgend, Wales)*

### **Sponsors Wanted - 'Where there is no Doctor' Booklet**

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### **Counting the Cost**

We are living in a world that is full of businesses and so people are very preoccupied - both traders as well as buyers. Therefore could we recall what happened in the days of Noah, and Lot, too.

Peter, speaking about disciples, said, “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once were not a people, but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, - abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul” (I Peter 2:9-11).

Could we have a second look at verse 11, “Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.” Knowing that the life of a disciple was bought for a price hence he no longer lives to himself or as Jesus put it: “They are not of the world.” The phrase, fleshly lusts, what does it mean? Maybe John could put more light on this: “For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world” (1 John 2:16), and verse 17 says, “And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides for ever.” And so the world of Noah’s and Lot’s days really did pass away with that generation. Remember the subject of our study is “Counting the cost”. With all this, then, it is right and proper for the disciple to sit down and make a proper life’s budget.

In Luke 14:26, Jesus said, “If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.” Hey! friends, brethren and sisters, what is our life’s budget list like? One of the first great commandments is: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” The question is, Have we done this? If our answer to this question is positive, thus good enough because God should be first on each one our lists of our life’s budget. Therefore the rest should come second.

Peter calls us “a chosen generation” because of our response to God’s calling, that is our decision for Christ Jesus was final. Therefore like Paul we would proudly say, “Yea doubtless,

and count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.” Yes, Christ is my life and yours too.

*Bro. Sylvester Tembo (Mzuzu, Malawi)*

## **False Teachers**

If anyone teaches a different doctrine, and does not agree with the sound knowledge of words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is a false teacher. Some leaders who have gone astray imagine that godliness is a means of gain. We brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of the world. For those who desire to be rich fall into temptation. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

In 1 Timothy 4:1-2 it says, “Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times, some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons through the insincerity of liars.” They lie in order to gain for their lusts.

In 2 Timothy 3:1-9 we are told that there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, and lovers of money, proud, ungrateful, slanderers, lovers of pleasure, having the appearance of godliness but denying its power, among them are those who creep into the households and capture weak women; they always learn but are never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. These men have opposed the truth, they are men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.

You can be a brother, yes, but you can be one of the false teachers. In 2 Peter 3:3, we are told that “scoffers will come in the last days, following their own sinful desires. They will say, Where is he, where is the promise of his coming? for they deliberately overlook this fact that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God. And by means of these the world that existed was deluged with water and perished; By the same word, the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the time of judgement and destruction of the ungodly.”

You must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, they said to us that “in the last time there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passions. We should first of all know that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. False prophets arise among the people just as they did in times of the past. They secretly bring destruction to members of the ecclesias “even denying the Master who bought them; bringing upon themselves swift destruction.” Many members have followed their sensuality, and because of the them the way of God is being blasphemed.” 2 Peter 2:1-2.

Hear this you heads of the house of God and rulers of areas and local ecclesias, who detest justice and make crooked all that is right. Its heads give judgement for a bribe, its priests teach for a price, yet they lean on the Lord and say, “ is not the Lord in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us;” remember the word of the Lord is not in vain. The judgement day is

coming; and every living creature will give account before the judgement seat.

*Bro. Isaac Kapa (Tongaren, Kenya)*

### **The Honour of the Call (Eph ch 1)**

In this revelation of the saint, Paul discloses the almost incredible fact that the glory of the saint is parallel (though not equal) with that of Jesus, the Christ! His glory was conceived for him before the world was; he is a light of the world; he is identified by his works (signs); he has been foreordained to an inheritance; and he will finally enter into a unity of glory with the Father which is beyond human conception (Ephesians 1:4-5).

Thus the epistle to the Ephesians is an exposition of the origin and life of the saint. It is a portrait of a people so busy ministering to the needs of others that they have neither the time nor the desire to think of themselves. They are a blessed people! (Ephesians 1:15 and John 17:20-21)

Paul was so filled with the majesty of this conception of the saint that he accepted his trials thankfully, because his Lord had done him so great an honour to call him to be his minister. He realised the magnificence and the power of the call of the saints and he knew that no prize of this life could compare with the honour of the saint (Ephesians 4:11-12).

So whether we be abounding with the glow and energy of health, or helplessly chained to a bed of sickness; whether we have the comfortable possessions of this world, or little more than the widow's mite; whether we be young or old, brother or sister, *let us rejoice in our call* as saints and strive to radiate the spirit of the Father's purpose in us, that we may continue to work in whatever way we can in preparing ourselves for the coming of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and King and a place in his Father's Kingdom.

*Bro. Lazarus Kingoo, (Kenya)*

### **Promise of Peace**

When the people did evil in the eyes of the Lord, He flooded the land leaving only Noah and his family and the selected animals. Many would have heard of the call to build the ark but they did not believe and gave negative responses. To those who have faith in Him, He put forth a promise of peace. He set a rainbow as a sign of remembrance to His people that He will not flood the earth again. When we look at the rainbow, let us think of God's mercy upon us. Some of the colours are: RED – for sin, GOLD/YELLOW – for faith, GREEN – for eternal life, BLUE – for heavenly things, and PURPLE – for royalty. The Lord Jesus Christ will bring peace to the world following all the storms and violence of the present age (Isaiah 32:17, 18; Psalms 72:6, 7). As I believe no one wants to lose this promise, let us give a quick, positive response to God's call.

A man was called in youth but he said, "I am young, too young to do the work; when I grow up, I will do it." He was called in middle age and he responded negatively saying, "I am very busy at home and at my company, so I've no time. When I am retired, I will accept." Finally, he was called in old age and again responded negatively saying, "My eyes cannot see properly and I'm unable to walk long distances, so I can't do the work," and he died in his sins. Brothers and

Sisters, let us avoid this by not putting faith in faith, but faith in God. Many Christians when facing trials agonize to attain mountain-size faith. But Jesus taught that faith the size of a mustard seed is sufficient, if planted in the soil of God's greatness.

A sinful heart is like a crooked fence – all the paint in the world will not straighten it. Finally, let us come to God and stay with Him always that we may be sons and daughters of His promised peace.

### **An Exhortation: The Body of Christ**

***Sis. Jean Field (Kendle, U.K)***

Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

When we sit down to take the bread and wine in memory of our Saviour, Jesus, what should we be thinking about? Perhaps we imagine the scene of the crucifixion, feeling grief and horror that such a terrible torture and death was necessary for our salvation. This is right; we must never forget it; but the accounts of his death in the New Testament do not say very much about the sufferings of Jesus. It is easy to imagine how a newspaper today would give a detailed and heartrending description of such pain and suffering, but the gospel writers obviously did not think that was the most important aspect. So what should we be thinking about?

In the chapter we read Paul instructed "Everyone must test himself before eating from the bread and drinking from the cup" (v.28). What should we test ourselves about, and how could we eat or drink "unworthily"? (v.27) *According to v.29* it is if a person "does not *discern the body*", so we need to find what that expression means.

The word "discern" in the Greek is a strong one, which means to understand fully or judge completely or differentiate; it is translated "exercise their judgement" in 14:29. So what is the meaning of the "body" of the Lord? Writing to the Romans Paul explains: 'just as in a single human body there are many limbs and organs, all with different functions, so we who are united with Christ though many, form one body, and belong to one another as its limbs and organs' (12:4-5).

To the Ephesians he wrote about "the church which is his body" (1:22-23) and taught that all brothers and sisters have various abilities "for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity inherent in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God" (4:12-16), and 'we are living parts' of his body. (5:30). The same idea is given importance in the letter to the Colossians: Christ, the Messiah, is "the head of the body, the church" (1:18) and "Christ's body (is) the church" (v.24).

So there can be no doubt that the body of Christ consists of all brothers and sisters, the worldwide Ecclesia, Jesus himself being the head. How then can we understand fully or exercise our judgement about the church?

Paul continues the same figure in 1 Corinthians 12, where he shows that, although we are so different and have such a glorious diversity of talents and abilities, being one body we need each other, and each part is important. No part can say to another "I do not need you", nor any part say, "I am not part of the body". This shows that the important thing is our attitude to each other and to the ecclesia. We must not think that any brother or sister is not necessary, or has no right to belong to the church; neither should anyone think themselves unworthy to be a member, or that they do not need the other members. It is all too easy to fall into such a way of

thinking, especially when there is a clash of personalities. As we have already read, “divisions are bound to arise among you”, but each member has his or her role, and we all belong to Christ.

The first problem Paul had to deal with in Corinth was their tendency to be divided into factions, and he begged them to “avoid divisions; let there be complete unity of mind and thought” (1:10). He desired them to live in such a way that “there might be no division in the body, but that all its parts might feel the same concern for one another. If one part suffers, all suffer together; if one flourishes, all rejoice together” (12:25). As we all know only too well, this is extremely difficult, but we must *aim* at the high standard.

The Philippians had some kind of problem between two sisters, and Paul gave them some practical advice on how to achieve unity: “...fill my cup of happiness by thinking and feeling alike, with the same love for one another, and a common attitude of mind. Leave no room for selfish ambition and vanity, but *humbly reckon others better (more important) than yourselves. Look to each other’s interests and not merely your own*” (Phil.2:1-4).

To the Galatians Paul emphasized our equality of race, sex and social status in the sight of God: “There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus” (Gal.3:28).

In John 17 we have the amazing privilege of listening to the Lord Jesus praying. He prayed for his disciples, mentioning *us*! “It is not for these alone that I pray, but for those who through their words put their faith in me. May they all be one; as you, Father are in me, and I in you, so also may they be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me”. If our Lord prayed that for us, can we allow any difference of opinion or conflict of personality to divide us?

There will inevitably be different ideas about many things, and people who cause problems, but we have to think of these as God testing us ‘until we all attain to the unity inherent in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God – to mature manhood, measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ” (Ephes.4:13).

So as we take the bread, whether alone or in company, let us remember that it symbolizes not only the literal body of Christ, but the whole brotherhood. If in our hearts we exclude any member, we do not “discern the body”.

“When we bless the cup of blessing, is it not a means of sharing in the blood of Christ? When we break the bread, is it not a means of sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, though many, are one body; for it is one loaf of which we all partake”. (1 Cor.10:16-17).

(All quotations from the R.E.B.)

*Bro. Joseph Zishechi (Mhangura, Zimbabwe)*

## **The Tongue**

Does anyone think he is religious? If he does not control his tongue, his religion is worthless and he deceives himself (James 1:26).

But no-one has ever been able to tame the tongue; it is evil and uncontrollable, full of deadly poison (James 3:8).

The tongue is a fire. It is a world of wrong, occupying its place in our bodies and spreading evil through our whole being. It sets on fire the entire course of our existence with the fire that comes to it from inside us (James 3:6)

You can be sure that on judgement day everyone will have to give account of every useless word he has ever spoken. Your words will be used to judge you – to declare you either innocent or guilty (Matthew 12:36-37).

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom; but a perverse tongue will be cut off (Proverbs 10:31).

Truthful lips endure forever; but a lying tongue lasts only a moment (Proverbs 12:19)

The tongue has the power of life and death; and those who love it will eat its fruit (Proverbs 18:21).

You will be protected from the lash of the tongue; and need not fear when destruction comes (Job 5:21).

Would he argue with useless words; with speeches that have no value? (Job 15:3).

Through patience a ruler can be persuaded and a gentle tongue can break a bone (Proverbs 25:15).

*In Memory of our courageous Nigerian Brethren and Sisters*

*Bro. Henry Mwei (Mandi Hills, Kenya)*

## **Nigerian Atrocities 2 Million died 100,000 Military Casualties Christadelphians lived in Caves**

*This is a factual report on the experiences of one of our Nigerian Brethren in the Biafran War 1967-1970 in which two million people in Eastern Nigeria died from warfare, disease and starvation. We are in process of producing a book on the incredible deliverance God has wrought for His servants, which encourages us all in the knowledge of Divine protection should we be called upon to face persecution before our Master returns.*

Soldiers searched our homes and looted properties. They took the roofs from several homes and used the corrugated iron sheets for their camps. They took captive beautiful girls and women who were raped and carried away. Some of these unfortunates have not been seen again. Boys and middle aged men were never spared. They were made to dig their graves and buried therein. They were forced to consume two gallons of native liquor as punishment before their final doom. With broken bottles they were barbed and forced to eat their hair before being killed. Domestic animals were not spared. Yams and cocoa yams and other foodstuffs were looted. The Federal Government placed a total blockade on occupied Biafra.

Our Christadelphian members were wise, remembering our Lord's injunction to his disciples regarding the Roman siege in A.D. 70 (Luke 21:20-22). However, a few of our members who

unfortunately jammed with the ‘vandals’ were tortured but later released; this occurred before we went into hiding into the caves. Before going into the caves I was hiding in the ceiling of our home and my elderly father was sitting at the veranda to keep the ‘vandals’ off. Their entering into our village was at unawares and so at the earliest stage when they entered some were caught. I remember meeting them unexpectedly on a Sunday with my Bible and they questioned me about my religion and I answered them appropriately, and with smiling faces we parted. There was a time on a Sunday when I was explaining some parts of Revelation and as I talked about the “fire” one of them entered where we were and asked, ‘What are you doing here?’ I answered, “We are studying our Bible”. He passed us with his gun and went away with his loot; in fact, Providence guarded us.

Many people suffered malnutrition. Some of our members slept in the Lord, for example, our late Bro. Mark Kalu Mba Eze; we also remember our Bro. Emmanuel Kalu Eme. We lost many of our relations – parents, brothers, cousins, nephews and mothers - it was at this time (Sept. 5, 1969) that I lost my own mother. They were not in the truth; fathers of most of our members died at this period.

We lacked several foodstuffs, but managed on the little available yam and cassava, rationing them. Being blockaded, we could not get things from other areas like beans, rice, cow-meat, fish, crayfish for soup; even salt and sugar were unobtainable. No bread or biscuit, and soap for washing was scarce.

We Broke Bread every first day of the week, using sliced baked yam as a substitute for bread and palm wine (sap) for wine. We read our Bibles with the aid of the *Bible Companion* and sang from the Christadelphian hymn book and exhorted ourselves – all done very silently. From various hiding places I and a few others who were close to us in hiding met, this place was the cave where Bro. Kalu and I stayed; the place was not rotated.

I remember a day when I was accompanied by Bro. U.C. Eze when the soldiers suddenly met us. They told me to go my way, but took Bro. Eze, whom they styled a Biafran soldier. They began beating and torturing him. Being embarrassed, I resorted in prayer to God to effect his release and my prayer was answered. Bro. Eze was dealt with mercilessly, unable to easily find his way back; I had to ‘pick-a-back’ him to our place where he received some treatment. Bro. Eze is now blind. I remember, too, that our Bro. K.C. Eze (now in the USA, where he had his university education and still works) was taken captive by the soldiers at that time, but was later released. He is Bro. U.C. Eze’s brother in the flesh; he is still in our fellowship and visits us from time to time from the USA.

My books were buried under ground and some of them marred and spoiled; such things were not spared nor any one educated. I am unable to give definite, accurate accounts of our dead members, including the children, during that war period, but remember Bro. Mark Kalu Mba Eze, Bro. Emmanuel Kalu Eme; some of our children include John Agwu Eze, Edeoma O. Ekeoma. Other members died immediately after the war and include Bro. Philip Ekeledo, Thomas O. Agwu Eze. More ‘non-members’ died or were killed by the ‘enemy’ soldiers. I estimate the total number of deaths in my village area to be upwards of 200 men, women and children killed by the soldiers or died by other conditions, but these were mostly not ‘in the Lord’.

*Brother Elijah M.K.Eze*

### **Memorable Quote**

"I have seen things in Biafra this week which no man should have to see. sights to search the heart and sicken the conscience I have seen children roasted alive, young girls torn in two by shrapnel, pregnant women eviscerated, and old men blown to fragments, I have seen these things and I have seen their cause: high-flying Russian Ilyushin jets operated by Federal Nigeria, dropping their bombs on civilian centres throughout Biafra ... At Onitsha - the 300 strong congregation of the Apostolic Church decided to stay on while others fled and to pray for deliverance. Col. [Murtala] Mohammed's Second Division found them in the church, dragged them out, tied their hands behind their backs and executed them."

"Nightmare in Biafra," *Sunday Times* (London, 4/26/68, p.12), by a war correspondent

### **Answers from 'Trinitarian Texts Examined'**

2 Corinthians 8:9: "...our Lord Jesus Christ that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor".

This is held to teach the incarnation of God the Son who gave up his heavenly position of power and assumed human form.

#### *ANSWER*

- 1) This verse says nothing at all about incarnation or the eternal pre-existence of Jesus. The time when Jesus was rich is not defined and must be discovered from other scripture.
- 2) But did Jesus (even accepting for a moment the trinitarian concept) leave the riches of the Godhead behind? The trinitarians say that Jesus was God during his ministry – if so, what part of the Godhead did he leave behind? Did the “God” part of Jesus die on the cross? If not, then it is difficult to see what the riches of the Godhead were that Jesus is said to have left behind.
- 3) Christ’s riches may be scripturally ascertained and they started with his birth and did not exist before:
  - a) He was the rightful heir to David’s throne and could have assumed this position then (Matt 1:1; Luke 1:32; John 6:15).
  - b) He could have made stones into bread (Matt. 4:3) and performed many other similar miracles had he chosen so to do.
  - c) He could have called on twelve legions of angels to come to his aid (Matt. 26:53).

All of these things he refused and instead he “endured the cross, despising the shame” (Heb. 12:2) becoming “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3). This, the suffering of the Lord, was his poverty through whom we may become rich.

2 Corinthians 13:14: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit...”.

Here, it is said, is a clear statement of the existence of the trinity.

#### *ANSWER*

1) Note that it does not say Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit, but Jesus, God and the Holy Spirit. Thus this verse does not support the trinity, for it shows that Jesus is separate from God and, by implication, it teaches that the Father alone is God as in 1 Corinthians 8:6.

2) The verse does not suggest or imply in any way that there is equality or perfect unity, in the trinitarian sense, existing between Jesus, God and Holy Spirit; this has to be read into the verse

Galatians 4:4: "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman".

It is argued that if Jesus was sent forth by God this implies his previous existence and hence supports the trinitarian concept.

#### ANSWER

1) "Sent" does not imply pre-existence; John the Baptist was sent by God (John 1:6) but no-one believes that John existed before he was born.

2) Romans 1:3,4 gives the correct view of Jesus. He was "seed of David" first, then, after his resurrection, "Son of God with power". The trinitarian concept makes Jesus Son of God with power first, then seed of David according to the flesh second, thus contradicting the scriptures. 2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 89:27 confirm the Romans 1:3,4 order. God says of the future son of David, "I will be his father..." and "I will make him my firstborn...". There is no question in any of these scriptures of him being an eternally pre-existing son.

3) The word "sent" implies that Jesus was subordinate to the Father, for the sender is greater than the sent. This is against the trinitarian concept.

*Bro John Allfree*

#### Notes on the Daily Readings - December 11-15

December 11th – 1 Peter 1

The spirit of Christ: Whilst it is a fact that the important Greek manuscript, called the Codex Vaticanus, omits the word "of Christ" so that verses 10 and 11 read, "...the prophets have enquired...what manner of time the spirit which was in them did signify...", and therefore allows no implication of the pre-existence of Christ, the phrase can be understood as in harmony with the scriptural teaching of the birth of Christ, as given in Luke 1 and Galatians 4.

In Peter's second epistle ch. 1 v 21 we have a further reference to this testimony of the prophets. Peter teaches that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. By *this power* "they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow" (Isaiah 53). Now John testifies that to Jesus this spirit was given without measure (ch. 3:34), and by this Jesus was not only able to be the great prophet (Luke 21 and Rev. 1-21), but to work miracles and declare God's plan of redemption. Thus the same spirit was in Christ and the prophets, as Paul testifies, "there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit" (1 Cor. 12:4). And when writing to the Philippians he says that the work of preaching "shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ" (ch. 1:19).

That spirit, then, which received its fullest manifestation in Jesus, was also the spirit which gave the prophets of old, and the apostles, their power and authority of utterance.

December 12th – 1 Peter 2

A living stone: Jesus was, of course, this living stone upon whom the living temple of chosen ones will be built.

Conversation: As this word occurs eight times in the two epistles of Peter it is well to point out that every time it means *behaviour or manner of life*.

“The Shepherd and Bishop of your souls”: This, of course, does not mean the shepherd and overseer of immortal souls. Paul clearly testifies that our “life is hid with Christ in God”, and, “When Christ, who is *our life shall appear*, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:3,4). Since, then, our eternal life will be bestowed upon us – “our house which is from heaven” – by Christ when he returns, he can most fittingly be called the Shepherd (or feeder) and Bishop (or overseer) of our lives (soul here, as so often, means *animal life*).

It is an interesting point that Christ is spoken of as a sheep in the prophets (Isaiah 53:7), as a lamb in the Gospels (John 1:29) and finally as the good shepherd in the Gospels (John 10:14) and the Epistles (1 Peter 2:25). This change from sheep to shepherds has also been promised to Christ’s true disciples. In the Gospel they are sheep of one fold under the good shepherd, in this Epistle (ch. 5) they are spoken of as feeders or shepherds who, when Christ comes, will receive the honour of being Kings and Priests, the chief Shepherds of the age to come.

December 13th – 1 Peter 3,4 and 5

“The spirits in prison” In ch. 3:18-20 Peter says that Jesus by the spirit went and preached unto disobedient spirits, and he links this disobedience with the days of Noah.

Who were these disobedient spirits? The Scriptures *never* refer to disembodied spirits; it refers to the angels as spirits, and to men as spirits. In 1 John 4:1 John tells the believers to try the *spirits* because *false prophets* were in the world. Here, clearly, is a reference to teachers of wrong doctrine or “seducing spirits” (1 Tim. 4:1).

Now such were both disobedient and in prison (or in bondage to sin [Romans 6:16]) just as all in Adam are in the “*bondage of corruption*” (Romans 8:21) and “through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to *bondage*” (Heb. 2:15).

Christ came to “preach deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1). Not, of course, to enter into prisons and release malefactors and evildoers, but to bring salvation from sin and release from death. Did Christ do this in Noah’s day? Christ did not exist then, except in the purpose of God, nor does Peter say that he did. Peter says, “By the spirit Christ preached”. Since Christ could not personally preach to disobedient men of Noah’s day, either during his ministry, nor during his three days in the heart of the earth, nor after his ascension, there must be an analogy between Christ’s preaching and Noah’s preaching.

Noah preached, but his generation were disobedient spirits and perished in the flood. Christ preached and his generation were mainly disobedient – they were scattered, sold as slaves, and finally died an eternal death. The same *spirit* was the witness to the disobedient in both ages.

“The devil...walketh about” :There will be no need to say what the devil of the Bible is, except to show what particular adversary the false accuser was in this case. It is explained in ch.5 verse 9, for Peter makes reference to “the same afflictions are accomplished (or experienced) in your brethren that are in the world”, i.e. in the Roman world or empire. This referred to the persecution of the early Christians by the *Roman authorities* (especially under the Emperor Nero) which sought to “devour them”.

#### December 14th – 2 Peter 1 & 2

“More sure word of prophecy”: In Matthew 17 reference was made to the transfiguration of Christ as a foretaste of the majesty of Christ in his Kingdom. To this Peter refers in verses 16-18 of ch. 1, and then he adds, “We have also a *more sure* word of prophecy”. Certain as he was of the vision which he had seen, and the words which had been spoken, he says that the prophetic word is even more confirmed or “made sure”. It was Amos who wrote, “The Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets” (ch. 3:7). This word of prophecy we know.

“The angels that sinned” The angels in heaven cannot sin, they are God’s ministers that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word (Psalm 103:20). These angels that sinned must therefore be human agents, or messengers, who failed in their mission. Who were these? An almost parallel passage in Jude vs. 5 & 6 helps us. In verse 5 we have a reference to Israel being delivered from Egypt and of many who afterwards “believed not”. There is a record of many who murmured, many princes who were disobedient, some who rebelled against Moses and kept not their first estate, or principality, and were allowed to perish in the wilderness. It would seem that Peter refers to the same, and then gives further examples – Noah and *his generation*, Lot and *Sodom and Gomorrah* and Israel and *Balaam*.

#### December 15th – 2 Peter 3

The heavens and the earth: We have the use of the words heaven, earth and world in a figurative sense in many places in the New Testament, e.g. Gal. 4, Col. 2, Heb. 2. In this chapter we have a full example. There are those in Christendom who believe that this earth will eventually be burnt up and destroyed, and they refer to the *last* part of verse 10 – but not to the *first part*, which speaks of the heavens passing away; for this proves too much for their doctrine of heaven as the everlasting abode of the righteous. The whole passage shows clearly the figurative use of these words.

The Patriarchal constitution – “the world that *then was* being overflowed with water perished” (vs. 5 & 6), but *the earth* was not destroyed, for “the earth abideth for ever” (Ecc. 1:4). The *Mosaic* world, again made up of heavens (or rulers) and earth (or ruled ones) as is shown in Isaiah 1:2, “waxed old” and was “ready to vanish away” (Heb. 8:13). Peter probably was speaking of this in v 7 – for the end of the *Mosaic* world was the violent overthrow of Jerusalem and the scattering of Israel by the Romans.

Then in verse 10 he speaks of the political heavens and earth in existence *when Christ returns* and this is certainly the Gentile world – the ruling powers of which will be cast from their seats, and the works of the people will be destroyed. The fervent heat and burning of which he speaks is Armageddon. The “day of the Lord that burneth as an oven” (Mal. 4:1). Then will come the new heavens (Christ and the saints) and the new earth (obedient people - Isaiah 2:2-4) wherein will dwell righteousness.

## **A Way of Life**

One of the most beautiful things to behold is a newly baptized Brother or Sister coming to make things of God’s Truth their way of life. The daily reading of the Bible becomes a habit, firmly embedded in the daily routine of life; contact with other believers, by letter or meeting, means that slowly the convert’s social network becomes focused on other Christadelphians rather than on the words of others, a result worldly friendships and habits gradually fade away. Prayer becomes a regular part of life – morning and evening and before meals. Slowly there is the courage to preach the Gospel to others. In particular, a way of thinking develops that is centred upon the Father and His Son, which subconsciously gives priority to their things rather than those of this life. These changes are the natural outcome of the new focus. They simply happen as a way of life develops that is based around spiritual things. Sadly, not all who are baptized make this change; their belief continues to consist, as it did at baptism, of accepting the truth of certain correct propositions about doctrine, but somehow the things of the Spirit fail to take over. And for all of us, we can find ourselves not living the spirit of the Christian life, but rather seeing our relationship with God in terms of certain specific actions or beliefs which we have adhered to and have felt comfortable with – and nothing more. The fabric of our daily lives and thinking can be sadly unaffected by the high things to which we are called, so that our religion becomes a matter of external action rather than the possession of a spirit of life from which all our devotion naturally and joyfully springs.

*Godwin Mugasi (Mbarara, Uganda)*

## **Signs of the Times**

### **WORLD-WIDE FAMINE ON THE HORIZON**

The changing world climate is showing signs of a major catastrophe in the making. Prolonged *droughts* in some of the world’s larger grain-producing nations are resulting in devastating wild-fires, ruined crops and in many cases the reluctance to attempt a planting of any crop at all. These disasters have, in some cases, resulted in the migration of farmers to the nearest cities in search of sustenance, leaving their land to the elements and wild animals. *Severe winters* have killed many live-stock.

In Denmark a whole herd of 31 cows were killed in a single *lightning strike*. *Storms and Floods* have swept away people, homes, cattle, trees and soil in numerous countries from England and Wales to China, India, Bangladesh, across the once peaceful Pacific Islands to Canada, California, Florida and the Caribbean Islands.

In Sub-Saharan Africa an immense invasion of *locusts* is threatening to leave millions of hectares bare from coast to coast. This region has received rain, but it came in a series of downfalls, allowing locusts to breed up during each dry spell, but the rain returned before any measures could be applied to destroy the young locusts. Consequently there are at least three generations of locusts on the march. The UN has been too tardy in realising the danger and so missed the opportune time to prevent what has been described as "*a plague of Biblical proportions!*" *A very good description considering the prophecies of the Last Days!*

The shortage of food has been demonstrated by the reluctance of the *Donor Nations* to supply the many urgent appeals for food from regions like *Darfur* where the famine is due mainly to the inhumanity of their fellow-citizens. Their resources are being stretched by appeals from those countries suffering from *natural disasters*, such as *earthquake, tornados, fire and drought*; and evidence is overwhelming that there is an increasing number of those!

PIGS DO FLY !!??

Chinese scientists have announced that they have discovered a virulent strain of '*bird flu*' in - yes - PIGS! This has put the World Health Organisation (WHO) into a flat spin as pigs can also contract human diseases and are recognised as a possible catalyst for the transfer of animal diseases to humans. The risk of a pandemic resulting from a new strain of influenza infecting the globe via this route is quite possible and has the WHO very worried.

Add to this the pandemic of AIDS which has infected millions (the number of present sufferers remains at a constant 40 million -as thousands die, more thousands become infected) those millions who die of *famine, malaria and tuberculosis, etc.*, and we can see the truth of Jesus' prediction of the state the world prior to His Return. However, we have His reassurance that these signs are also *the "Vials of Wrath"* which signal his imminent return:

*Extracts from Bro Arthur Wright's September "Signs of the Times"*

## **Israel**

JERUSALEM (AFP) - The Israeli government was given a double warning over its policies in the West Bank as its top legal officer said it faced a real threat of sanctions over its controversial separation barrier and the United States condemned the latest settlement drive. Chief Justice Aharon Barak is understood to have said that a petition filed by residents against one branch of the barrier would be "an appropriate opportunity" to compile a written assessment of the ramifications of the ICJ ruling. Attorney General Mazuz was also warning the government not to simply brush aside the ruling.

"It is hard to overestimate the negative repercussions of the decision of the International Court of Justice at The Hague for the state of Israel in various realms, including issues that go beyond the separation fence," said Mazuz in a report commissioned by Sharon.

"The decision creates a legal reality for Israel in the international arena, which could serve as an excuse and a catalyst for activity against Israel in international forums, to the point of sanctions."

Perhaps even *more than sanctions*, the Scriptures are clear that *all nations will invade Israel*

Zechariah 14:2 For I will gather *all nations* against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken..... 3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet (*i.e. Jesus' feet*) will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. ." cp. Ezek. 43:1-4

### **The Just Shall Live by His Faith (Habakkuk 2:4)**

I am really asking every believer to be just and live by faith for we all aim for the last days. David took his staff in his hand and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook and put them in a shepherd's bag in a pouch which he had and his sling was in his hand. He drew near to Goliath of Gath and the Philistine also drew near to David and the man who bore the shield went before him. The Philistine looked and saw David; he scorned David for he was but a youth, ruddy and good-looking, and so it was when the Philistine arose to meet David, that David also hastened and ran to meet the Philistine. Then David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone, and he slung it and struck the Philistine in his forehead and he fell on his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone which killed him. But there was no sword in the hand of David (1 Samuel 17:40-50). The proud Philistine met the wrath of God "For the wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness".

Undaunted, David with faith had declared that he came in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: "This day", he cried, "the Lord will deliver you (Goliath) into my hand" (verse 46). His cool courage, in such enormous danger and with so many eyes upon him, was a measure of David's greatness

*Bro. Friday Enyiogu (Ikwueke Oboro, Nigeria)*

### **Fringilla (Zambia) Bush Camp 2004**

The gathering at Fringilla Farm started on the evening of July 30 and ended on August 3. Brethren from different parts of the world, Zambia, Australia, UK, were gathered as one to enjoy fellowship and encouragement one with another.

Brother Andrew Walker concentrated on principles of ecclesial life. On the first day he spoke about the breaking of bread service. We do it because it is a command from our Lord Jesus (Luke 22:19). It is also a recommendation to live in total submission to God. We should love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind (Luke 10:25-28).

When we share bread and wine we remember always that Jesus died for our sins. We should not neglect the Lord's supper because it is a participating in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16). It is also a privilege; only true believers in Christ can share the bread and wine. It is like the Israelite ecclesia; no one was allowed to eat the consecrated bread except Levites (Lev. 24:5-9). In the same way only baptised brethren and sisters share the bread and wine. Every time we meet to break bread, read and pray we keep the light burning as God commanded Aaron; they had to tend the lamps continually before the Lord in the tent of meeting (Lev. 24:1-4).

Fellowship and ecclesial life. Fellowship is sharing the word of God by continuing in the apostle's doctrine (Acts 2:36-42). We recognise the grace given to us (Gal. 2:9). We share the breaking of bread. We share the same hope, problems, suffering and the work of preaching, prayer and welfare. Jesus gave us to God to do His work, as the Levites did God's work. To accomplish all this, we need singleness of heart, not backbiting each other.

Baptism. The purpose of baptism is to enter the Kingdom of God, but before baptism, there must be repentance and confession of sins. After baptism there should be the bearing of fruit (Col. 2:12-13). To bear fruit we should set our hearts on things above (Col. 3:1-2). We should rid ourselves of all things which can hinder us bearing fruit (Col. 3:8,12). Above all things, we should love each other (Col. 3:13-14). Outside of the ecclesia we shall lose our focus on the Kingdom (1 Cor. 10:1-4).

*Bro. Robert Miwele*

### **Fringilla Camp Mutual Improvement Class**

These classes prepare brothers to the call for discipleship. I realise that it is always a difficult task to stand in front of other brothers and sisters and present a lesson. What makes matters worse is that not each one of us is a good speaker. Perhaps a lengthy talk on lecture presentation could be of help to brothers and sisters. The point is, before you teach or preach you must know your subject. You must take ample time to research and read on the subject. Not just mere reading, but – most important – careful, prayerful and thoughtful study. Ask yourself, What am I going to preach? How will I present the material? Do I have enough information in support of the theme? Will the method I use be effective?

Trying to answer these questions, will mean having enough time for preparation and planning. A lesson plan is helpful in that it will serve as a guide as you present your lecture. It will also help in the logical presentation of your material. Teaching is not merely standing in front of a class and reading your notes; the audience will take this as a lack of preparation. Reading notes is something they can do for themselves given the chance. Moreover, it tends to make a lesson boring.

So, when you stand in front to preach, first introduce your subject (theme). Next, how do you sustain your theme? This will call for illustrations, demonstrations etc. from different passages in the Bible pertaining to the topic. These will serve as practical examples in support of your theme. Again, you can stress a point by referring to the present state of the world, in relation to your subject. Teaching is a combination of visual, audio and learners' aids. This arises because some people learn best through seeing, some through hearing and others through activities, etc.

I am glad that at the camp we always have a chalk board, but few brothers realise its importance. The topic and other important points to note should be written on the board. Teaching involves class participation. I wonder why many brothers sweat themselves to read their quotations from the Bible instead of asking for volunteers to do it.

Having thoroughly presented your lesson, there will be the need to draw a conclusion based on your theme. What is it they learn from your lesson? In your conclusion perhaps you could introduce the 'question and answer' method just to see if you have achieved your aim. Has the class enjoyed and understood my presentation? I look forward to an improvement in presentation next year, God willing.

*Note:* We have received several accounts of the Camp but, owing to pressure on space, are unable to include them all in this issue. However, we are grateful to those who have sent in reports. MH.

*Bro. Lapulani Malata (Kabwe, Zambia)*

### **"I stand at the Door and Knock"**

Jesus stands at the door and knocks in our lives. Yet we are living in the church-era of Laodicea. At this time, many will be neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, (Rev. 3:16). This, then, is the main characteristic of people's religious attitude in our world and the ecclesias. We must see through God's eyes and not according to our impressions of it. In his eyes, this ecclesia was neither cold nor hot, and He wishes that they would decide more firmly for Him. We must take very seriously what Jesus Christ writes to Laodicea, because it is intended for us in our generation. He says that those whom He loves, He will rebuke and chasten and therefore we must repent. We must repent of being cold or lukewarm, of being passive, of not getting up and giving everything in hotness of zeal for our Lord Jesus Christ. He says that He will rebuke and chasten us until we do this. We are His spiritual children and He wants to bring us to spiritual maturity. In order to do this, He will use trials in our lives in order to create a conscience, because only by having a conscience can we repent. Let us remember this, as we endure the trials which He brings to us in these last days.

Having said all this, Jesus Christ then tells the Laodiceans that He stands at the door and knocks, wishing they will open to Him (Rev. 3:20). So, His knocking on the door is Him bringing rebuke and chastening into our lives. Our opening the door to Him is like our repentance. So the purpose of all our trials is to change our hearts, to create conscience, and to prepare us for the return of Jesus. Therefore we shouldn't be surprised that we have many trials, nor should it seem strange to us that we who live in the very last days will be especially tested, because Jesus is trying to prepare us to meet with Him, to be ready for Him.

Jesus says that He knocks on the door, and if anyone hears His *voice*, then He will enter. So the knock at the door is like His voice. And the knock at the door is like our trials and tribulations. This means that those trials are in reality, for us, the voice of Jesus. He is trying to talk with us through our trials. John 14:23 has a similar idea - that whoever keeps the word of Jesus, Jesus will come to him and dwell with him. This can be true at any time of life, but especially is it true in the last days before Jesus returns. Then, when we properly respond to His voice, He will come and return physically and live literally with us on the earth. There is another verse about this, in Song of Solomon 5:22 where the girl hears the voice of the beloved one knocking on the door and asking her to leave. So we too are asked to leave the world which is surrounding us.

Jesus says He will not only come in and live with us, but He will eat with us. What does this mean? It means that in this life, if we really are answering the call of His voice and responding to

the trials, then He will eat with us at the breaking of bread. For these last days it could mean that if we properly understand and obey His voice, then He will enter back into this world and eat the Supper again with us in His Father's Kingdom.

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"But you, fellow Christians, are not in darkness that you should let that day take you by surprise as a thief would do. For you are all children of the light and children of the day. We have nothing to do with night and darkness. Let us not sleep then, like the others, but be awake and sober (1Thes 5:4-6).

*Bro. Gennady (Poltava, Ukraine)*

### **Question Box - What is the difference between soul and spirit?**

I asked my little boys (aged 8 and 13 years) if they'd like to come to the movies with me. "Yeah, wicked, dad" they replied. By "wicked", they mean excellent, great or wonderful: but I doubt you'd see that meaning of the word 'wicked' in any English Dictionary. This illustrates an important concept. The meaning of words are always contextual (that is, word meanings can change depending on the surrounding words), and may mean quite different things in different places, and at different times.

The word 'spirit' in both NT and OT can mean spirit, wind, breath etc. The context usually means the mind, or disposition (happy/sad) of a person. Pararoh's spirit (or mind) was troubled (Gen. 41:8), Jacob's spirit (or depressed mind) revived (Gen. 45:27), Sihon had his spirit hardened (or his mind determined) (Deut. 2:30) etc. But the context may decree other shades of meaning such as that God given breath of life (Gen. 2:7) that keeps us all alive – Eccles. 3:21.

Soul in the OT and NT can mean animal/life/mind/person. Indeed many 'souls' of the older English Bible version are now 'persons' in the newer versions. The most common meaning is simply a life, or a person. Souls can drink (Isa. 32:6), eat (Lev. 7:20), faint (Ps. 107:5) etc. The souls of Gen. 2:7, 17:14, 27:19, 46:15, Exod 1:5 etc are all just 'persons'. But again, the context may decree a slightly different meaning. Job 7:11 is a case where both spirit and soul are used with almost the same meaning, the very depth of Job's feelings. The soul of Matt. 10:28 and 1 Thess. 5:23 is not the body, but the essential character of a person to be brought back to life at Jesus' return. So, in conclusion, spirit usually means the mind or disposition of man, and soul usually means 'person' or character, but both meanings may vary, and even overlap.

*Bro. John Thatcher (Baringa, Australia)*

## **A Story About Forgiveness**

One small boy wanted to surprise his dad with a gift. Later his dad saw that in the house all the paper was destroyed. He was really mad, because of it, he knew that only his young son could do something like that. So next moment when his son came in the room, his dad slapped him in the face..."What did you do!? How many times have I told you not to touch those things!?" But dad...the boy was fighting with tears and cry... that paper I used to pack your gift...I thought that it would help you after all those problems at work...

His father was totally crushed and in pain...But his pride and anger didn't make him apologize to his son. That night his son went to sleep with the tears in his eyes. That night his father couldn't sleep. In the morning he was waiting for his son to give him a morning hug. The door opened and his son ran to him with a smile on the face. His love for his dad was so pure, that he still loved him with all his heart.

"Dad here is your gift!" While he was opening the present he felt so ashamed and bad. But, as he was opening the gift, his anger was growing and growing.- the box was empty. During the night his father couldn't lay down from an annoyance, he forgot how bad he felt last night...He screamed: "Will you never learn anything!? You never give a gift box empty-never! You are not that stupid, are you! You destroyed all that paper...". The boy was crying again: "But dad, he box is not empty I put hundreds of kisses in it!".

Later the boy died, but his father is still carrying that box around...and people say that every night before he goes to bed he put one kiss into the box.

Message: God gave as a gift for loving other people and we should use it. Even when we are sad, angry, with somebody, we should always remember that in every human being God put a million ways in which to love others. We should always forgive and ask for mercy.

*Bro. Alej (Sarajevo, Bosnia)*

## **The Truth Spreads In Bosnia**

The significance of the photo opposite can only be appreciated once one really understands the background of ethnic tension there over the past 15 years. This photo is a modern miracle - as Paul says, the boundaries between nations have been pulled down in Christ, and our unity together is the greatest witness to the Truth. For this reason the Truth is spreading wonderfully in Bosnia.

Many readers will be unaware of the awful nature of the atrocities which have led to such bitterness between the national groups which are now united by the true Gospel. Almost every family in the former Yugoslavia suffered from the civil war. The following is a formal, signed and testated statement by R.C., not a Christadelphian, which gives insight into what many suffered and which has prepared them now, some years later, to accept the Truth.

"In the ethnically cleansed village of Celebici, where Moslems had already begun to move into the former Serbian homes, a large concentration camp for Serbs was set up at the beginning of May 1992. The camp was located in the former oil storage depot of the JNA, and was encircled with barbed wire and mine fields. The first camp inmates were taken to this camp after

Croatian-Moslem formations attacked the majority Serbian villages in the Konjic district. The Croatian-Moslem armed forces, which were loyal to the government of Alija Izetbegovic, entered first the undefended Serbian village of Blace.

The men who were captured were taken from Bradina to the camps at Tarcin and Celebici but the women and children were either imprisoned in the primary school building or dispatched to the camp in the Sports Hall - Musala in Konjic. Later, most of the women and children were deported to Donje Selo which had now been made into a kind of village prison camp. Before they were deported from Bradina, many of the younger women were raped. As the Croatian and Moslem armed formations entered Bradina, some Serbs attempted to escape from the village through the woods and reach Serbian territory. A few groups of them did indeed succeed in doing so but many were captured as they attempted to escape and were either imprisoned in camps or murdered .

From its founding on the 4th May 1992 until its closure at the end of December 1992, several hundred people were imprisoned in the camp at Celebici where they were subjected to the most horrific tortures. The number of inmates constantly changed but they were imprisoned in the concrete tunnel called "No. 9", in the sheet metal hangar called "No. 6", in a depot called "No. 22" and occasionally in concrete manholes sunk into the earth. The female camp inmates, who were kept hidden from the International Red Cross missions, were imprisoned in the so-called administrative building, located at the camp entrance, or in a shaft excavated in the ground next to the tunnel "No. 9"

Some of them, as can be seen from statements enclosed in the dossier, were severely abused and raped. The camp guards also raped the wives of camp inmates who attempted to visit their imprisoned husbands. The hygienic conditions in the camp were virtually non-existent and the camp inmates had to perform their bodily functions in the same place where they slept and ate. They did not receive regular meals and what they did get was not sufficient. Nevertheless, the camp inmates suffered the severest forms of torture and beatings every day. ...Croatians and Moslems murdered, in the most horrifying way, 13 of the camp inmates. They murdered them on the 15th June 1992 in a part of the camp which they blasted with artillery shells from the immediate vicinity of the camp.

At the camp, I was sent to Azem Delic, a Muslim of Konjic, who was deputy camp commander. He started questioning me where my husband was and since I didn't know he started to beat me, threatening to send me to Grude, to a Croatian detention camp for Serbs. He took me then to another room with 5 beds. We were accompanied by another Muslim from Dzajic and by a Cosic of the village of Ibar near Celebici. Azem Delic told Cosic to stand at the door; Dzajic was lying in bed, while Azem started to take my clothes off. I thought he was going to beat me with the rod, but he raped me, he was the first to do it, and then they left. I was alone there, but soon an Albanian called "Sok" arrived; he was doing his military service in the JNA there and when the JNA withdrew he decided to stay. He also wanted to rape me. I resisted and cried, so he finally apologized and left. That night they left me alone .

I spent another night there, alone, and they didn't touch me. The third night, however, they took me to the guardhouse, in the reception room. I don't remember what time it was, but I know that many of them came in. They ordered me to undress and raped me. It was dark so I couldn't recognize any of the young men. Three of them raped me, the fourth one didn't. The fourth night they brought young Serb women from Bradina and began to take them around and rape them. While they were there, they didn't touch me . After 22 days in the camp, they brought in I.N, a

Serb girl from Ibar, and another older woman called A.L. That very night Azem Delic raped I.N. who was a virgin. She didn't stop crying for 24 hours. After two months in the camp they came over again and told me to get out. So I had to get out; a car turned towards a military hangar 200 metres in front of me and he told "Sok", the Albanian, to take me up the hill. I cried bitterly, begging him to turn back or to stop, but he feared they would kill us. We approached the hangar with the lights on three Muslim soldiers were there. The light went off and a civilian, Nurko, who was repairing arms, came to me, led me to the hangar and raped me. Then he drove me back to the room and they didn't rape me any more.

During my stay in the camp I watched the Serbs who were tortured by the Muslims. I watched the "No 9" tunnel at Bradina, I watched the Muslims take the Serbs out, line them against the wall where they had to stand for hours with their hands up, they sat for hours in cold rain, soaking wet, and they were forced to sing and learn the Koran. Those who didn't know the Koran were beaten. I watched them beat and kill Slavko Susic (aged 40), a teacher. Delic was beating him on the back with a stick until he was almost dead and fell on the road, while Delic continued to kick him. They accused him of having a radio station which he didn't have, but he was guilty of being a prominent Serb. After the visits by the ICRC representatives, men were beaten to death because they spoke of their torture by the Muslims. They strewed Nedeljko Draganic's legs with gunpowder, a Serb (aged 17), set him on fire and pressed a hot knife against his body, so that it was full of scars, but he was eventually released. They put a red-hot knife on the body of Spasa Miljevic, a Serb of Konjic, and scorched him; Dusan, a Serb taxi driver from Bjelovcina, was also scorched with a knife; some like Branko Gotovac (1937 year of birth), of Viniste, for example, got hernia of hard labour. I saw all this because I was near the camp. Srdja, a Serb of Bradina, had his arm broken; Sava Djordjic had his left ear cut off; Nedjo Kujanin had his little finger cut off, etc. I watched Serbs walking on crutches, with bandaged arms and heads, exhausted and massacred. Whenever a car came over to pick up a killed Serb, Muslims would say that he died of diabetes, from hunger-strike, of heart attack.

My husband was hiding at Donje Selo, but during my stay in the Muslim camp, I knew nothing about him. When I returned to the village on 31 August 1992, I was told that my son had left for the Serb territory on 30 August 1992. I was surprised to see my brother-in-law there, but he told me that my husband had left a week before and that our son went along with him. My brother-in-law's children were hiding around the house and on 29 September 1992 they set for the Serb territory along the Neretva river, towards the village of Bijela. On 22/23 August 1992, my husband was killed as he stepped on a land mine. Our son managed to reach the Serb territory. My brother-in-law's children were killed on 2/3 September 1992. We heard of their death only on 5 September 1992. A Muslim, Jasna Dzumur, president of the State Commission for Prisoners at Konjic came to me accompanied by four Muslim soldiers, asking me to join them and identify the corpses. I didn't want to, but they forced me. My brother-in-law's children were recognizable; but my husband's corpse was disfigured. It was black, but they had taken out everything they could from the head: the eyes, the ears, the brains, everything. I hardly recognized him. On Monday, 7 September 1992, they allowed us to bury the brother-in-law's children. My husband's corpse was given to me only on 10 September 1992, thanks to a Croat, Zdenko Sagolj "Pisak", who said they had to release the body for the sake of humanity. We buried him near the brother-in-law's house. Somehow, I managed to flee the Muslim territory, so the children and I are now in the Serb-held territory. We lost everything, but we have to live on. My only hope are the children".

## **Preaching In American Prisons: Update**

The prison work continues here. We've had one inmate, Kenneth, who has requested baptism and we're working on making that happen. We're waiting to be approved to visit Kenneth. Thankfully he is in the same prison as our dear Bro. David MacCharles. They meet at the Chapel on Sundays and at Bible Study on Wednesdays to strengthen one another in the faith. Bro. David has taken his books and magazines, which he was going to donate to the chapel, and gave them to Kenneth. Jim and I visited with David on Sept. 4. He told us the books in the Chapel were mostly spiritual books and nothing with the basics or history of the scriptures. Our work continues.

*Sis. Marilyn Seagoe (USA.)*

## **Question Box - Why are we all sinners?**

### **Brother N from Iran asks:**

*As we know God creates peace and he creates evil or disaster & there is a difference between evil and sin, which is mans fault ! Sin first entered the world as a result of man not God. I have been chatting and preaching to a person who thinks God is a sinner too, because He created us and He created our mind so He created our sin too! I told him that sin is our desire and comes from within us and all humans in the world sin and nobody is perfect , but his thoughts are not true about God. As we know God hates sin and He wants to save us. I told him the same sentences but he told me: 'Saved from what? From the things that God already made for us to do?' Would you tell me your opinion about it ? How I can help that person? The question is why are we all sinners? I'm looking forward for your answer. Lots of love and regard to all, God bless.*

These are deep issues you're touching on here. As you rightly realize, there is a difference between "evil" in the Biblical sense, i.e. disaster, the punishment or result of sin - which God can bring. Isaiah 45:5-7 etc. make this very clear. But sin comes from within, out of the heart of man (Mark 7:15,21-23). James 1:13-15 describes the all too familiar process - we are tempted by our own lusts, then lust develops into sin, which results in death. We die because of sin. By one man, Adam, sin entered the world (Romans 5:12). However, as you again rightly realize, this only throws the question one stage further back. Why is there even such a concept as sin? Where did the concept even come from? We're dealing here with things which are perhaps beyond our full understanding, but the following are some suggestions. God didn't want us to be robots, automatically obeying His will. So, He gave us genuine freedom of choice, between obedience and disobedience. Since sin is the breaking of God's law, we could say that the concept of sin began with the fact that God chose to test us by obedience. As soon as He set up the concept of obedience, there was the possibility of disobedience and therefore sin. Paul wrote an inspired commentary on this dilemma:

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for

apart from the law sin is dead. And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; and the commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death: for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me. So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good; that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good...Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:7-25). Although Paul's words here are hard to be understood, the basic point appears to be that our experience of the concept of sin was intended by God to teach us something; we appreciate the reason for death, we come to see our own desperate and urgent need, and the hopelessness of our position without the saving work of the Lord Jesus. The whole concept of sin and the need for a way of escape from it leads us to an appreciation of the Lord Jesus and the grace of God which was shown in Him and especially in His death.