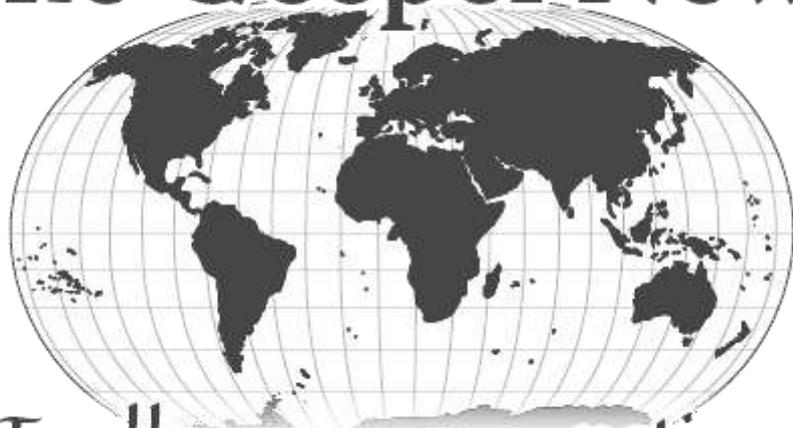


The Gospel News



“To all  nations”



EDITORIAL: “Let the dead bury their dead”

The Lord’s comment, “Let the dead bury their dead” (Mt. 8:22), reveals how He had a way of so radically challenging the positions held by normal people of the world, to a depth quite unheard of and He did it in so few words. And even more wondrous, the Lord appeared to have come out with this so pithy and semantically dense statement almost ‘off the cuff’, when presented with a man declining to follow Him immediately because he had to bury his father. So let’s see in what ways the Lord’s comment was so radical.

Respect for parents, as expressed in burying them, “was at the heart of Jewish piety... under Hasidic-Pharisaic influence the last offices for the dead had gained primacy among all good works... the duty to participate in a funeral procession could even override study of the Torah”(1). And of course the Lord knew this, He knew just how fanatic the Jews were getting about burying parents - and it’s exactly that issue which He chooses to pick on in His relentless demand for our ‘all’ in following Him. Quite apart from the particular obsessive situation in first-century Israel relating to burying parents, there was a widely held view amongst both Greeks and Jews that burial of a father could only properly be done by the son, and if this wasn’t done, then the man was effectively not properly buried, which even Biblically is used as a curse. And ‘just’ for delaying doing the Lord’s service for a day, the Lord demanded all this of a person. He’s no less demanding today, even if His radical call is articulated over different issues. It may mean having to remain single when our parents want us to marry an unbeliever; giving up a good job; turning down promotion; relocating somewhere nearer our brethren; driving or sending our children to a school a long way away for their spiritual wellbeing... these, and far more, unto death and the complete giving up of life, are His demands.

But there are other radical elements in those words of the Lord. Lev. 21:11 forbade the High Priest to be polluted by the corpse of his parents, which would have precluded him from the usual Jewish manner of burying the dead in the first century. By asking His followers to act as if under the same regulation, the Lord was inviting His followers to see themselves, each one, as the High Priest. We may merely raise our eyebrows at this point, as a matter of mere expositional interest. But to those living then, this was major and radical, a man would have to summon up every ounce of spiritual ambition in order to rise up to this invitation. And psychologically, we could say that those first century illiterate Jews were subject to a very powerful systemic spiritual abuse. By this I mean that they were so emotionally hammered into the ground by the oppressive synagogue system that they felt themselves unworthy, no good, not up to much, awful sinners, woefully ignorant of God’s law, betrayers of Moses and their nation... and the Lord addresses these people and realistically asks them to feel and act like the High Priest! No wonder people just didn’t ‘get’ His real message, and those who did were so slow to rise up to the heights of its real implications. And we today likewise toil under a more insidious systemic abuse than we likely appreciate, with the same sense of not being ultimately worth much... until the Lord’s love and high calling bursts in upon our lives, releasing us from the mire of middle class [or aspired-to middle class] mediocrity into a brave new life. Another example of the challenging way in which the Lord treated His men is to be found in Jn. 15:16: “I have chosen you and ordained [Gk. Etheke] you”. C.K. Barrett shows that etheke reflects the Hebrew samak, and that the Lord’s phrase alludes to the ordination of a disciple as a Rabbi(2). Those guys must have looked at each other in shock. They who were barely literate, and knew how very human they were, whose small minds were creaking under the burden of trying to understand this Man they so loved... were being ordained as Rabbis, by a man who’d just

washed their feet, which was what disciples usually did for their Rabbis. But, yes, the Lord challenged them and us to have a far higher estimate of His opinion of us...

The Spirit Of The Prophets

And further. 'The prophets' were painted by Judaism rather like the Orthodox church paints 'the saints' today - white faced men of such spirituality that they are to be revered and worshipped as icons, rather than seen as real examples to us today. The Lord by contrast saw them as working models of the sort of spiritual life and walk with God which we too can just as realistically attain to. In Ez. 24:16-24, God forbid Ezekiel to carry out the mourning rituals associated with his wife's funeral. Likewise Jeremiah was forbidden to participate in lamentation for the dead in a house of mourning (Jer. 16:5-7). And again, the man who was bidden "let the dead bury their dead" was being invited to see himself on that level, of an Ezekiel or Jeremiah, being called to this behaviour by a person who could speak directly on God's behalf. And why were those prophets bidden to do those things? It was in order to be a witness to Israel, proclaiming judgment to come. And this was exactly the same reason the Lord bid His potential follower to 'let the dead bury the dead' - in order that the man could urgently proclaim the Gospel to Israel. Yet if we press further with the question as to why exactly God wanted Jeremiah and Ezekiel to not mourn for the dead, we find ourselves reflecting that, actually, God quite often asked His prophets to engage in what some would call 'anti-social' behaviour in order to attract attention to the message they were preaching. Remember that Jeremiah was forbidden to marry [most unusual for a Jew], go weddings etc. (Jer. 16:1-4,8). For other examples of 'anti-social behaviour' demanded of the prophets [e.g. walking about naked], see Eze. 4:9-15; 12:1-7; Hos. 1:2; Is. 20:1-6. When we meet the enigmatic phrase, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10), I believe it's a pithy summation of what we're saying here. The Angel had made prophecies, and John felt that this was something so wonderful that it separated him from the Angel. But John, like us, was bearing "the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 1:9). The same essential spirit which was in the prophets is in all those who in their spirit, or attitude, bear the witness of Jesus. Hence the prophesying Angel encourages John not to worship him, but rather to recognize that he is John's "fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book", i.e. all believers (Rev. 22:9). And again, this was radical stuff for the initial audience of the Apocalypse. They were being told that they had the prophets as their brethren, and on account of their spirit/attitude of bearing the testimony of Jesus, the same spirit which was in the prophets was in them. The very act of bearing witness to Jesus in our spirit/disposition is in fact to have the same spirit in us which was in the prophets and was the basis of their prophetic witness. This makes the prophets our "brethren", not distant white faced 'saints'.

Israel was a society bound together by 'norms' of behaviour and taboos regarding cleanliness. Yet prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel had been asked to openly break with the conventions of their environment, in order to draw attention to the message they were preaching - which was that God is likewise outside of the conventions of human environments, and His message is a radical call to quit them and be ourselves, His children and not the children of this world. The Lord asked a man on the way to his dad's funeral to "let the dead bury their dead" and instead come with Him and preach the Gospel - and this chimes in seamlessly with the way God treated the prophets and commissioned them for witness to His people. The prophets were perceived as men raised up by God in a crisis situation, to do something special in their generation, to be God's men of the moment which we admire from the safe distance of historical study. And we, too, can feel the same about them. But the Lord bursts abruptly into this complacency - "thou art the man!" is very much the message. Our lives are likewise to be lived [in this sense] in a

spirit of all-out effort for God's people in urgent crisis. A man in a desperate war situation might dodge out of his dear dad's funeral procession to fight the enemy or save a life that was immediately and urgently threatened. But it would have to be a pretty urgent and immediate crisis that bore down very personally upon him. 'And this', the Lord is saying, 'is the intensity and pressing urgency of the spiritual battle I've called you to'. I salute the Lord as highly as I can for the totally artless and majestic way in which He packed so much challenge into those few words: "Let the dead bury their dead".

The Urgency Of Our Task

There is to be an urgency about following the Lord, an urgency that can't be put off. This was one of the things which was so unique about the Lord's teaching style. It's been observed: "There is nothing in contemporary Judaism which corresponds to the immediacy with which he [Jesus] teaches"(3). Or as the Gospel records themselves put it: "Never man spake like this man". The total unusualness of His teaching style and content was enough in itself to make soldiers sent to arrest Him simply give up and turn back. If we ask why men followed Jesus, it's hard to think they did so because they thought He had promised them a great reward in the future; for He says little of this, and their reaction after the crucifixion indicates that they loved Him not because He had offered them anything that tangible. There was simply a Divine power of personality within Him, and by this I mean more than mere human charisma, and a message which demanded the immediate response of following Him wherever it might lead, even like Abraham not knowing where He was going. As Nebuchadnezzar proudly surveyed his capital city, the Angelic voice suddenly stated: "To thee it is spoken; the kingdom is departed from thee" (Dan. 4:31). But it was 12 months previously that Daniel had bravely told the king that unless he repented, God's intention was to remove his kingdom from him. The king had heard the word... and forgotten its real import. But "to thee ['you' singular] it is spoken". So it can be with us. We may hear and perceive something from the word, but a year later we've forgotten it, and we tend to use the nature of human memory as an excuse not to have to take seriously the simple fact that if we hear something from God's word, we are to do it...and we are held accountable if we don't. The passing of time doesn't somehow produce an atonement for us. Therefore - and this point just outlined needs some reflection before we feel its practical import - it becomes absolutely crucial to respond to God's word immediately. Hence there is an urgency to our Bible study - for as we understand, we are to do, not to merely jot notes in a margin or imagine we've taken a mental note. We are to do, to act, to take concrete action, as a result of what we perceive God asking of us. The immediacy of the baptisms in the first century were symptomatic of how the early church responded with immediacy to the Lord's call; but the immediacy of response to His word continues, of course. For we are to live "in newness of life", ever living out again that same basic response of baptism which we made when we first encountered the Lord's call.

The idea of leaving family and putting them last was uncommon but not unknown within Jewish circles. Again, the Lord was using familiar ideas, but with a radical and thoroughly unique twist to them. The schools of the Rabbis and Pharisees were full of both stories and examples of men who had indeed quit their families and given up their jobs in order to fanatically study the Torah, and had ended up materially and socially advanced(4). It's apparent from the Gospels that the Scribes and Pharisees were socially and economically better off than the mass of the population in Palestine. But the radicalness of the Lord's demand was that He asked people to leave all and 'follow Him' - in order to achieve an actual loss of material and social advantage. In all this we see a relentlessness in the Lord's demands of men and women, His dogged insistence as to the unconditional and total nature of following Him. Once we grasp what

following Him is all about, it becomes apparent that to tell a man on the way to bury his father, 'Let the dead bury their dead', was actually quite in harmony with what the Lord was asking of those who would follow Him. On this occasion, He put it so baldly and bluntly to the man rushing to the funeral that both readers and hearers of those words of Jesus were, and are, shocked. But if only we grasped the real essence of His teaching, we wouldn't see that demand as in any way unusual or out of character with the general tenor of His message.

Following Him

And there was yet more radical, pattern-breaking demand within the Lord's words: "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead". To 'Follow me' and be preachers of the teacher Jesus of Nazareth was not unknown in first century Palestine. But to stop a man on the way to his dad's funeral and insist he join up right now and skip the funeral - that was incredibly demanding. Further, it was always pupils who tried to get into a Rabbi's entourage or school, the Rabbi didn't just walk up to a normal, non-religious working guy and say 'Hey you... come right now and follow me...'. This is where the attempts to make the Lord Jesus out to have been just another 'holy man' within the first century Jewish prophetic environment are, to me, simply pathetic. Here was a man, a more than man, who spoke and demanded and convicted and loved and ultimately saved like no other. There is an undeniable connection between the guerrilla groups who fought the Roman occupation and the schools of rabbinic teaching, the fanatic zeal for the Law was the thing that drove the Jews to fight as they did. The idea of 'following after' a man is a Hebrew figure for men following their leader/general into battle. There are many examples: Josh. 3:3; Jud. 3:28; 4:14; 6:34,35; 9:4,49; 1 Sam. 17:13,14; 30:21; 2 Sam. 5:24 etc. In those early days, a general wasn't a smart guy with a degree who directed the battlefield from his laptop; he was the one who went over the top first with his men behind him, knowing full well he was the one his enemies would go for above all others. It was his bravery which inspired the followers to go after him and which, over the battles and wars, solidified their trust in him and willingness to give their lives behind him. And this figure of speech was well understood by the Lord. Around him were false prophets and rabbinic teachers, asking young men to follow them, adopt their interpretations of Torah, study the traditions, and get hyped up enough to take weapons in their hands and go forth to fight the infidel. The Lord was fully aware of this, and He frames His calling of men in the same terms. Indeed, when He speaks of leaving all and following after Him (Lk. 14:33), He surely had in mind the well known story of Mattathias, who began the Maccabean revolt by saying, "Let every one who is zealous for the Law and supports the covenant follow after me...and they left their possessions behind in the town" (1 Macc. 2:27). And again the Lord seems to have had this in mind when He says that when He comes, His true people are to flee Jerusalem and not worry that their 'stuff is in the house' (Lk. 17:31). For an itinerant teacher like Jesus of Nazareth to offer his ideas and his interpretation of the Old Testament, and then have men following Him, was not out of place in first century Palestine. But the Lord twists the whole figure of 'follow me'. Unlike the other teachers, his teaching didn't lead to taking arms and fighting Rome. His men are to follow Him in wilfully taking up and carrying a cross, imitating His supreme human bravery in both His life and above all in His death, a bravery which He showed in facing sin in the eye and conquering every temptation, whatever the cost, whatever the human implication.

The Violence Within

The real battle was not against Rome, but against sin in all its forms, against human weakness and dysfunction, rooting out cherished habits, secret sins, the innermost fantasies of the heart, and reaching out to the salvation of others and the advancement of the things of God's Kingdom. The ultimate battle we are led to is the battle of truly accepting the cross in our lives,

of realising and living out the truth of the fact that losing now is winning; dying now is living... In the moments, the seconds and even half seconds of temptation, we are to fight and win, to courageously follow that bravest of men, “the captain [another of the many military allusions in the New Testament] of our salvation”.

As a woman glances at the display of alcohol in the supermarket, yearning to ‘just this once’ drown the tension of an unbearable, no-exit life... as another brother begins to slip into a rage and expletives yell in his mind at the brother who’s just demolished his cherished view of prophecy, etc,etc, it is in these moments they are in the heat of battle. But it’s all a question of perceiving that this is what the war is about, and that every battle is bitterly contested and fought out to the end, with no easy victories. The battle is above all against ourselves, not some brother with suspected wrong teaching or Rome or the Moslems or the Jews round the corner. In this was the essential difference between the Lord’s teaching and that of the contemporary Rabbis, who saw the struggle as a literal one by the righteous, those justified by their correct reading of Torah, against an external pagan enemy. There is of course a conflict with the world around us, ‘satan’ refers both to the powers of the world as well as to our own internal temptations, but the conflict is most significantly within our own hearts. It’s no good gallantly fighting the evil of the world if we’ve not started and keenly felt “the violence within” (to borrow a phrase from Paul Tournier). Perhaps this theme is presented to us in the account of Uzziah, who had many “valiant men” in his army, but it was the priests who in that same context are called “valiant men” for daring to stand up to Uzziah’s immorality and speak out against it (2 Chron. 26:12,17).

The Call Of God

But this radical call to ‘follow me’ is thrown out by the Lord in an almost casual way - or so it can seem. The usual way was for a man to observe and reflect upon a rabbi’s words and ideas, and then ask to join in his inner circle of followers. But the Lord wasn’t like that. He called men, arresting them with His radical call in the very midst of daily life, at the most inconvenient moment, even the most humanly inappropriate moment - such as being on the way to a father’s funeral. And again, the Son of God was actually acting as His Father had done. Gideon was called whilst in the middle of threshing wheat in a time of famine (Jud. 6:11), Saul whilst he was out looking for lost cattle (1 Sam. 9:10,20) and again whilst he was coming home from work one evening (1 Sam. 11:5), David whilst he was looking after the sheep, Samuel whilst he was asleep, Amos whilst he was tending his flock (Am. 7:14,15, see also 1 Kings 11:29; 19:15; 2 Kings 9:1-13,18). In other words, the call of God comes to us right in the midst of ordinary, mundane life, of this there can be no doubt. And the Lord Jesus called men in just the same way. This is what was, and is, so unusual and startling about the ministry of the Lord. His love sought men out; He didn’t wait for them to come to Him [for none of us would ever come without God’s gracious initiative]. Of course, it was only those who perceived that He spoke on God’s behalf who could take His invitation as a real call from God which had to be obeyed.

And again, every Old Testament ‘call of God’ was for someone to do something dramatic, often in extreme crisis and physical danger, inviting them to rise up to the challenge of the moment. Yet as we have shown, the call of the disciples had the call of the prophets as its prototype. And the Lord Jesus went around Palestine and goes about this world today, calling people with that same call. We are ordinary folk, nothing-special women, average fellas... just like those invited in the first century, and yet we are ‘called’ in the same way as people were called to heroic things in Old Testament times. To encounter Jesus as we have done is to be called by God. The struggle and fight and victory and eternal cause and glory to which the Lord Jesus calls us to rise

to, is just as real now as it ever was, and just as bitingly urgent to respond to. Perceiving it imparts a spirit of heroism to our otherwise formless and unachieving lives. For example, to conquer gluttony or repressed anger and bitterness over a lost relationship, to lead a friend to Christ... these are the victories, the real ones, which have eternal consequence and glory.

So to sum up, I don't think that we should skip a relative's funeral in order to 'do' things for the Lord. And I don't think that was the intention of the Lord's words. Rather is He teaching us of the sense of urgency which there must be in our service to Him, our willingness to 'follow' Him whatever it takes, to place no restrictions upon our service to Him and what it may demand of us. We are to see our lives as being totally dedicated to Him, making use in some way of all the precious seconds granted us, rather than letting them slip away between our fingers. We are to realistically grasp the fact that His mission and ministry is in fact ours. And the total insecurity, exposure to danger, misunderstanding, sudden calls of God to change direction and move way out of our comfort zone etc; are all part of participating in the short term fate and eternal victory of the One whom we follow.

Notes (1) Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader And His Followers* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981) pp. 8,9. (2) C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According To St. John* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978). (3) Gunter Bornkamm, *Jesus Of Nazareth* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959) p. 57. (4) See Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem In The Time Of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), pp. 112, 233

Duncan Heaster

News from Africa

news from cameroon

BAKUMBA

I want to write about the ten virgins who were waiting for Jesus. Five were wise and the other five foolish. So we should be very careful and be like the wise and hold the word of God firmly and keep His words, if not we shall be like the foolish virgins and not be allowed to enter the Kingdom.

Bro Elangwe Michael

BEKONDO

Hope you are at ease, as we are here in Bekondo. First of all, thank you for all the letters and *Gospel News* sent to me. We appreciate you very much for making us aware of information from other countries; this makes us learn of the work of God in our lives. May the Lord bless you in working in His vineyard.

Bro. Moki Martin

DSCHANG

I heard of the visit you made to E. Europe with your wife. As we are waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should have love and peace among us. Special greetings to your wife and all your brothers and sisters.

Bro. Bernard Mbouna

KUMBA

It is a long time since we communicated. I do hope you and the rest of the brothers and sisters are all well. I thank you very much for *Bible Basics* and the other educative literature you have sent me. My wife, Sis. Bridget, fell asleep on January 19th 2005, and is now waiting for the resurrection when our Master, the Lord Jesus, returns to the earth. Greet all the brothers and sisters and God bless you.

Bro. Mbiaoh Anthony

MUYUKA

In the hope of eternal life, which God, who can not lie, promised long ages ago see Titus:1:2. God declared, my words will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which i have delighted, and it will have certain success in that, for which I have sent it Isaiah:55:11. God is already creating "new heavens and a new earth . The foundation for the "new earth" has already been laid. After telling about some of the marvellous things that "a new heaven and a new earth" will bring to mankind, Revelation quotes God Himself, the universal sovereign, as saying: *look!* "I am making all things new ." Also, he says: write, because these words are faithful and true" (Rev21:1,5). The crucial question is, are we making the needed adjustments in order to be counted worthy to be a part of the new earth under the new heavens?

Bro Kungang Hilary



Photo: The five baptised during the Fontem Bible School.

MENJI

Thank you for your letter and the book, '*Where There Is No Doctor*'; I will pass it on to the new ecclesia, Makem. All that I do in my life is to preach the truth and through this Centre I am already seeing God's blessing in preaching. Accept love from my wife, Sis. Monica and all the children. We are sorry to announce the death of Sis. Ursula Asong, wife of the late Bro. Asong Lawrence of the Menji ecclesia; this was on June 2nd 2005. Those who knew our Sister will miss her for her positive attitude and her concern for the truth and care of the Sunday School. Our Sister left two children, ages 14 and 3 years.

Bro. Nkeng Charles

MUYUKA

In the hope of eternal life, which God, who can not lie, promised long ages ago see Titus:1:2. God declared, my words will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which i have delighted, and it will have certain success in that, for which I have sent it Isaiah:55:11. God is already creating "new heavens and a new earth . The foundation for the "new earth" has already been laid. After telling about some of the marvellous things that "a new heaven and a new earth" will bring to mankind, Revelation quotes God Himself, the universal sovereign, as saying: *look!* "I am making all things new ." Also, he says: write, because these words are faithful and true" (Rev 21:1,5). The crucial question is, are we making the needed adjustments in order to be counted worthy to be a part of the new earth under the new heavens?

Bro Kungang Hilary.

MUTENGENE

Our Ecclesia Was blessed with the visit of Bro Moses of the Buea and Bro Franciose of the Yaounde Ecclesias. We had fellowship together and broke bread, Bro Moses gave an exhortation based on Romans ch 8, where it says Nothing shall separate us from the love of God, be it persecution, peril, poverty etc. We all learned a lot, especially at this time when the world is full of temptations. We so hope such visits can be more often, we are looking forward to the January Bible School in Limbe.

Bro Constantine Fonkem.

news from kenya

AHERO

Formerly, for reasons of self-preservation, Israel had shown reluctance to implement the UN Resolution 242, that required the nation to withdraw from Arab-occupied territories. Now how safe are they to move from the West Bank? Surely, the Jews' enormous sins are the main cause of their calamities. The happenings today are sure signs of Christ's return. You have these in your press statements of killings in Iraq, terrorist attacks in London, the threats of war between President Bush and North Korea, the floods hitting India. Surely people are fearful and afraid of current developments, but to us who understand the significance of Bible prophecy, look upon the scene with hope.

Bro. Lawrence M. K'owiti

BUNGOMA

I am happy to write to you to say I have received your letter, *Bible Basics* and *Gospel News*. The messages you expressed were welcome and gave me much impetus. Actually, brother, I went through your letter and find that there are terrorist attacks in England but there were no Christadelphian casualties, surely that shows that God is with us. So please, wherever you are, pray to God always, don't give up. I am also trying, up and down, to work for God. Please brother I would like to request that if you can find a Bible and other books, please can you help me.

Bro Anasetus Khaenba

We are married and have one son. We have a hope in Israel's hope, we have hope in Christ as our future King. Our brother, we appreciate what you have done to our brothers and sisters in Kenya by communicating with them. We have borrowed some books from them like *Bible Basics* and *Gospel News* and gone through all those books and we are interested also to have a copy to make us achieve more through the books. Brother Anasetus has played a big role through lending us his books and teachings, so we decided to communicate with you. If you are in a position to communicate with us we shall really appreciate it, we are waiting for our Lord Jesus to come back.

Bro. Boniface and Sis. Irene Juma

No words are enough and appropriate to express how happy we are for having received more than twenty English and Kiswahili *Bible Basics*, copies of Bible reader's calendar, a copy of the 'Death of the Cross', 'Antichrist and the Battle of Armageddon', 'Christ's death and your salvation', 'Why should a righteous man die?', 'Do Christians need prophecies today?', copies of 'Present Day Events'. Actually this was like a dream to us and we could not believe our eyes. We are very grateful. Through this literature most of our questions have been swept away

and of course doubting Thomases have now acquainted themselves with the content of the true doctrine. These have also served as a catalyst for the rapid spread of the gospel as they have been widely distributed and carefully utilised, not only for discussion's sake but with knowledge of the final judgement if at all we fail to act accordingly – in trying to keep this it has resulted in the baptism of *Bro. John Makhino* on 10th July 2005, while others are still in the Bible Class. We are also expecting some more converts from Narok who we have supplied with some literature.

We cannot also forget to register our sincere thanks for a very interesting copy of "*How to grow a balanced diet*". We have already begun to put into practice what it contains. Many in the society are willing to join us in identification and cultivation of various crops which, after feeding them best nutrients, can lead to good health. We are hoping for better results as time goes by.

In the western part of the country, particularly Bungoma where we stay, the weather conditions are favourable for survival of both animals and plants. This encourages farming which is normally carried out on a small scale. Lack of capital and improved farming techniques and machines are the major problems facing us. In these parts children normally suffer from multi-nutritional diseases resulting from the lack of a balanced diet in their bodies. From an analysis done some exchange their animal products for grains claiming that they are storable for quite a good period of time, hence feeding their children on only carbohydrates. Despite the fact that seminars have been held to discuss this issue, this has been an endless habit amongst our people. We believe the books you mentioned which deal with farming and places with no doctors can be the best to solve our problems and we shall be extremely happy to receive.

We are equally happy with the work of supplying *Gospel News* magazine, together with other literature, especially the ones we received recently. We must admit that they are of great value and meaningful to us. Through them we get to know how events are occurring worldwide in the fulfilment of the Scriptures and at the same time get to know how the gospel is spreading worldwide resulting in the increased number of Christadelphians, which signifies that the required figure of the saints will soon be accomplished, hence leading to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. We also get to see how the biblical pregnant statements give birth whereby we get answers to our various questions.

Bro. Nimrod Masika

The apostle John says "I had many things to write but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink. But I hope to see you shortly and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name." (3 John v 13-14). For me I can better express my fellowship and my respect for each other through writing and communicating to you with pen and ink. Shortly before his death, Jesus Christ prayed these words: "And this is eternal life, that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" John 17:3. This shows that there is only one true God. Therefore life with God is eternal. To share such life with God, Jesus said, one must know God. Now I am looking forward to continuing searching the scripture because of the lessons you have given me. In our ecclesia we have monthly Bible study which I hope will be facilitated through *Bible Basics*. Therefore brother, I am requesting any book that is available.

Bro. George Maina Wabwile

CHWELE

Thanks a great deal for your endless organization dedicated to promoting creative use of the *Gospel News* media in Bible teaching. You have done a great work to make me understand what God wants me to do and believe as we wait for the Lord's return. "There is neither

salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). I’m willing to assist my friends, sisters and brothers as other ecclesial brothers do over the world but we are all orphans. May the Lord bless Bro Joshua Kisuya who has stayed with me in his home for five years. “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love” (Ephesians 3:17). Am I correct? A true brother must be born in three ways (a)- In body; (b)- In water; (c)- In spirit at Christ’s coming.

Bro. Geoffrey Wanyama

KAKAMEGA

Warmest greetings of love and peace in Christ. I was pleased to receive copies of *Bible Basics* in Kiswahili language which you sent me by sea mail. They took long to arrive but arrived safely. I have distributed five copies to a prison camp and two copies to interested friends and kept a copy for myself and my wife. I am now requesting copies of ‘*Where There Is No Doctor*’. I intend to supply the books to a women’s group in my area who have a thirst for the word of God and give a copy to the prison camp.

Bro. Gibson A. Azera

KITALE

The ecclesia is the pillar and support of the Truth, whose mission is in divers ways to make known the manifold wisdom of the Deity to all to whom it can find, “being instant in season and out of season”, which implies that instruction to unbelievers by precept or example is at all times in place. “In understanding be men” “What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath a believer with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of the Deity with idols? Manifestly none. “therefore come out from among them,” Belial infidels and idolators, “and be ye separate and touch not the unclean.” This we do when obeying the Truth, we purify our souls or “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.” We begin to do this when we become sons and daughters of the Father by adoption through Jesus. As the adoption in hope of the redemption of the body, we come out from the Gentiles and constitute a separate people for His name. We decline to touch the unclean, the fornicators and adulterers of the world, nor in any of our enterprises will we be unequally yoked with unbelievers.

Sis. Lydia Fuchaka

KITISE

Here at Kitise we are fine and thanks for the books that you send, mostly the one which is called “*Where there is no doctor*”. Those books give good intelligence and are understandable. If possible could you send a dictionary to help us understand when reading. Here we go on spreading the Gospel, waiting and looking forward to the coming of our Saviour.

Bro. Daniel Maingi

KOBUJOI

I so much appreciate the book “*Teach me Thy Way*” and the other smaller pamphlets on topical subjects. “*How To Grow A Balanced Diet*” has reached me safely. It is a very useful book. The Bible Reading Calendar has been very good. Each year I raise casava and a few sweet potatoes to be used during the dry season. Thankfully in the area where I stay drought has not been serious. Cases of hunger and people lacking food here has been mostly attributed to negligence in the agricultural sector as many folk usually turn to ‘empty’ talking during times of plenty only to be caught when the dry season comes in. Great spiritual lessons are to be taken in here: we should learn to use our time wisely in taking in the food of life whilst the opportunity is still here. When time of ‘drought’ comes, we should blame ourselves. God willing, I hope to

get engaged to a lady before the year ends, it has been very difficult to get a suitable sister for a wife. The notes on the signs of the times are very interesting, thanks for the copy.

Bro. Geoffrey Chirchir

MATUU

I am writing to inform you that I have received all materials sent to me. Thank you very much for everything, especially for the new Bible. Thank you very much for counting me among others to whom you did the same. May the Lord God bless you and the service you are offering to not only brethren but also to friends, especially in Africa. The two health books seem to be very nice and will help many people. This shows exactly that you are bothering with the health of people so that the spiritual food you are providing to them may flourish in healthy bodies. I request some more *Bible Basics* of Kikuyu, Kikamba and Kiswahili if you have them.

Bro. Lazarus M. King'oo

MBITA

I am very happy to say that I got your letter and I was very thankful for that and let God be a guide to all our Christadelphian brothers and sisters around the world because they rely on faith and truth. I encourage you to carry on sending me *Gospel News* and other pamphlets to help me understand the Bible because our beliefs and our faith are quite different from other denominations. We as Christadelphians believe that when we die we must wait for the coming of Jesus and the resurrection. Other people think that after death they go to heaven, which is not even written in the Bible. How can we spread the Gospel through *Gospel News*? Let all of us go to Scripture reading daily and refer to what we have read and make use of those readings. In our areas as Christadelphians we are getting news from our neighbours in other countries because we are reading *Gospel News*. I ask others to take this opportunity to take time to spread the word of God to local people in their areas in order to work for the free gift of the coming Kingdom of God which will be set up on earth very soon.

Bro. Jared Oketch

When Jesus taught people 2000 years ago he spoke of the "harvest" of the world. Just as there is a time limit for crops, then they are harvested, so the world's time will soon be up. The Bible makes it very clear that Jesus Christ will soon return to set up God's Kingdom on earth, reigning from Jerusalem. This is the true and wonderful hope of the Bible and the only hope for a world in chaos. From Bible prophecy we know that Christ's return is very near. Micah 4:4, "They shall sit every man under his vine and fig tree and none shall make them afraid." Isaiah 35:1 "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Amos 9:13, "The ploughman shall overtake the reaper."

Bro. Daniel Ogembo Oliech

MIWANI

I have peace with my God.

I thank the Lord and Bro George Ndiege, Bror Alex Abuya and Sisr Pensillah Abuya for encouraging me and my wife Sis Jane Omuny, to start Miwani Ecclesia in Masago village. Even though we are small in number, we are to stand for the truth and will witness in the world. I am requesting you to send me *Bible Basics* to help me in my teaching and preaching.

Bro Pete. and Sis Jane Omuny



Photo: Bro. Peter and Sis Jane Omuny

MOMBASA

Many thanks for the encouraging letter and the two enclosed booklets. It is really good to read the testimonies of our beloved. It uplifts us when other people receive the good news of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. I really enjoyed the books. I thanked God our Father for Veronica's faith to understand the true scriptures of the Bible. As Paul the apostle wrote to Timothy in 2 Tim 3:16,17, she connected to and understood the word of God by herself by reading. By that time God had arranged for George to help her to understand more. As I was reading, going on to a point of baptism, I felt as if I was there at that time of her confession – and the act of baptism. Although she was suffering from pains in her chest, she afterwards slept in the faith of resurrection, when our Lord Jesus will come back. I learned and enjoyed the book "A Woman's Place?" I think that debate must have been very interesting to the listeners. I learned much about how we brothers can take our role and time to teach our wives and sisters without fear, so that they may be on the foundation of the scriptures. In our country some sectors of religions have made some of the women 'Lay' readers, Pastors and evangelists, contrary to the word of God. It is very open and clear in 2 Tim 2:12 that a woman should not have any authority *over* man (a brother) but be silent and learn with all subjection v 11.

In the book of Romans 12:21-32: "They knew God, but they didn't glorify Him or thank Him as their Creator. Instead they were foolish in their hearts and did all bad habits as they liked. For this cause, God left them in their foolishness and dishonoured their own bodies (verse 24). From these verses we know that it is really the ending of times. So we believers should be near our God by prayer, reading the Bible (His word) and help each other. Help me by sending me some books and encouraging me in your letters.

I will be grateful and thankful if you send me the Debate *on A Woman's Place?* As you first wrote me to write to Australia about receiving *Present day Events*, I regularly receive 20 copies for our ecclesia, also with GPL Middle East Update – I am really thankful for that. I have learned much about Mid/East. In our Mombasa Ecclesia, we have a Bible Study, teaching our friends the Basic lessons before the memorial service.

Edward Kunikina

MUHORONI

Thank you very much for your letter and a good pamphlet, *Do Christians Need Prophets Today?* It was very helpful. We are building an ecclesial hall at Songhor East following our request during the CBM Annual General Meeting. We got some help and the hall is now at lintel level. We were in a position to build a temporary structure but following the strength we got from brothers and sisters in UK Songhor East Ecclesia will be a permanent meeting hall. 1 Kings 6:11-13. In Songhor East Ecclesia we are five brothers, four sisters, fourteen Sunday School children and seven friends. We are doing Bible Study weekly and we are at an advanced stage to open another ecclesia in Miwani.

Bro. George Stanley Ndiege

NDALU

I would first like to take this opportunity to thank the Almighty for His love to us all. Through you I received my reading glass and I was very happy that day, now I am reading *Gospel News* well. I pray our Lord God that CAT may keep on helping other brothers and sisters who have that problem. Again, in the name of Jesus, can you send more books and *Bible Basics* in Kiswahili. I pray that God will bless you. Let us encourage each other in good deeds and be strengthened in the Word.

Bro. John Masiki

NDHIWA

Very warm greetings in the Name of the King of Kings. I am always very pleased to hear from you. I always say thank you for *Gospel News* when I receive it. Bro. Marcus, I do just remind you of the book *Where there is no Doctor* which I requested you to send me, I have hope that you will send me one, God willing. Could you run a few articles on health care?. There is a sister who would like to be put on your isolation list?

Bro. Lenard Mboya Lar

PALA-SARE

Outside the city of Jerusalem there was a little garden called Gethsemane. Here Jesus and his disciples often went and spent hours in prayer to God. When, after the last supper, Judas went to betray Jesus to the Jewish priests, Jesus led his disciples along to the garden of prayer. His disciples were weary and sad and fell asleep. Alone in the darkness, whilst his disciples slept, Jesus suffered great agony of heart as He prayed for strength to face His cross and His death. Upon his perfect life was to fall the unclean and dreadful sin of the whole wicked human race. As the Lamb of God, he was to be God's sacrifice to take away sin and open the way of salvation. Your sin and mine was on Him too. It was as he prayed that Judas brought soldiers of the Jewish High Priest into the garden and by kissing his Master he made it clear to the soldiers which one of the band was Jesus, so that they could arrest him. Peter tried to defend the Lord by using his sword and slashed off a man's ear, but Jesus told him to put his sword away and he healed the man's wound. "Who are you looking for?" said Jesus to the High Priest's servants. "Jesus of Nazareth", they replied. Then Jesus said "I am he" and the men immediately fell backwards. When the soldiers had recovered themselves, he let them lead him away to the High Priest. What a terrible thing Judas did to betray Jesus. To be a hypocrite, to say we love Christ, whilst in our hearts we love only ourselves, our money and our sin, is to be a modern Judas. What causes this betrayal? Money! Money is what Judas received. Many commit this terrible crime. Professing to be of Christ's disciples, they live like Judas, a religious life. They mix with Christian people and share in Christian work, but their hearts deceive themselves and others. But they cannot deceive God and one day they can be sure their sin will find them out.

Sis. Dorine A. Mboya

SUNA

Thanks for the Bible received, It's a good one, I like it very much. I'm very thankful for the *Gospel News* received regularly, it is a spiritual junction where brethren all over the world meet spiritually, when they strengthen each other through preaching, testimonies and other introductions. May all powers, praise and glory be to our Almighty God, the God of Moses, for His everlasting love to mankind. God makes ways where there is no way. Exodus 14:15-16. He has stretched His mighty hand of deliverance in the Islamic country of Pakistan to make and set them free. I am still praying for others who are in Iran and other Islamic republics. Please may

you try to find and send me a book entitled “Captive Conscience”, God willing. It will be a blessing to me.

Bro. Lucas Omboro

TONGAREN

God is at work. Tongaren Ecclesia is becoming the centre of translating Christadelphian literature into local languages, so it will have its office built in the ecclesial plot, of which I will be proud. I have translated as many books as I can, some are being printed in UK and some are still waiting to be sent to UK for printing. Recently I received some more booklets for translation from various brothers and sisters in UK, which means they have need of the translation project to be in existence. For these I praise God in heaven who has enabled such a marvellous project to be done in Tongaren; this will be of benefit to our generation and future generations to come, if Jesus’ coming is delayed.

Bro. Isaac Sikolia Kapa

After reading *Bible Basics* from my friend I was very willing to follow very closely and to learn more from it. May you therefore send me a copy of the book *Bible Basics* in English, if available. I look forward to receiving this and wish God to make me one of His little flock. God bless you and I hope to hear from you soon.

Mr Michael Soita

WEBUYE

The main aim of writing to you is to ask you to send me the book “*Where there is no doctor.*” It is a very good book to read, especially ‘First Aid’ when an accident has occurred and there is no doctor around. I also need more key cards, they are very interesting indeed for me. I have an eye problem;, I cannot get anything to prevent them from irritation.

Margaret Shikuku

news from malawi

BOLERO

We need to keep on helping each other spiritually and personally, because no one knows when God will release His Son, who is our Master, King of Kings to overcome all his enemies. Here in Malawi many prophecies are being fulfilled, such as hunger, quarrels of leadership, disease etc. All such troubles are signs that soon Jesus will come. I enclose a picture of some orphans I care for, plus giving them spiritual teaching. Pray for me that I will not get tired, since I am unemployed. I will also pray for you.

Bro. Godwin Banda



Photo: Children cared for by Bro. Banda

We are in need of reading glasses. If possible, could you send us some as per the enclosed prescriptions.

Bro. Lukanga Nyomiro



Photo: Bro. & Sis. Chipala and family at Chimbalanga

CHABONGA

Thanks for sending me *Bible Basics*; many people will benefit from it; it is more important than gold and silver. I want to inform you that we have received iron sheets for our church. Now our prayer house is no problem and this also makes us feel powerful and strong, bodily and spiritually. On behalf of Chabonga Christadelphians I say thanks to those who provided them.

Bro. P. Mbingwani

CHITEKESA

My name is Justin Bafter and I am the third-born in a family of eight. I went to school from Form 1 up to Form 4 and passed Malawi School Certificate of Education in 2000 and am still looking for a job.

Bro Justin Bafter

KARONGA

I need some books like '*Elpis Israel*' and some tracts. May God bless you all the time till the second coming of our Lord.

Bro. Lytwel Symbey

Comment: When we get a copy of the book I will send it. MH

KASUNGU

From Kasungu centre to my place is not less than 35kms. Regarding Zomba meeting, I do not have any regular communication; they sometimes send me printed papers in Chichewa. They used to know me in the past years when Bro. Nightingale with his wife and Bro. Lowe with his wife came and we met at Kasungu Inn together; I then knew my Brethren and Sisters around Kasungu district, but now I only come to know members in Malawi through *Gospel News*. I have heard that *Bible Basics* is now in the Chichewa language, and I would like it if I could receive a copy; there are many who only read Chichewa and it would be a pleasure to share it with them. As you know, since my husband passed away I truly live upon the assistance of God through His beloved ones. Being a widow, I was chosen among 12 ladies in our village to be tested for HIV/AIDS disease. If the disease could be found we would be given food, clothes, soap etc. I was the only one found negative, so I do not get anything. It was sad for me in one way because we're experiencing so much hunger in our country. But I went home and entered my room and said, 'O Lord of Israel, you fed people with manna' and, of course, I'm being provided for by God through His loving people.

Sis B. Khonge

I am very glad to inform Brothers and Sisters world wide that we are studying Revelation, verse-by-verse and chapter-by-chapter, by using Bro. H.P. Mansfield's notes. I have been assisted by Sis. Paula from UK. Some days ago I heard from Sis. Hope of Sussex, UK, that Sis. Paula was ill, so I am not now receiving the notes. I am in isolation, so please don't forget me. I find *Gospel News* very uplifting.

Bro Alexandre Banda

LIWONDE

I am able to translate in Yao language, which is also familiar in Malawi, Gambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Please let me have plans: paper, pens, together with a good English dictionary to help me grasp the meaning of some words. Life has been so difficult, to the extent of being divorced by my spouse in October 2000, because my poverty was endless. At my age, the blow was so severe and in trying to culturally avoid the environmental influences of ungodly people, I left home and settled here in total isolation. Whenever I am to assemble with fellow believers, a journey of 36kms on foot is to be taken. Living alone has twice resulted in thieves breaking through my house to sweep it clean. Nevertheless, I praise the Lord who, through His grace, makes some neighbours feel sorry and who help me sometimes. I think you can understand how one feels at times when one is isolated by both this world of unbelief and also fellow believers, one's heart paces faster ahead of the feet towards the Kingdom of God and His Christ. Anyway, I am convinced of that which the Lord has seen fit to visit me with, and am glad to know the Lord is kind to spare me some days to assist in His noble work and may it be so, God willing. I became a Christadelphian at the age of 19 years in 1966 and now I am almost 60 and I believe you will know how difficult it is for one to stay all alone at this age, yet I know I am never alone, the Lord is ever close. My present address is: Brighton M. Bwanali, c/o Chisomo Pvt. Primary School, Box 188, Liwonde, Malawi.

Bro. B.M. Bwanali



Photo: Bro. Philiat (left), Bro. Alexandre (centre) and Bro. Gerlad.(Kasungu)

LISUNGWI

One of my Brothers in Christ, who lived in Mozambique is young but well; his parents were killed in the Mozambique war. I have been teaching him and now he is on the way up; we know Yahweh can only work with men who are prepared to do their part in the warfare of faith. We cannot use weapons we have not proved, therefore we must make every effort to familiarize ourselves with the word of God through daily reading and personal Bible study. Brothers and sisters, surely mercy and forgiveness should be the ruling principles in our love one for another. The message is in 1 John 2:9-10 Brotherly love is the foundation of true religion.

Bro Edmond Store



Photo: Bro Edmond Store watering his garden

MACHINGA

I was glad when I received *Bible Basics* and *Gospel News*. Our beloved country is known as 'the warm heart of Africa', but economically we are amongst the poorest; out of the eight poorest, we are number five. Your letter drew my attention to many who share the word of God with us. I

heard of the terrorist attacks in England that killed many innocent people and wounded many others. I strongly agree with you that the Son of God is about to appear. Brothers, we are joined together in Christ even though we've never met, but we will when our Lord comes. I love and care for you all.

Bro Tholesi Nazombe

MIGOWI

All the things you send me to read are good and I want to encourage you to send me more in order that I may continue to study. The thing I want most is the Holy Bible, Chinyanja version if possible, but if that is not possible, try to send me another as I haven't one.

Bro. Maxwell Tebulo

MANGOCHI

Due to circumstances I have changed my address to: Mpinganjira ecclesia, Private Bag 135, Mangochi, Malawi, C.Africa

Bro. Morris Assani

The following is paramount to our everyday life. In Song of Songs (5:2) there is a certain woman who had a lover. One night she slept, but her heart was awake. She dreamt a man knocked at the door. He said, 'Let me come in, my darling, my sweetheart, my love. My head is wet with dew and my hair is damp from the mist.' If you go through the chapter from verses 3 to 6, you will hear that the woman refused; she didn't want her lover to come in. In v. 4 the lover puts his hand to the door, but the woman didn't open for him. Finally, the woman realised that the one who was knocking was her real lover and she opened the door. 'Alas!' The woman said, 'my lover has gone away.' Brothers and Sisters, what does this mean? Let us look at Rev. 3 v 20, 'Listen! I stand at the door and knock: if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and eat with him, and he will eat with me.' The lover mentioned in Song of Songs is Jesus Christ. We are hearing the knock of Jesus on our hearts even now. Why is it some do not open to him? They are living in a danger zone. Should he come today, what will be their (and our) judgment? Brothers and Sisters, Jesus is calling us daily to submit our hearts to him. Let us respond to our Lord positively.

Bro. Symon Wanyekheya

MZIMBA

I write to extend my sincere gratitude for the Bibles and Bible tracts. I write on behalf of the church – we are very thankful. Please keep it up, as the books have assisted us in spreading the word of God further. Our church is growing and we are really being helped by your activities. We are tirelessly spreading the gospel to all people. As you know, Malawi is poor and sometimes we find it difficult to travel long distances.

Bro. James Nyoni



Photo: Bro. Nyoni and his daughter Jean

I write to inform you that I am a new member in this church and have received your inspiring words. I am now seeing the light of Jesus. I write to ask you to send me some Bibles and tracts

so that I can preach to others. We are handicapped here because of the famine.

Bro. Moses C. Lusale

MZUZU

Many thanks for the copy of the Chichewa *Bible Basics* which I am sure will be of great help for many brethren and sisters who find English very difficult to understand; this really has fulfilled one of your – and our – dreams. For the ‘Tumbuka’ version of *Bible Basics* we need to sit down with brethren over here who will be able to help in the translation work. One other thing: about the book, ‘*Where There Is No Doctor*’. I didn’t know it was such a very good book until I saw it with a brother here.

Bro. Sylvester Tembo

NSANJE

I am delighted to inform you that I have received with joy, ‘*Why Are We Here?*’ There are many brethren and sisters here in our ecclesia who need *Bible Basics* and *Gospel News*; I humbly request you to send more copies. I have been a Sunday School teacher here for three years. Our aim is to encourage young people to grow spiritually, but unfortunately I have no Sunday School teaching materials, such as Key-Cards, time charts and lessons. Please, if available, send me these. The Scripture says, “When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, Let the children come to me. Don’t try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God” (Mk. 10:14).

Bro. Venancion Malata

PHALOMBE

I write to you, brother, to ask for your help. As you know, last year the rains were poor in Africa. So, due to the droughts, people failed to harvest more yields and because of that fact hunger is now a big problem in Africa and especially here in Malawi. Right now, as I am writing, people are dying because of hunger.

Bro. Thom Bicycle

news from nigeria

IKEJA

It was really encouraging to hear from you and to know that my very little work was appreciated. The desire was borne out of some arguments that came up at that time. They were so frequent, and I got to know that many people just claimed to be Christians but, even though they read the Bible, they did not know what it really said. I then felt that since the topic was one of the fundamentals of the Christian faith, more light had to be thrown on it and it had to reach more people. I completed it at home and gave it to my dad who read it through and was happy that even though I was in isolation I still had time to do a thing like that. My school is in Ondo State, about three hours away from where I live – Lagos – and since there are no brethren there I have to do things on my own. I am in my first year reading microbiology and turned 18 last May. I also have no siblings and so do not have the hope of anyone joining me here. In school, people think you aren’t a good Christian if you do not go to church on Sundays, but I try as much as possible to let them know that their general beliefs are different from mine, and since we aren’t in agreement we can’t worship together. Many people are surprised that I read the Bible every day, even though I do not attend church and even quote me as an example to some of my friends, and when it is time to talk about the Bible, those around call on me. I have

been able to make some of my friends see reasons why the Roman Catholic church is out of place, though I have problems with some of my Catholic friends because of that; those who agree with me on some things disagree with me on others. I really am used to living a lonely life, but it gets harder by the day because here in school I have no friend who I am close to. On many occasions I either cry, talk to myself, read the Bible or pray for strength, but the thought that maybe something is wrong somewhere keeps coming back. Though I know that friends can let you down, I still know that there could be one true friend in a million. I have Christadelphian pen-pals and one other friend who was like my sister, but she left school after our one-year pre-Degree course; I felt I wasn't going to survive; though we talk on the 'phone, it's not like the real thing. Please pray for God to help me pull through academically, morally, spiritually and financially. I really am happy to be a Christadelphian.

Sis. Julie Omotayo

Comment: This is a letter from the heart. Would some Sisters please encourage her.

ENUGU

We pray that you are all well and holding fast to the things we have received, lest at any time we should let slip. Such is the warning from the apostle and such are our experiences that in the face of continuing hardship, with no end to be seen in sight, some may weaken and fall away. It reminds us that we belong to each other and are responsible for each other. None of us is as strong in the faith as we may feel we are, and we must help each other along the Kingdom road (Ecc. 4:9-12). The Brother you see here (Bro. Gabriel) has been our choir master since the '80s. He was struck by a mad man; the wounds he received have been treated but his two hands are paralysed. He was referred to have orthopaedic treatment, but our ecclesia alone could not afford the money needed to help him. We take the opportunity to thank his family who rushed him to hospital, and Enugu ecclesia who contributed a lot at that period. There are 15 lbo-speaking ecclesias across Nigeria and we can use as many *Bible Basics* as you can send us.

Bro. Goddy Nwosu

news from south africa

ZENZELE

A mouthful of thanks for *Bible Basics* and thanks, too, to the Sister who sent me three books. I like the book, '*Family Life in the Lord*', it is inspiring to a family man like me, also to young couples. "Before the end comes, the gospel must be preached to all peoples' (att24:14;Mark 13:10). How is the gospel going to reach the people if there are those who deny the process? Let me pray for them. *Bible Basics* is in great demand and I don't know what to do: I promised people something that I cannot fulfill, mostly teachers at schools are thirsty. There are people around the informal settlement who do not even have a Bible.

Bro. Francis Chauke

news from tanzania

DAR-ES-SALAAM

It has been a long time since I have written to *Gospel News*. In fact my family and I are doing well. I was away from Dar-es-Salaam visiting Congo visitin Lubumbashi, Kipushi and Kalemie. With God's blessing we held an eight day seminar in both Lubumbashi and Kipushi, during

which many people came to listen to us. They actually came to know who the Christadelphians are, their faith and their beliefs. Two were baptised from both Kipushi and Lubumbashi. We then travelled to Kalemie, where we had a warm welcome, and as the result of our visit ten were baptised. May our Heavenly Father be with the newly baptised Brethren and Sisters. We particularly thank all the Brethren and Sisters who willingly contribute financially to our travelling to spread the Word of God.

Bre Vincent & James Ibandje

KASULU

I am Samuel Alinoti, a Brother at Rutale ecclesia, Kigoma, in Tanzania. Now i am at Kasulu for my studies. I am schooling at Kasulu Teachers' Training College. There is no ecclesia here at Kasulu town, therefore I am not able to share fellowship with brethren and sisters. I am trying to teach the truth to the community around our college as well as my college mates. I thank God that there are some who have shown interest in knowing the truth, some are receiving our forty lesson Course. I meet with them and discuss the Bible regularly. We ask for prayers from brethren and sisters all over the world in this work so that these friends can know the truth in these last days. I request *Gospel News* magazine and advice from brethren and sisters on how i can go on with this work. Can you publish this message in GN? My college address is PO BOX 3, KASULU, TZ.

Bro Samuel Alinoti

KIGOMA (Rutale Ecclesia)

I am grateful for your letter and newspaper you sent me. I very much hope that you will continue sending to me. I delayed responding as I was admitted to hospital and operated on for hernia. I thank my God that I am going on well, this was from January to May 2005. I hereby ask you to continue sending me more and more scripture books, pamphlets etc. to enable me to deepen my faith. Brethren and sisters of our ecclesia warmly salute you, hoping that you going on well with the work of God

Bro. Paros Yunus

We congratulate you for the heavy task you undertake in spreading the holy word of our Lord. The things you send us always awaken our minds. We received '*Basic Bible Principles*', accompanied by an English Bible. Thanks a lot. Regarding our Sunday School, we again thank you for the positive advice and intend writing to the Children's Fund for further details. We receive *Gospel News* and its contents are appreciated. We have launched a new strategy of house-to-house evangelism with the aim of teaching the pure word among and within the Islamic community in which we live. We have convinced almost 80% of them and hope that one day they will be baptised. Please pray for us so that, God willing, we succeed in this new 'career!' Last but not least, as many of us live in rural areas where there is no proper medication, may you please send us the book, '*Where There Is No Doctor*'. Salutations from all brothers and sisters of our ecclesia.

Bro. Jerome Bukambo

MOROGORO

We are fine enough here to carry out our daily activities. We thank God for enabling us to deal with new challenges in life. I would like to comment on the greater job being done of spreading the gospel news; our Almighty God will always provide. The *Gospel News* magazine which I receive is of the greatest importance to me because the contents are very useful for the current life and for the promised eternal life to come.

Bro. Nkonge Mwakatage

news from uganda

BUSIA

My sincere thanks to Bro. Roy Boyd for sending me material which has helped me to grow spiritually and also for his letters which have all helped me in hard times in my life. I cannot forget Bro. Duncan, too, for the Sunday School material and other spiritual materials he has given me. May God reward them. So I pray that other Brothers and Sisters will build up their fellow Brothers and Sisters and students.

Bro. Mayende Sifunda

KASESE

I have received your letter, the English *Bible Basics* and *Gospel News*, *GN* really acts as a TV, bringing all the brothers and sisters world wide together, in speaking and seeing each other. I thank our Father in heaven for inspiring you all to do this work and thank you for your support and love to fellow brothers and sisters. *Gospel News* is also a means of spreading God's word to others; let us not use it for ourselves alone, but to help bring other people to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. It acts as a bridge linking those in isolation to the very many brothers and sisters on this earth. May this continue. Please send *Bible Basics* in Kiswaheli as I have some contacts who do not understand English very well. Unemployment is rampant; we are poor and always have problems of sickness and we cannot afford the charges of hospitals. I rely on self-help projects and through radionics I get some money for school fees for my children. I thank God who gave me that knowledge and may I increase it. Pray for me that more people bring me their radios for repair. This makes me think of the words of our Lord in Matt. 6, not to worry about what to eat and drink. Pray for us as we pray for you. We must read the Bible constantly and with prayer, lest Jesus Christ comes suddenly. Let us not be like the five maids who had kept their lamps but without parafin. This parable can be compared to brothers and sisters who keep Bibles without reading them constantly. Glory be to God who has all majesty, power and authority.

Bro Issac Bulea Cox

MBARARA

All the human sufferings are signs that were prophesied would forerun the coming of our Master, Jesus. We should indeed be on the watch for his coming. In my last letter I requested that you helped us with some *Bible Basics*; there is, indeed, a great need for them as I have now started opening up new areas for the truth. All the help you extend to us, especially Bible literature, is always received with tears of joy.

Bro Godwin Mugasi

MT. ELGON

We are very happy with all the programmes that are going on in the various countries, especially Uganda. We must make a greater endeavour to work together spreading the gospel before our Lord returns to the earth.

Bro. Samuel Godwin

news from zambia

CHINSALI

Precious greetings to you in the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I would like to inform you that the money sent was used to purchase a bicycle which I use to visit and teach the students in distant areas and for which I really give thanks through our Lord Jesus Christ. I desire our brethren to live peaceably and hold on to the teachings daily, which shows me they have fallen in love with Christ. It is my task to pray for them daily so that no one should come out of the hand of Christ. I would love it if we as brethren be one in Christ, then we shall be called Christians, because we are doing the work which God wants us to do. We should work and follow His commandments, then we shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Please send me some books to edify me and to teach every day.

Bro. Edward Mutale

Most of us cannot afford the price of stamps; it is such a problem here when you consider that we live in rural areas of Zambia and most of us are unemployed. It will help a lot if you send us a stamp each time so that maybe we can write something for the many readers of *Gospel News* which teaches us a lot.



Photo: At Fringilla Farm

KABOMPO

About the drought-resistant crops. I know the ones you have mentioned. The other one is yam.

Bro. Charles Muhupu

KABWE

I must apologise for the delay in writing to you. This is because life lately has been hectic for me. The first term college work was a little pressing. Imagine going through calculus plus the whole load of assignments and exams. I am now doing teaching practice at a school known as Neem-Tree Basic without any allowance from the Zambian government. I have taken on two students at Mukobeko Maximum Prison so that they send their *Bible Basics* lessons directly to me. Also I hope to meet Emmanuel any time now so that, God willing, he will begin to attend the meetings as, according to his letter, he has interest in God's Word. Lately I have had several brothers and sisters write to me to thank me for my articles and I am lost for words and I thank you, for I feel without *Gospel News* I would not have improved my writing. I am glad you are trying to satisfy the ever increasing number of people abroad wishing to learn English. In fact, I like your idea of producing a book with practical lessons on learning to read English by reading the Bible. Imagine reading the Word of God as you are trying to get your English lessons right. I feel it is much fun. Any time you happen to have another project on writing get me involved i.e. give me guidelines on anything to write and let's see what I can do.

Bro. Lapulani Malata

KALOMO

We are all waiting to receive our Lord Jesus Christ to come and judge each and every person according to the works that he or she has done on earth. Brothers, let us pull up our socks, this is not the time of reading newspapers in the streets. This is the time of reading the Bible and

understanding what you are reading. This should be our daily study as we are all waiting for our Master to come. As we don't know the day nor the hour he is coming, will he find us reading the Bible? Thank you very much for the public debate book which has interested me and also for the Bible reading calendars. We still need more.

Bro. Lameck Mtonga

The messages written in *Gospel News* have been of great use to me. Here in Kalomo we are working extra hard in our outreach ministry. In June last some of us made a trip to Kalomo South visiting three places there – Katanga, Kanyanga and Simwatachela. From Kalomo town to Katanga one can travel by catching lifts, such as from lorries. From there to Simwatachela one has to make it on foot. From Katanga mission is a turning leading to Kanyanga; this distance is long and there are no vehicles, the only thing you can get if you have some luggage is a 'scotch cat' (driven by oxen) or by booking a bicycle. Failure to get either of these means a walk for nine solid hours non-stop. At the end of each journey you experience hunger, thirst, leg pains and extreme tiredness. At all these places there are a number of students; some had finished their studies and were awaiting interviews. Our Linkman, Bro. Andrew Walker, assigned me to travel to these places once a month to deliver their mails since my post box is used by these students. In the month of August (5th to 11th) I made a second visit, then a third (15th to 18th.) May God bless His word and His labourers. Thanks to the Lord who has shown mercy and lovingkindness to our Brothers and Sisters in Iran and Afghanistan as we hear the report of baptisms in the Islamic world. We pray that the hand of the Lord will be with you all in every dangerous place as you and we journey to the Kingdom; I know it is not so easy in this evil world. 1 Peter 1:3-9: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade, kept in heaven for you and me, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice though now for a little while you have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. Those have come so that your faith, of greater worth than gold which perishes even though refined by fire, may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Even so come, Lord.

Bro. Harry Hambula

I received the Bible Reader's calendar for 2006; I was very blessed, and most of our friends need them. I hope to continue receiving *Gospel News*, I always get encouragement from Isaiah 54:5, "For my Maker is my husband, the Lord Almighty is His Name, the Holy One of Israel is my Redeemer, He is called the God of all the earth". He is the Provider of my daily needs; He takes good care of my health and my two loving children. May His Name be glorified for ever and ever. Amen. May the living God above bless every one of us for the encouragement we give and get from the Bible. needs; He takes good care of my health and my two loving children. May His Name be glorified for ever and ever. Amen. May the living God above bless every one of us for the encouragement we give and get from the Bible.

Sis. Juliet Mweetwa

KASAMA

Many thanks for the help received from the Brothers. The '*Present Day Events*' news sheet on the signs of the times is most interesting and I make photo copies for others. Travel to see others is difficult and so expensive; we are in need of a bicycle so that students and members

can be contacted. I hope and pray that this letter will find you in good health. My wife and I are quite fine. Will you kindly send me some reading glasses? I enclose the prescription as they are very expensive here.. Here in Kasama Ecclesia some people like very much the *Bible Basics* you have sent me. I do not have any left to take to Milima Prison as I am doing a lot of work here in Kasama concerning Christadelphian Bible teaching and have given literature plus some leaflets and *Glad Tidings* to several workers in Kasama. Please try to send me some more books in English and Bemba. My wife, my family and Sunday School join me in sending our love to you and your family. May our living God keep you safe.

Bro. Joshua Mushili

KAZEMBE

Alas, it has been necessary to withdraw fellowship from Sister Dyllis Musonda who left us and joined Watch Tower and then joined the Bahai faith. Efforts by brethren to bring her back have so far been fruitless. Meanwhile on 4 July 2005 we were blessed with the baptism of Bro. JOHN MWEWA of Mushota Kawambwa East, a sub branch of Kazembe Ecclesia, when Bro. David Nicholls, Sis Linda Nicholls, Bro. Nelson Bwalya and Bro. Z. Muntete visited the area. Right hand of fellowship was extended to Bro John Mwewa by Bro. David Nicholls. Elizabeth and I were overwhelmed to read your letter, we were as happy as if we could jump out of our skins. May our Lord bless you for your task to serve God in spreading *Gospel News* to its readers world-wide. May He keep you healthy and strong until the return of His anointed Son, none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Please include me as a student of that newly introduced 16 lesson course based on the Gospel of Mark. I am very eager to learn the Word of God set apart time to read every day as a habit and Sis Elizabeth helps me to maintain this time. I thank God for allowing this in my life.

Bro. John Kasanda

KITWE

I am happy to inform you that I am on my way to the southern part of Congo to the small town of Mokambo near Mufulira town. I spent the night at Bro. Francis Mbalanga's home, then next day I went to Mufulira. After the memorial service, I will proceed to Mokambo where I will spend one week. I lost my sister, who passed away two weeks ago, so I am coming to visit my relatives for that purpose. I will take this opportunity to share the word of Truth with my relatives and non-relatives. I hope that God will do something for His glory. In Luke 15:7 Jesus said, "I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety nine righteous persons who do not need to repent". We rejoiced with the heavenly host on 17th April 2005, when Bro. GOLDEN NDOVU was baptized. He has become a member of our body, we thank our heavenly Father for His love. This same month Bro. Francis Mbalanga of Chingola ecclesia decided to print calendars containing Christadelphian Bible Mission labels, in an effort to make known our fellowship to the Zambian people. The idea came after he realized that since 1971, when the Truth came to Zambia, the Christadelphian ecclesia is still unknown by most Zambian people. We joined him by distributing these calendars in all towns of the Copperbelt province. He also made the announcement of this activity to the Radio Cengelo of Kitwe. The campaign was successful as the Zambian public asked questions on what Christadelphian means and what they believe. I hope that God will make His Word to be known in all Zambia.

Bro. Robert Mpundu Miwele



This photo was taken after the memorial meeting on 3rd April 2005.

Standing left to right. Bro. David Kawba (Kapiri) Bro. Chabala Geoffrey (Mufulira) and Bro. Harris Mulongesha (Ndola).

Front left to right: Bro. Silas Chishimba (Mufulira), two sisters and a student from Ndola Ecclesia.

“But whoever lives by the truth comes to the *light*, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God” (John 3:21). *Light* is a challenge that lasts all our lives and all our natural ways need to be examined in the *Light*. “The unfolding of Your words gives light, it gives understanding to the simple” (Psalm 119:130). Our understanding of the work of God continually changes spiritual direction and will lead us to live a different way of life, in the *light*, we must always live in the *light* (John 2:10, Prov. 6:23, Psalm 119:105).

Thank you for the parcels. I received the books on Revelation and a parcel of clothes, thank you very much indeed. Bre. Mubaya and Alex Mutale also received their parcels. I accompanied Bro. David Nicholls and Sister Linda Nicholls for the mission trip to Luapula and Northern Province and we were blessed with three baptisms, a couple in Kasama and also a blind man in Kazembe. The C.B.M. asked me to visit North Western Province, this is Kabompo and Solwezi, so you can see I do have the opportunity of visiting various places. I am very glad to see that Bro. Duncan is back writing in *Gospel News*, thanks be to God. My greetings to your ecclesia.
Bro. Nelson Bwalya

My testimony: I spent most of my years in the church CMML and used to do the same job as Bro. Nelson Bwalya, that of selling books. Bro. Nelson preached to me the good news, but I did not believe him. However, after a long time I started thinking of what he used to tell me and came to believe that what he told me was the truth. Then I left my former church and started listening carefully to what Bro. Nelson shared with me about the Gospel. I started the lessons. After learning the truth I was baptised and started sharing the truth with others in Garneton township where I stay. I do thank all brothers and sisters who visited us in Garneton. We are building up the ecclesia which is called the Christadelphian Hall. Most of my family are now baptised.

Bro. Darkwell Mubanga

Jesus Christ must return to this earth as King in power and great glory to judge this present evil world and set it to rights, as the apostle Paul says, “In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent. For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the man He has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:30,31 NIV). His second coming will not be a hidden event, but one of which the whole world will be aware. The prophets foretold that it will be at the time of distress in the world (Micah 4; Zech. 14:2,3,9), when the people will focus on the Middle East and on Israel. The Lord will deliver Israel from her troubles, then he will reign from Jerusalem over a world-wide kingdom – the Kingdom of God on earth. “The Lord will be King over the whole earth. In that day there will be one Lord, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne

of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob Jacob for ever; his Kingdom will never end” (Luke 1:32,33). “In the time of those kings the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure for ever” (Dan. 2:44). “The Lord will reign for ever and ever” (Ex. 15:18). Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. Will we be there?

Bro. Reuben Njamba

I was very glad to receive your letter and the parcel; the garments were suitable for the children and most acceptable. Some of the children who had them are orphans.

Bro. Alex Mutale

Comment: We were given several hundred new garments for children and have sent them to various ecclesias world-wide. These clothes were new children’s school uniforms, but the Schools decided to change the uniform, so the Brother who supplied them to the Schools was left with a substantial redundant stock. However, his loss has been the gain of many children. It has not been possible to give to all ecclesias, but should there be another opportunity we will supply to children of other ecclesias. The Christmas before last it was possible to give a new sweatshirt to all the children in a Russian orphanage – the only present they had. So, if any of you know of similar good clothing going ‘spare’, let us know. MH

Thank you very much for the book, ‘How to Grow a Balanced Diet’, it is very good for us small farmers and reveals quite a lot of ideas which we did not know of.

Bro. Elvin P. Muntemba

LUSAKA

I was so elated to know from the letter you wrote to me that I passed with flying colours the “New Life in Christ” course. A lot of brothers and sisters here did not know that Pardon Changwe is a pastor somewhere in a Pentecostal Church; I feel so sorry for him even as I continue praying for him. Can you please help me with Bro. Edmond Store’s address, I just have an extreme interest in knowing about how he is living with the orphan children and if they are in school. The *Gospel News* magazine is always close to my heart and Bro. Duncan’s articles are my favourite because they are so real. At this year’s Fringilla camp meeting I had a really wonderful time listening to Bro. Michael Owen and having quality times with my friends and talking to other Brothers and Sisters. Bro. Michael has already sent me the notes of his talks which I asked for and I am so happy. By God’s grace I am happy to inform you that our Sunday School and Youth League are doing great after the graduation of Asenath, Jane and Alex from Sunday School to being Sisters and a Brother and Anita and Stephen from being mere youths to becoming a Brother and Sister.. I pray that we catch more people from this world with the Kingdom net (the gospel) like our Lord Jesus did.

Sis. Bevelyn Tembo

I write to request a copy of “Beyond Bible Basics”. I did request this before but you asked me to borrow from my ecclesia, which I did, and returned it to the ecclesial library. Now I feel that I need to research the book more and gain much knowledge in spiritual matters. I look forward to receiving the book and hope and trust that you will respond favourably and promptly.

Bro. Christopher C. Nkandu

Loving greetings in our soon coming Lord Jesus Christ. I thank you so much for your letter and a copy of *Gospel News*, also a handout of *Present Day Events*. I always praise God for the good

work CAT are doing by disseminating the true gospel news in the world and encouraging us all as we await our Lord's second coming. The great work will be rewarded at his coming. Happily I had a wonderful Bush Camp where I learnt new things from brothers and sisters, especially the talks of Bro. Michael Owen. I heard about the terrorist attacks in UK a good number died without hearing and accepting the truth. Keep on informing us about such events for they are a sign of his coming and God's purpose with the earth to be fulfilled.

Bro. Jaxon Kalumba Jnr.

MANSA

I received *Gospel News* for July-Sept 2005 after giving you my new address. I also received a booklet entitled "*Bible Basics for Moslems*" which sounded very amusing and was very educative after going through it. Please keep it up and continue with the same spirit. Sadly I did not attend the July-August Bush Camp because I have been engulfed with some problems. My wife has been complaining of some abdominal pains which started early in February 2005 to date, that is why we have been transferred from Kazembe to Mansa General Hospital. But the problem is still the same and we are just praying to Almighty God and leaving everything in His hands.

Bro. James Mwando Kambobe

MUFULIRA

Looking at four devastating events, namely September 11th 2002 in the USA, the war between the USA and Iraq, the Tsunami and now hearing of Bird Flu, has really touched me, more especially concerning the mass destruction of people's lives in all these instances. More people across the world are expected to lose their lives as the result of the anticipated Bird Flu. Pertaining to the rate at which the influenza changes, scientists have predicted the pandemic (word means world-wide distribution) could cause 7 million sicknesses and 2 million+ deaths in due course, as the forthcoming outbreak is self-styled to afflict people world-wide. This is coercion and awes almost everyone, more especially in developing countries because we saw how our friends suffered because they had no advanced medical facilities and highly structured transport network, then if it happens to strike amongst the developing countries, it is God's to salvage, because casualties would be more than expected.

This has terrorized our brethren and sisters in most parts of the world, but let it not be so, because these calamities are just vivid mass life consumers, but the kind of death is the same in everyday life as each of us witness in our local environment. With everything that surpasses our understanding, let us use it to try and acquire more knowledge about the power and the character of God and the fulfilment of prophecy. As much as I believe, those people who died in the earlier mentioned calamities knew not what was before them and would have fled to save their lives. Let us who are still alive take advantage of these practical breathtaking examples to prepare for sudden death or Christ's coming, so that we may enter the glory of his Kingdom.

Bro. Geoffrey and Sis. Sandra Chabala

I would like to ask you how to manage in sending deaf people to school or churches. I don't know if you have any in your ecclesia. I have a son who is deaf, Mike Mumba, aged 17 years, now doing Grade 8 at St. Joseph's in Kalulushi which is a Catholic school. Is there any organisation dealing with disabled people which helps them with sign language, books for education, or Christadelphian books in sign language?

Bro Fred Mumba

Our Master, after he rose from the dead, commanded the apostles, saying, "Go, preach the gospel to every creature; he that believes and is immersed shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be condemned. Lo, I am with you always, until the end of the world". My brother, please, I am here and want to serve the Lord, so send me some books and I can translate them into Bemba and Nyanja.

Bro. Charles M. Daka

MUZOKA

I really thank you for the book, also update news on signs of the (end) times, especially issues such as AIDS and a report on children's suffering by UNICEF 2005, which is so touching. Such work is appealing as this really needs particular attention like our Christadelphian missionaries are doing to reach the unreached and then share hardship with those in need of attention, help as well as care and love, with disaster relief funds. Last Sunday we were visited by Bro. Maxwell Choongo of Kasaka on his Bible campaign outreach programme. We had a nice time, where we studied the Signs of the End of the Age from the book of Matthew ch. 24. This is indeed a good reminder to us all who labour in the Lord. We should not sit back and pretend everything will take care of itself or perhaps forget what the Bible says. We also had a good Bible study together. We need to cut across linguistic, social and religious barriers. God will actually bring rest to a weary world. So many thanks for the booklet, 'Did Jesus Christ Really Come Down From Heaven?' This is of great concern, especially around us. We are all concerned about so much poverty, drought and hunger. This drought situation and poverty levels have actually culminated into poor attendance at my pre-school, having gone down to five pupils this term against 22 which I had last term. With prayer and faith everything will be under God's control.

Bro. Wilfred Chilomba

NDOLA

I was happy to hear that you had two Sisters from Latvia visiting you. We should teach others the word of the living God because we are the salt of the earth, the representatives of God. We continue hoping for the things we have not seen, but walk by faith not by sight. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of Christ, not tribulation, distress, persecution or famine. I enclose a photo taken at the Fringilla bush camp last August, where we learnt a lot.

Bro. James Mwanza

So many thanks for the booklet, 'Did Jesus Christ Really Come Down From Heaven?' This is of great concern, especially around us. We are all concerned about so much poverty, drought and hunger. This drought situation and poverty levels have actually culminated into poor attendance at my pre-school, having gone down to five pupils this term against 22 which I had last term. With prayer and faith everything will be under God's control.

Bro. Wilfred Chilomba

SOLWEZI

Arriving at Changa Changa motel, I found Bro. Nelson Bwalya giving an exhortation and telling brothers and sisters to read the book of Revelation and he gave an example from Rev. 17:18 to support his exhortation. I am very happy that Bro. Nelson Bwalya visited Solwezi twice when he baptised on both occasions, making Solwezi move from isolation to a full-time ecclesia. We now number 11 – 10 Brothers and one Sister.

Bro. Joseph Kapimpa

BANKET

I was very happy to receive Brethren David Swain and John Butler from UK. After they had failed to meet any member of Banket ecclesia at the meeting place, due to lack of communications, they decided to come and see me at the farm and I was delighted to have them. Although time didn't allow us to discuss all matters at length, I took them to my garden to see it for themselves and they appreciated very much the work done. I am assisting brethren and sisters in our ecclesia to obtain vegetables for their daily use. The visitors were proceeding to my home in the rural area, at Zumba, about 64km west of Chinhoyi town, to see brethren and sisters in isolation, including my wife, Eneres, who spends much of her time there. When they arrived they agreed that a new ecclesia should be initiated because it is very far from Chinhoyi ecclesia. I am glad to report that a new ecclesia has now started and I am very much uplifted and strengthened by this; there are three brethren and two sisters, including my wife, who is transferring from Banket to the new Zumba ecclesia. One of the saddest aspects of human existence is the speed with which everything changes. The passage of time causes people, places, customs and joys to fade away. The memories linger for a while, but they, too, recede into the background and the glories of yesterday are soon forgotten. That is because they are all things of time; they come, they have their moment, then they go. That is the very nature of anything of the world, but when someone does the will of God, that person is doing something that is eternal.

If possible, kindly send me ten Shona *Bible Basics*. Some of my contacts are finding it difficult to read the English when doing our Bible studies, therefore it was suggested we use Shona instead of English.

Bro. David Yelulani



Photo: Part of Bro. Yelulani's garden

BEITBRIDGE

I am writing to tell you that I was recently transferred by my work from Kariba to Beitbridge, 288km away in isolation. I acknowledge receipt of *Bible Basics*. There have been several applications from Beitbridge for the 40 lessons which will be dealt with by Sis Janet Lovelock. It is amazing, and encouraging, that there are more Sisters accepting the truth in Eastern Europe. May God bless them. Where I am now living is reminiscent of Sodom, where I am very vexed amidst so many people in error and non-brethren. God willing, the seeds of truth will germinate, grow and produce fruit. Pass my love to the brothers and sisters meeting with you around the Lord's table.

Bro. Joshua Pakali

BULAWAYO

The Bible is the book of love and truth. In Revelation it tells us that the man is blessed who reads and hears. When we are "born again" the blindness in our lives is removed, but we must read the Bible each day; as spiritual Israel we must eat the spiritual manna each day on the way to the promised land. The world is full of adversity and many people are not Bible-based. In

Isaiah (45:6-7) God says He is the one who makes wellbeing and creates calamity. We hear of wars, famines and earthquakes; when Jesus was on earth he preached about these times which we are seeing and hearing of today. There are diseases from which many people are dying daily. Moses told the Israelites that if they did not follow God's ways He would bring disaster and diseases (Deut. 28:60). Then there is the question of peace in the Middle East, but it is like waiting for the bus that never arrives. Let us try to overcome the world. Thank you for your letter and the Bible. Pass my thanks to Bro. Duncan for a job well done in helping our Iranian brothers and sisters, this is true fellowship, and as we sing in our hymn, let us help each other on the road and each bear a brother's load. I was happy to see your letter published in our local paper, this shows that we are Jesus' workers in the vineyard; keep on doing it.

Bro. Dzingai Sumburera

CHEGUTU

You mentioned the book Duncan has produced regarding English and the Gospel of Mark. I would like to have a copy, if possible. Here things are not good; some are sleeping outside, others have been displaced from their work places, so life becomes very difficult, but God knows everything; He has an answer to everything that happens under the sun. Please do pray for us in our situation.

Bro. Farai Phiri

GUTU

Thank you very much for sending the Shona edition of *Bible Basics*; my students were very happy to receive them and are also requesting the Shona Bible for them to understand more fully their studies. I also request you to send more Shona *Bible Basics*.

Bro. Tarirai Nyandoro

HARARE

I would like to thank you for sending the book, '*How to Grow a Balanced Diet*'. I was on leave for the whole month of June visiting my wife and children, whom I only meet every six months, since I do not stay with them. My wife is the only Christadelphian at my home area, Nyanga, which is about 300km away. She receives *Gospel News* and *CIL Exhortations* from S. Africa. I thank God for His care when you had a couple of weeks in Eastern Europe. As members of one 'family' we should meet together to encourage one another, but since we are world-wide it is not easy to be together. However, we are together as we meet every Sunday, in reading the same Bible chapters and by receiving *Gospel News* and CIL literature. Brothers and sisters are well blessed by having *Gospel News*, the purpose of which is to encourage our hearts and to unite us in love so that we may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that we may know the mystery of God, namely Christ (Col. 2:2 and 5), "For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is". So this is an example for us when we try to inform each other of how we are preaching or doing at our different places.

Bro Israel Mutundwe

KARIBA

In prayer we find time to be alone with our loving God who promises to hear and answer us. Sometimes we receive more than we ask or even think is possible to receive. We must pray in humility, in honesty, in faith, in confidence, in Jesus' name and in accordance with God's will. God wants us to be persistent in prayer, but He also wants us to accompany prayer with action. In 1 Kings 3:10-13 king Solomon, in his prayer, asked for wisdom and God gave him more than what he asked for. 1 Chron. 16:11 tells us to be persistent in prayer. Prayer also involves

praising the Lord, thanksgiving, confession of sins etc. So we need to keep on praying and God is always there to hear and answer us. I am glad to announce the baptism of (now) Sister NAOMI MHONDIWA on Sept. 18th, 2005, as our first Sister in Kariba and we wish her every blessing on her journey to the Kingdom.

Bro. Witness Majecha

KAROI

Most people have heard of the Zimbabwean situation, where most people, including some of our brethren and sisters, have been displaced or affected. Well, these are just man-made disasters, but praise God that no gun sound has been heard. If possible, may you send me *Bible Basics* if you still have it in English and also the *Bible Reader's Calendar*.

Bro. Marison Tafirenyika

MAGUNJE

I applied to be a tutor and was welcomed, but told that I should teach the Bible lessons in Shona language. I would love to do this, because Shona is my mother language. Please pray for me that our Lord will lead me to handle this work well. My brothers, the time in which we are living is heading fast towards the end of earthly rulers and their kingdoms. Jesus gave us signs of his coming and those signs are surely happening everywhere. If we see or hear what is happening we could easily think it better to die than to live. But we, as the friends of our Lord Jesus, and as children of God, are looking at the sign of a nation – the nation of Israel. If we see and hear of all that is happening in the land of Israel we can easily understand that the Kingdom of God is at hand. So let us keep on praying, 'Our Father in heaven, let your Kingdom come and your will be done on earth'. Why do we make this prayer? Because we are the children of God; this world is not fit for us to live in, we must admit that we are aliens, strangers in it (read Hebrews ch. 11). We await that country which is coming with our Lord Jesus Christ ruling as King of Kings.

Bro. Zvenyika Magoronga

We did not get what we were expecting from the fields due to low rainfall. The book, 'How to Grow a Balanced Diet' is helping me very much. I did agriculture at school, but I get more advice from this book. I constructed my 20 x 50m garden and dug two wells inside, plenty of water (God is great!), so by now I am harvesting sugar beans and sweet potatoes. Another side I am planting bananas and sugar cane. I am sure by next year I will be harvesting and selling them, God willing. We await the coming of our Master to set up God's Kingdom on earth. We are told to look on things above and not on the earth. As we meet every Sunday we strengthen each other to stand firm on the word, as we live in a world of distress. Many thanks for the leaflets you send which help us to preach the good news of God. It was good to receive another letter from you with the information on how to keep goats. Yes, it is a good idea and for me it could be a good project when I start it, since I have a small family of three children and a plot of 5 hectares. At the time I am keeping poultry and those we call 'free range' chickens. I am just buying from around the area and then start to breed them. Goats are sure good meat. When my neighbour kills one and gives me a piece it is very good and the manure helps very much in the garden. Thanks for the news of Israel and of the Palestinians; without a radio you cannot hear such news.

Bro. Weston & Sis. Ruth Kamota

Thank you very much for the Bible reading calendars. I saw Duncan's photo when he was in Afghanistan. I felt very touched by the bravery involved in that mission. I know a Brother was

beheaded there by his own father-in-law for being a Christian and see Duncan among the same people who are fighting against the truth. Surely the God of Israel is doing wonders. I wish all of you success in your preaching efforts and my prayers will always accompany you. May the God of Abraham bless you all. I am writing this in Nov. ('05) and there is no sign of rain. We should be busy planting our crops, but the prevailing dry spell is forbidding this. (Since this letter we learn that many parts of Zimbabwe have had some rain and pray that the brethren and sisters will soon have sufficient food for their needs in 2006) Where this will take us is a mystery. We only feel secure in the power of prayer, hoping for the immediate return of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, our sanctuary. We simply need to live by faith. Some few centuries before the Christian era God gave the prophet Habakkuk a revelation that was later to provide the basis of the gospel, "But the righteous will live by his faith" (2:4). So accurately does this prophecy express the central theme of the Christian life that it is actually quoted about three times in the NT. Of these three passages, Habakkuk's prophecy is most fully expounded in Romans 1:17. We need to grasp the main theme which runs through the whole Epistle, "The righteous man will live by faith". Paul states the one basic requirement for experiencing the power of God for salvation (Rom. 1:16), "For I am not ashamed of the gospel OF CHRIST, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Human nature is often prone to the assumption that the mundane actions of daily life have no spiritual significance and offer no room for applying faith. On the contrary, it is only after we have successfully applied our faith in the simple material areas of this life that God will promote us to higher spiritual responsibilities. Jesus himself lays down this principle in Luke 16:10-11, "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you?" I therefore encourage brethren and sisters to examine how they can work out their faith in daily living, because it is only after we have made our faith work in the very little things that God will entrust to us greater responsibilities and the true, spiritual riches. Maranatha! Could you please send me some English *Bible Basics* and also some copies of *Introducing Bible Basics*. I happen to be helping some students here and I believe these will go a long way in helping me help them.

Bro. Thompson Changata

MASVINGO

I received *Gospel News* and all the literature. Here in Zimbabwe poverty, hunger and crime are increasing. It seems as if the Lord will come soon. I do hope and pray for my best friend to give up smoking and drinking. Please also pray that I may endure to the end with sound doctrine. If possible and God willing send me some more literature as this will keep me in touch with all the exhortations world wide. Here we are spreading the gospel to all the people regardless of tribe, nationalism etc. as Jesus instructed. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Bro. Simon Mudavose

RIMBI

Firstly, I give you my profound gratitude for what you did in sending me, 'Where There is No Doctor'. Brother, I have no full set of words to thank you for this book. As I opened the package, I took a breath and my eyes could not believe I had such a surprising present. Happiness remains in my family's eyes. The book is very helpful to anyone who reads and understands it. I pray for the authors of such books to remain with power in their research of the world's diseases, because health is life.

Bro. Moses Sithole

ZUMBA

Hope this finds you in the best of health as we wait for the coming of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. I am pleased to let you know that Zumba 7 is now an ecclesia with five brethren and two sisters. I would now like to thank you for the books you sent to me, '*Where There is No Doctor*', two *Bible Basics*, debate on the subject, '*Are The Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Spirit Possessed Today?*' These will help me to grow spiritually, especially in this sinful world. The Bible is the only book that can bring us closer to our Lord. Finally, i would like to thank you for sending me *Gospel News*, this is very important to me as it brings me closer to other brethren world wide.

Bro. Emmanuel Kondowe

ZVISHAVANE

I thank our Heavenly Father for the time He has given me to write to you after a long silence. Brothers, I am one of those here in Zvishavane who conducts baptisms and interviews, so I kindly ask if you can send me the booklet, '*Baptism Interviews: Model questions and answers*' or anything else you feel may assist.

Bro. Sibangani Maka

News from Europe / Eurasia

news from azerbaijan

We send our 'salaam' to all, and thank you for your prayers. We are still hoping to get our Canadian visas to help us leave here, it has been so long since we left Iran and life is so hard for us in this situation. Please keep praying.

Bro. B

news from belarus

We are delighted to announce the baptism of SASHA, and look forward to him attaining the Kingdom when the Lord returns.

BARANOVICHI

I continue trying with the people I write to in prison, some can only receive letters every few months. Yet I believe some of them are sincere and this maybe is my calling from God to write to these people. I am still in touch with Pavel, a very serious man who is in prison at Novosady. It is such a pleasure to write with him. I pray much for all your good work for the Lord.

Bro. Leonid

We are hoping to be able to go to the Bible School. I am studying *Beyond Bible Basics* and doing the questions there. We are all well here and send our greetings. We're concerned we may not be able to make the next Bible School, health, work and the children all make Winter travelling hard for us. But we are with you all.

Sis. Larisa

SENO

We are very happy to be able to call you 'brother', this is a new experience. Our home very much needs repairing, and we fear the coming of Winter. We are reading the Bible every day.

Bro. Sasha

STAI

I have had a huge catastrophe this year with Colorado beetles. They have destroyed my potatoes, which is what I am planning to live off this Winter. I was looking at them, and I admit I wondered why did God create Colorado beetles? This is very serious for me. I summon all my faith to endure this blow.

Bro. Ivan

TERESHKI

Here the Summer has been hot, but we have been blessed with good harvest, which we are now preserving so we can eat through the Winter. We recently held a small gathering of the brothers in Minsk which was very good. Every second Sunday of the month we are trying to gather in Minsk for the breaking of bread. These meetings really help on our lonely path to the Kingdom of God.

Bro. Vladimir

Please pray for my son as his blood pressure is so high. I try to talk to people here, but who will listen to an old woman like me? all are worried about money or their crops. I notice though that people do like to read religious literature these days, and I am trying to distribute as I can.

Sis. Anna

VITEBSK

I am always thinking of all the work being done to spread the Gospel and am praying for it. I see what you are doing as similar to what the apostle Paul did, with the same problems he met. I am interested in the chicken raising project and also am interested in raising rabbits for meat.

Bro. Ivan

VYAZMICH

I pray for all brothers and sisters for their health. For us we pray for health because we have no money to buy medicine and we also have to work all the time in the field for our food. Nobody here is responding at the moment to my preaching but I am hopeful they will.

Sis. Nina

news from belgium**LEUVEN**

I took note of the need for a Dutch *Bible Basics* and this interests me too. According to time and God's will I will try to start on it.

Bro. Markus

news from bosnia**SARAJEVO**

We have very sad news, in that the mother of our Brother Ivica died, and it is a very depressing

time for us all. The chickens raised in the project have been sold and now more chicks have been bought. Here in Sarajevo we really have problems, with no place to live and having to find money we don't have for things like food and college fees.. I worked in a coal mine for a bit but it was impossible. I have problems with almost everything! I am trying not to be discouraged and to remember that we are true soldiers for the Lord and will never quit.

Bro. D

news from croatia

ZAGREB

I'm translating the booklet 'Living With Alcoholism' and have done around 20 pages. At the same time I am doing, 'What is the Gospel'. My health is bad, but this is something I can do.

Sis. Anita



Photo: Sis Anita

news from england

Just Keep praying.

Many will recall our request for your prayers for our brother Ronnie van Eetveldt around the time of his major brain tumour operations in New York around 6 to 7 years ago. Those operations held the tumours at bay but in the process Ronnie lost his speech and taste. You can imagine the problems this caused in his work as an international lorry driver.

About a month ago, over a single weekend, his speech suddenly and completely returned. His doctors in New York and Belgium are amazed and are listening when Ronnie tells them about his faith and the prayers which have helped to bring about his recovery.

Ronnie and all of us in the South Lakes (England) ecclesia thank God for this wonderful answer to the prayers of brothers and sisters around the world.

Bro John O. Halstead

news from georgia

SUKHUMI

I feel so helpless to help those brothers I read about who are so persecuted, but I truly pray for them. I had been preaching to some people here, but they then emigrated, so again I am left with no fruit from my work.

Bro. Guram

TBILISI

My wife and I and some others would love to come to the Bible School but it is very far for us to travel, and also we have to travel through some unstable territory to get to Ukraine, unless we fly, which is expensive. We have two friends here interested, although they don't yet want to be baptized.

Bro. Agakhi

news from iran

To communicate is hard for me, especially also the problem of English. We here want you to know we pray for you and ask you to pray for us as we try to live Christian lives here and tell others of Jesus.

Bro. E

We were so happy recently to see some pictures of Sis Cindy and Bro Duncan, we treasure these very much and love you all although we have never met most of you.

Bro. K

news from iraq

I am still keeping my being baptized secret from my family and some friends. But whenever I contact any people from outside I am telling them my happy feelings. Please if there is any job, or translation work just let me know. God bless you my big brothers.

Bro. S

Note: We were very impressed at being approached by an American news reporter who had met our Brother. He had told her he is a Christadelphian, and she was interested in making a documentary about Christadelphians in Iraq.

news from israel

BAT YAM

I am hoping to be able to make another visit to Ukraine where there are some people in the Crimea very interested in the true Gospel. All here send their greetings as we wait for Messiah's coming.

Bro. Vladimir

news from italy

ROME

It is so hard for a refugee here to find work, although I pray every day for it. I have a chance to get a job with one man. I pray for it. Sis. Asmait is well here and sends greetings.

Bro. Naizghi

news from jordan

IRBIL

My prayers are with you all in the year 2006, that it will see the return of Jesus.

Bro. Bassam

news from kazakhstan

KAZAN

I am grateful that the Lord preserved me from my accident, I am strong and well by His love. It was a very happy day for us recently when we baptized Lidija, she was so eager for baptism eventually, after very much study with you.

Sis. Ludmila

Recently we were visited by brothers from England and there was a meeting held here at a hotel. We greatly missed the presence of Brother Duncan and look forward to being with him at the Winter Bible School.

Bro. Viktor

KOKSHETAU

My daughter is still in Germany. I miss her very much, but it is impossible to see each other now; also I do not see the grandchildren. I value so much the daily Bible reading, it is my great joy and what connects us.

Sis. Svetlana B

We so much value the Bible Schools, especially for me meeting sisters I met previously. Brother Sergej is growing up now and he is leading our ecclesia as we are sisters, he has got his first job on a building site. We are trying hard, so that all the great effort to establish our ecclesia here will not be in vain. We admire the great missionary work being done in other areas and we deeply respect it. We are trying to develop more singing and music in our meetings. All here send their greetings

Sis. Elvira

I am so sorry for my rare letters, but we don't forget you! All is well with us although we have to work so hard and so long. Just know that we are together in the Lord.

Sis. Tanya

news from kyrgyzstan

ISSYK-ATINSK

Along with brother Ramid we are continuing to study the Bible and to try to teach others. We have a sore need for more *Bible Basics* to give to people. I am studying to be an electrician and I so hope to one day have a more stable life.

Bro. Anvar

I send greetings to all brothers and sisters in Christ. Here we are preaching, but some people truly think we are crazy because of our teachings, I think they sincerely believe we are crazy.

When people refuse interest, I can tell them that I was once like them, and I try to work on them always.

Bro. Ramid

news from latvia

We are delighted to announce the baptisms during the last six months of ASTRIDA, ERIK, VASILY and SIGITAS IRINA, ANDREJ, ALEKSANDR, LENA and LILIJA, the latter as a result of our Speaking About Jesus English language courses..

AIZKRAUKLE

I am holding on here. I speak with my son about the Bible. Thank you for the light brought into my life by the true knowledge of God.

Sis. Irena

DAUGAVPILS

Things are hard for me and I am in need of some warm clothing here as we face Winter. I read the Bible a lot as I have much time, and am trying to speak with the people around me about it, but they are distracted by other things.

Bro. Erik

Note: Clothing is being provided.

I really enjoy *Gospel News*, it's a great magazine, please keep it up. I am truly encouraged every time I receive it.

Bro. Petr

Here in the prison I am having a hard time. I never get to breathe fresh air and my legs hurt continually. I am in a cell with two other men, it is very small, but we are able to talk a lot about the Bible and God. Please pray for me.

Bro. Eriks

I am so grateful for the clothes sent me, it's really a big help. We are in need of about everything. Even soap we don't have. We are with you in our prayers. I am so glad to have my very own Bible from you for the first time in my life.

Bro. Andrej

ENGURE

I am praying for you in all your work of teaching the Bible, it is hard for me at my age in this village to do much but I am with you sincerely.

Sis Zina

JURMALA

I am praying for brother Hussein and others persecuted. I am grateful for the help given to me especially warm clothes. I send greetings, especially to Bror Marcus. I am still teaching some people here about the truth and I am grateful for the copies of *Bible Basics* which I received for this purpose. My prayers are with all those affected by the recent terrorist acts and other catastrophes.

Bro Mikhail

MADONA

I have been so busy in working in the fields harvesting our crop for the Winter and also looking after grandchildren. Now we await Winter, when I have more free time, and am able to read the Bible absolutely each day without fail using the *Companion*.

Sis. Sarmite

SIGULDA

I am so grateful for the clothes sent to me, the jumpers and boots, without them I do not know how I would be able to look forward to this Winter coming. I am very much with you all. Here in our village it is as if people are so primitive, only thinking of themselves, and I find it hard to do as Jesus said and to always turn the other cheek.

Sis Gunta

TALSI

I am always so happy to attend the breaking of bread in Tukums. I think about what we hear for the rest of the week, and re-read the notes that are taken.

Bro. Vladimir

TUKUMS

Please pray for me, as yet again I fell, this time whilst trying to board a bus, and again I broke something. I have a small job cleaning, but the pay is very low.

Sis. Vaira

I feel such great gratitude for all you have done for me, and also to all sisters who are buying the scarves we are trying to make. I don't know where our family would be without your help, we can only pay back by trying to be faithful to Christ in all ways.

Sis Anita

VILANI

Things for us here aren't good because of the way people are getting poorer whilst others become very wealthy. Our only hope is for the coming of Jesus Christ! I have been reading according to the *Companion* from both Chronicles and the gospel of John, the two hardest parts of the Bible for me come at one and the same time of the year. Even Revelation I think I understand better. I pray for the new brothers in the Philippines. I read some news about that country and I am pleased to know there are brothers there too.

Bro Fyodyor

ZVARE

I very much enjoyed the Bible School. Even after hearing the first talks, my blood pressure reduced. I am very grateful for everything.

Sis Vaira

news from lithuania**KAUNAS**

I am very happy to be in touch with you all again. I have had a very difficult time from losing my job and only now am I settled again. I send love to you all.

Bro. Saulius

VILNIUS

Everything is now fine with me, and I look forward to breaking bread with you when possible. I appreciate any literature in Russian.

Sis Ludmila

news from macedonia

I am thinking how to advertise *Bible Basics* on some chat groups. I strongly believe there must be unity amongst us and all the Christadelphians must break bread with each other.

Bro Dragan

news from moldova

KISHINEV

I still am working and surviving, for which I thank God. I try to understand that there is more good in life than bad, for we who are believers.

Sis Elvira

news from norway

I now have a job, working as cashier in a shop! We are hoping to come to Latvia and some time I would love to come to a Bible School and meet the Latvian Christadelphians. I`m fine here. Linda is now in the kindergarten. She likes it very much there. I`m not ready to break bread online, because I`m not so clever with computer - maybe one day. God bless you all.

Sis Helena

news from pakistan

SAHIWAL

We are starting to train another 15 young people in our Bible Basics Sunday School and we ask for prayers.

Sis. Safina

news from poland

POZNAN

I am hoping to be able to come to the Bible School in Ukraine. This is a great opportunity and I so appreciate it.

Bro. Valentin

WALBRZYCH

My greetings to all brothers and sisters recently baptized. I got some New Testaments from Gideons, I am giving them to people and try to make small advertisments for *Bible Basics*.

Bro. Krzysztof

news from russia

We are delighted to announce the baptisms of LIDIJA (Kazan) and TATYANA in her old age and pray that they will endure to the end and enter the Kingdom with us.

ARMAVIR

Things are difficult for me as I am left alone now my husband has left me, I ask for your prayers. I admire your bravery in going to dangerous lands to spread the gospel to Moslems! I try also to be brave in my situation, also trusting in God. We often think of all the trouble Brother Duncan went to for Vitaly's baptism, and despite all problems and the evil situation we are surrounded with here, we think with joy of the things of the Kingdom and thank you for the hope you have given us. We continue breaking bread together.

Sis. Galina and Bro. Vitaly

CHELYABINSK

I think that we all are brothers & sisters and must love each other. Only God knows who is better and who is worse. God bless.

Sis. Elena

EFREMOV

Here I am rather depressed as things are not good for us in our little group here, and despite all my efforts, people still do not want to respond and be baptized. I find the letters I get from old Sister Ludmila all the time a great encouragement, she keeps me going.

Bro. Oleg

IZHEVSK

Sorry for not being in touch. I want to ask you to please pray for my wife as she is seriously ill and it makes our spirit at home very sober. May God bless and help us all.

Bro. Andrej

JOSHKAR-OLA

My children and I went to the Bible School of CBM in Moscow, the atmosphere was different to before, and we wished the baptisms had been performed openly rather than privately. However, for all things we give thanks.

Sis Lena

KAZAN

Here we are all well and continue to meet at Sis. Ludmila's home. We have some small land outside of the city and we have been harvesting our crops; I feel guilty at times how much time I spend on such things when there is always the Bible to be read.

Bro. Andrej

I am very fearful I cannot attend the Winter Bible School because my health isn't good. I have contact with the sisters from Kazakhstan still and try to give all advice I can from this distance. I am still so happy I was able to baptize Lidija here recently, I feel God is still using me. Bro. Igor Prozorov recently called me from Moscow, it was lovely to be remembered by him.

Sis Ludmila

I am so grateful to Sister Ludmila here who did so much for me spiritually, may God bless her with long life. I am grateful to you, too, for opening up to me so much, now I feel I know Jesus.

For example, I understand now how He didn't exist from the beginning as a person physically, but was truly the Son of God and son of Mary. In short I am so happy!

Sis Lidia

I still remember with such joy our meeting in Krutushka for the Bible School, it was my joy to help arrange this. My prayers are with those newly baptized people in Asia.

Bro. Viktor

Several from here are going to the Winter Bible School, but after my accident I feel unsure of myself to make such a long journey to Ukraine so, sadly, I won't be able to come, although I am so strongly with you all. I am working at persuading one woman here to be baptized.

Sis. Ludmila K

I am sorry for such a long silence. Life has not been easy and I've not been reading the Bible as much as I ought to. However, I am resolving to make a special effort to attend the Winter Bible School!

Sis. Ludmila F

KHANTY-MANSIJSK

We are very happy to say that our young daughter has started reading the Bible. Because we are so isolated here, the cost of everything is so high because of all the transport required. It is very hard for us to survive. Please pray for us.

Bro Sergej

KORKINO

We made a visit to brothers and contacts in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. It was very wonderful journey for us and we thank God! I have got a new job. I am struggling to understand Amos 9:7, it's not at all clear to me and I am trying by all means to understand!

Bro Alexei

KRASNODAR

We have a desperate situation as my wife needs to have an operation, she has had all scans and reports from the doctor, but they ask so much money to make the operation. The local brothers to us here are poor and we meet together and just pray for her.

Bro Dmitry

KRUTAYA

I was disappointed at a recent Bible School to see people not allowed to be baptized because it was said they did not know enough: I have been worrying about this since returning home. Here in our region it is now not allowed to publish advertisements for *Bible Basics*. My husband and daughter are now working in St Petersburg, so I am preparing for the Winter alone with Anna. I am thinking much about Paul's words in 2 Corinthians, that with God there is not 'yes and no', but in Him is the Amen, the 'yes'. He is so positive, and amidst all problems we are facing here I am determined to live by those verses and be positive.

Sis Tanya

PYSHMA

I love you all, and wish you all God's blessing in all aspects of life.

Bro. Viktor

ROSTOV Obl

We have some replies from here and we are grateful that you are sending them *Bible Basics*. I

have been discussing with Adventists here about the Sabbath issue and trying to persuade them of the truth.

Bro. Andrej

RZHEV

I am pleased to inform you of more who want to study the Bible lessons here. It was encouraging to read of the first baptism in Iraq. I feel very limited in what I can do here because of total lack of funds. I really enjoyed going to Moscow and breaking bread with the brothers there. I have a neighbour, an old woman, who is studying *Bible Basics* with me, and also I am sending it to my relatives who live far from me.

Bro Aleksandra

St. PETERSBURG

I am reading and re-reading some of the old exhortations for the breaking of bread, they seem so relevant to me. Things here are going from bad to worse, corruption is everywhere and there is a spirit of evil it seems wherever one looks, and true Christianity is very hard to live here. I recently had a letter from Sis Ludmila from Kazan, it was such a pleasure. She has been a great encouragement to me since I first met her at a Bible School some years ago. She is a wonderful sister and it is encouraging for me to see that even now in her old age she still cares for us all and loves the Truth.

Bro Valeriji

SARATOV

I was so happy to see my grandson, who is also my brother, getting married to a sister in Christ. We as a family are so grateful for all the things you did for us. I read by the *Companion* each day, but I worry that I forget so much, even by the next day.

Sis Raisa

SHAKHTY

I have been wondering what 2 Pet. 3:9 means, about God waiting with patience for all to repent. One almost wishes He would not be so patient, so Jesus would return sooner. The verse confuses me. Tanya and I hope to come to the Bible School, and are so happy to have this chance!

Bro Andreji

SHCHYOKINO

I am having big problems with letters not getting through to me. I want to inform you all that I pray for all of you whom I know, I love you all. I break bread each week and read the same chapters you do from the *Companion* each day, I am with you all. Please pray for me as I fear each Winter whether I will survive because of my weak health. I am very worried about my elderly sister Sofia, she came to see me in May, and then she departed for Ukraine to her home and since then I have not heard from her. Travel is so hard at our age. As she is not educated and naive I worry that something bad may have happened to her. I pray for her, for you all, and desperately hope in the return of Jesus before I have to die.

Bro Boris

STAVROPOLSKIJ KRAJ

At last I think that God may have given me someone with whom to share my faith. I have found an old lady near here, to whom I can talk about the word of God. I bought her a Bible from a drunkard, who would sell anything he could for money to drink. I gave her the Bible and together

we read through the book of Ruth. I am very hopeful that she may come to be baptized.

Sis Ludmila

TOMSK

I now have some free time and am happy to continue working on the website.

Bro Rinat

TULSKAYA Obl

My dream is always to be able to get to the Bible Schools because, for me, my faith is my life, it is all I have. I am so very grateful that you lovingly remember me and bother to write to me.

Sis. Ekaterina

TVER

My neighbour in our block has read *Bible Basics* and is corresponding with Brother Duncan, but she is very old and her family are against her studying with us. I pray for her and am hoping to come to the Bible School.

Bro Sasha

TYMSK

We here are all very much looking forward to the next visit. We are preparing now for the Winter. When the river freezes, and vehicles can drive over it, we are more connected to the rest of the world. We pray for you all. We were so blessed this Summer with a great harvest of potatoes. Which we are storing. The snow has already come, and we pray God keeps all the family healthy through the Winter. I am preaching by letter to a distant relative of ours in Germany. *Bro Ivan*

UST KATAV

I know I have not written for a long time and I feel guilty for this! We love you all very much, and I give greetings from us here, Antonina, Vitaly and Dimitry. Please pray for us, we have some difficult problems. I have focused upon Isaiah 40:31, which says that in the Kingdom of God we will rise up with wings as eagles, above all the present sadness we now experience.

Sis Elena

YELETS

We were really pleased here to learn about the new baptisms in Latvia, may God bless you there in the work going on. We are well here by God's grace. We are so looking forward to coming to the Bible School, it is such a joy for us each year, thank you!

Sis Nina

I am sorry, but for me it is impossible now to go anywhere because of my wife's severe disease; she suffered cerebral thrombosis (a stroke) a few months ago, so that for the time being she must stay home and be served by somebody. So I wish for the Bible school to go with the blessing of God.

Bro Sasha

news from serbia

SUBOTICA

Sometimes I feel so happy, knowing I have my wife, a Sister, and the children reading the Bible, I feel this is my real ecclesia, my church in my home. I thank God. I am distributing the Hungarian and Serbian *What is the Gospel?* with encouragement to people to write to your address for

more books.

Bro William

news from spain

Thanks for everything. Thanks for your prayers and love. I feel that I have some friends who can listen to me despite our limitations, which I very well understand. God be with you all.

Sis Gela

news from sweden

I am here in Sweden, although it is hard for Bosnian people here to find work and survive. Please pray for me.

Bro. Renato [ex-Bosnia]

news from turkey

Please keep up the prayers and pressure on UNHCR for our Brother Mojtaba, his situation is serious and there is still no positive response for him. Other Iranian Brothers are in bad situation. And may have to flee to northern Iraq. Brother H is now in Greece, he has lawyer to try to help him. Our Sunday meetings here are going very well. Many are coming and want to know truth. However, one of our Sisters has had problems from the police and she got very scared.

Bro Hussain

IZMIR

I feel the strong responsibility to preach and also to baptize people, to fulfil the great command of Jesus. I feel it as to me personally.

Bro Fabian

news from turkmenistan

Hope everything is fine with you. I always pray for you all and know that we are always in your prayers and thoughts. There are problems with internet again here so I am not able to write often. Everything is well with me, but my mother is still sick. I have news: our sister Bilbil got married on 1st of December. Hope to see her very soon. Our tradition does not allow meeting with her and during 20 days her face should be covered. We so much miss her.. Few hours a week I work at school. I do my hand-made works alone without my mother and sister now. But I plan to make new products and I draw some new designs of them. I also continue my reading and translating *Bible Basics*. So you see how busy I am. God Bless, I am so happy that we are baptised into Christ. Things are not easy because of the situation here. I am glad the camels we make are in Christadelphian homes! Thank you! I am sending more translation of *Bible Basics* in Turkmen.

Sis G

news from ukraine

KAHOVKA

We are meeting regularly here. We have a few people interested. We are all Sisters and Bro Nikolaj is the only brother and he does the breaking of bread with us every week. We are hoping to come to the Bible School! Thank you for such possibility!

Sis. Nana

POLTAVA

I am writing this having just returned from the hospital. My only prayer is that Jesus will return soon, I strongly pray for this, although, according to God's will. I am looking forward to meeting at the Bible School.

Bro Vladimir

news from uzbekistan

TASHKENT

I was amazed to learn about the great hurricanes in America. I am wondering what this means from God, whether surely it is the end time, or whether this is a judgment from God? Here things are very hard for me. I recently had a visit from Bro and Sis Stoyanov from Korkino in Russia. As I have no telephone it wasn't possible for them to tell me in advance, so it was a very great surprise for me!

Bro. Oleg

The situation for us here is really desperate. My son can't find work, and we get just a few dollars per month in pension, it is hard even to eat, let alone to heat ourselves for the Winter. Please be praying for us, we sincerely ask.

Sis Tamara

News from the Americas

news from colombia

CALI

May the grace of God always be with you all. I find your writings very good and would really appreciate to receive them as a CD for reference.

Bro. Luis Martin Chirveches

News from Asia

news from indonesia

Here we are all well and send greetings and much appreciation for everything. I hope to send translation of the next chapter of *Bible Basics* soon.

Bro. Anthony

Thank you for all your support. Translation is going well with the book. I am trying to reach others to get them interested.

Bro. Harley

Note: Translation of Bible Basics into Indonesian is progressing well, and can be viewed at <http://www.carelinks.net/Indonesian.html> . Our brethren are making a huge effort with translation; may God bless their zeal.

news from malaysia

Whilst in Asia a couple of weeks ago for work I was able to call on two people recently visited and baptised by Bro. Duncan. A third contact I was unable to visit due to logistics. Bro. Mariappan lives with his family in Malaysia. He does not have good mobility, and is effectively housebound and dependant on his family. Since 1998 he has been operating his own website with its main thrust being to point out the errors of the Catholic Church - by God's Grace he came across *Bible Basics* online and he followed through the steps to baptism. I spent several hours with him and we broke bread. Sister Ratanapan is a 2nd year student Nurse in Thailand. I managed to spend two hours with her over lunch by a Buddhist temple and was really impressed with her desire to grow in the spirit of God (closer to Him) and in Truth. It really is a wonderful thing that, despite the weight of a foreign culture, history and often difficult circumstances, the simple Power of the Truth is still able to impact individuals in this way and bind us together.

Bro. Sam Bradley (Australia)

news from nepal

We are delighted to announce the baptisms of HARI, SHARMA and another contact JEROME. They are all living in other lands as a result of problems in their home areas and need our prayers.

Brothers and Sisters to Love One Another

The letter Paul wrote to the Thessalonians was both touching and educative. He mentioned that brothers and sisters at Thessalonica loved each other in their daily lives. It was crucial for them to have this affinity for, being only a few chosen brethren and sisters, people had to learn the Christian type of life from them. In verse 3 of 2 Thessalonians 1, Paul mentioned that their love had increased greatly, and thus work went on easily with their one love. Despite this love, they had troubles one way or another. The ruling authorities of the time abhorred the gospel and the

power of God was needed. Persecution and troubles prevailed but the brothers and sisters at Thessalonica persevered (v 4).

It is God who shall pay back trouble to those who gave, and still give, troubles to His children, the believers. These troubles will be relieved when the Son of Man comes. Paul went on teaching them to keep on praying. Some of them had questions as to when the Son of Man was coming. Paul taught them to keep praying tirelessly for his coming, even though the day is unknown. Jesus gave us signs to remind us when he will come. People who do not listen to the truth, perish. We can be saved by listening to the truth. What then is the truth? There is life in Jesus Christ: Jesus is the truth (Romans 5:17; 1 John 5:12; John 3:16, 14:6).

Finally, Paul finished his letter by giving thanks and praise to the brothers and sisters of Thessalonica, who listened to his gospel and spread it throughout the surrounding area. 2 Thessalonians 2:15 encourages them to stand firm in support of the good news they had received. We look forward to receiving eternal encouragement and good hope from Jesus Christ our Lord and God the Father.

Bre Chakumanda and E Akwaa Kondowe (Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe)

Why Did Elisha Ask for Two Parts of Elijah's Spirit?

Just before Elijah finished his assignment as a prophet in Israel, the younger prophet, Elisha, requested from him, "Please that two parts of your spirit may come to me" (2 Kings 2:9). Spiritually speaking, Elisha was surely claiming a double portion, such as that given to a firstborn son (Deut. 21:17). A brief consideration of the account will make this clear and will help us to draw lessons from what happened.

In harmony with God's direction, the prophet Elijah had anointed Elisha as his successor (1 Kings 19:19-21). For some six years Elisha served as Elijah's faithful cup-bearer and was determined to do this to the end. Even on Elijah's last day as prophet in Israel Elisha stuck to his mentor. Although Elijah urged Elisha to stop following him, the young prophet stated three times, "I will not leave you" (2 Kings 2:2,4,6; also 2 Kings 3:11), indeed, Elisha viewed the older prophet as his spiritual father (2 Kings 2:12).

However, Elisha was not the only spiritual son of Elijah. Elijah and Elisha associated with a group of men known as "the sons of the prophets" (2 Kings 2:3). The account in 2nd Kings indicates that these "sons" felt a close bond with their spiritual father, Elijah (2 Kings 3:5,7,15-17). Yet, as anointed successor, Elisha was the foremost among Elijah's spiritual "sons", he was like the firstborn.

In ancient Israel, a literal firstborn son received two parts of his father's inheritance, whereas the other sons each received one part, hence Elisha asked for two parts of Elijah's spiritual inheritance.

Why did Elisha make this request at that particular time? Because he was about to take on a weighty task – that of succeeding Elijah as prophet in Israel. Elisha realised that, in order to fulfill the responsibilities related to this daunting assignment, he needed spiritual power far beyond

his own capabilities, power that only God could provide. He needed to be fearless as Elijah had been (2 Kings 1:3,4,15-16). Thus he asked for two parts of Elijah's spirit, a spirit of courage and of being "absolutely jealous for God". (1 Kings 19:10). How did Elijah respond?

Elijah knew that Elisha had asked for something that was not his, but only God's, to give, so Elijah replied, "You have asked a difficult thing. If you see me when taken from you it will happen to you that way" (2 Kings 2:10) and, indeed, God allowed Elisha to see Elijah ascend in a whirlwind. Elisha's request was granted – God provided him with the spirit he needed to take on his new task and to face coming trials.

At times, we may feel overwhelmed and inadequate in the face of a new assignment, or may be losing some of our courage to continue our Kingdom preaching work, as we face increasing indifference or opposition in our area, yet if we ask, beg, God for His support, He will give us the courage and strength we need to cope with challenges and changing circumstances (Luke 11:13; 2 Cor. 4:7; Phil. 4:13).

Bro. John Kasanda (Kazembe, Zambia)

Biblical Recommendations to Consider

What place does God occupy in our lives? Ecc 12:13 says, "Fear the true God and keep his commandment, for this is the whole obligation of man."

We have to ask ourselves: Does my life show that? Do I see things that way? Does obedience to God's commandments determine how I care for responsibilities at home, at work, or at school? Or do other interests or the pressures of life determine whether I set aside time for God?

What connection with God do we have? "Trust in God with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight" (Pro 3:5,6). It is the Lord your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service (Matt 4:10).

We must ask ourselves: Is that the way we feel about God? Do our everyday activities, as well as the way we deal with crises, demonstrate such trust and devotion?

How important to us is reading and studying the Bible? This means everlasting life, the taking in of knowledge of the only true God and of the one whom he sent forth, Jesus Christ (John 17:3).

We should ask ourselves: Does the place that we give to reading God's word and thinking deeply on it show that we really believe?

How important to us is attendance at our meetings? "Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works: not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together... and all the more as you behold the day drawing near" (Heb 10:24,25). "I rejoiced when they were saying to me: To the house of Jehovah let us go" (Psalm 122:1).

We have to ask ourselves: Does the pattern of our lives show appreciation of the direction found in God's word? During the past month, did we skip any Christian meetings because we let something crowd them out?

Do we have some zealous share in talking to others about God and His coming kingdom? "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness ... and then the end will come" (Matt 24:14). "Go therefore and make disciples of peoples of all the nations, ... teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19,20). "Sing to the Lord and bless his name. From day to day tell the good news of salvation by him" (Psalm 96:2).

We have to ask ourselves: Do these activities really have the place in our lives they deserve? Does our share in them reflect conviction on our part as to the seriousness of the times in which we live?

Bro Atabong Martin (Muyuka, Cameroon)

The Champion's Reward

The book of Revelation has several verses which reveal what will happen to the one who overcomes in this life. Now for someone to overcome, there must be something he has to fight.

In 1 John 5:4 we read: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith". Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, at the end of his ministry had the following to say: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

From these words then, we see that the believer's life of faith is in opposition to the world. This means that if someone befriends the world, he automatically declares himself to be an enemy of God. Having established this, a believer is in a war of 'no compromise with the world'. Jesus makes some promises in Rev 3:5: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels".

In this verse alone there are three promises:

1. To be clothed in white raiment
2. Name not to be blotted out of the book of life
3. Confession of his name before God and His angels.

There are still more promises of rewards in Rev 2:11,26: "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death"; "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations". Let us give the overcomer another name. 'The Champion of Faith'. All the rewards listed above are awaiting him. Let us be one of these 'Champions'

Bro Sylvester Tembo (Mzuzu, Malawi)

My Brother Abedi

Last month, we featured the plight of Bro. Abedi and his family in a refugee camp in Benin, West Africa. We are pleased to report that, thanks to the faithful efforts of the household of faith, along with God's blessing, our brother is now in a far safer situation.

Introduction

I came to know of Abedi and his circumstances through Bro Duncan Heaster as we were discussing the plight of a brother in Pakistan who was being persecuted because of his association with Christianity. We were looking for a country that would accept him as a refugee from religious persecution when the name of Guyana came up. However the circumstances of the brother changed and we were about to shelve the thought when Bro Duncan informed me of another brother in a United Nations Refugee Camp in Benin who might be better off in Guyana if he could be admitted to that country, since he and his family were in truly desperate straits, but no Western country would admit them. Bro Duncan gave me the e-mail address of the brother and that of a Siser in France who is in regular contact with the brother.

Making Contact

I contacted the sister in France for some background information on Abedi and to see if any of this was really feasible. I was soon moved by her tremendous care, concern and solicitude for this brother and his family. Her unselfish love and devotion over the months that followed truly exemplified what it is to be a member of the household of faith, and that we are indeed our brother's keeper. Bro Abedi hails from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Because of political persecution he fled that country and has been a ward of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees for a number of years. Initially he was in a refugee camp in Tanzania, which is where he came into contact with Christadelphians and learned about our faith. The UNHCR then moved some Congolese refugees, including Abedi, his wife and their five children, to Benin, a small French-speaking country in West Africa, in the hope that, as French speakers, they would be able to adapt easily and become self-supporting. In fact, however, Benin is a small, very close and inter-related society, where these newcomers were resented and Brother Abedi and others were violently attacked. He tried to improve his circumstances by fleeing to Ghana where the brotherhood gave him help to settle, but he and his family were soon deported back to Benin. It was there I that I asked him if instead of trying to go to Canada, which until then had seemed the only other possibility, he would be predisposed to go to Guyana. He replied: "Bro Clive, given our circumstances and condition here in Benin, I would gladly go anywhere to alleviate the suffering of my family." I did mention at that time that this might be an exercise in futility and that nothing was certain, but if it is the will of our Heavenly Father to be gracious unto us we will prevail.

Plan of Action

The strategy we employed was for Abedi to see if he could obtain travel documents from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and at the same time I would go to explore from my end in New York the requirements for obtaining visas to travel to Guyana. Sister Sonia, in France, was prepared to assist Bro Abedi in the application process, thanks to her experience with visa-seekers of various types. It is very difficult to enter Guyana legally, but once inside the country conditions can be very favourable. The problem was to convince the Ministry of Home Affairs to issue visas to this family. Being a former Police Officer in Guyana I was quite familiar with the process, but this certainly would have been a most unusual application.

The process begins

UNHCR began processing the application and in a matter of a few weeks I received an e-mail from Abedi who could not contain his excitement. "We have received our travel documents!" he exclaimed. Meanwhile my investigation from New York revealed that applications for visas to Guyana must be done in triplicate and forwarded to the Consulate with the required fees. I sent the visa applications to Abedi for him to complete and to return them along with the travel documents for the entire family that he had by this time received.

Logistics

While we were occupied with the travel documents and the visa application dear Sis Sonia was working on the logistics. She had determined that if everything went according to plan we would have to devise a suitable route for the family to travel to Guyana. This was the most difficult and time-consuming part of the entire process, since almost none of the industrialized countries were willing to issue transit visas.

The Brethren in Guyana

Sis Lorraine Mitchell of Guyana and my wife Daphne are more than sisters in Christ to each other, they are friends and confidants who truly enjoy being in each other's company; for me, I call her my 'Buddy'. She was the first person to whom I broached the subject of this family travelling to Guyana and she loved the idea. In fact, while Lorraine was in the UK earlier on, she and Sonia had been introduced to each other by telephone, by Sis Jo Cottrell, French Sunday-School teacher to Abedi's children, Lorraine encouraged me to contact Bro Ted and Sis Delores Sleeper and put the idea to them. This I knew had to be done but I was wondering if it was not a little too early to widely inform brethren of the plan, not being certain that the process would ever get off the ground. I opted on the side of caution and followed the advice of my 'Buddy' and informed Brother Ted of the plans for this family. True to his word Bro Ted and his lovely wife Sis Delores travelled to Guyana, galvanised the brethren, and set a plan in motion that involved a house for the family to stay and funds set aside for the purchase of furniture and their upkeep for a year. I was so impressed with Bro Ted's enthusiasm. We had the prayers of of the many brethren and sisters who by this time were aware of our efforts to help this family.

A visit to the Guyana Embassy

Having received the completed application from Bro Abedi, along with the travel documents for the entire family, I made my way to Manhattan, New York to file these applications. The costs for filing these documents were very expensive, I even had to pay for the postage of the documents to Guyana via DHL, but this was tolerable because I had a very good discussion with the Consul General about the Hope of Israel. He was so taken with the Scriptures that he advised me regarding the application that was before him. This I thought was none other than the hand of God in this matter and further strengthened my resolve. I left him a copy of Bible Basics that I had in my possession and said a silent prayer as I exited the building.

Application submitted

That was the text of the e-mail that I forwarded to Abedi, Sonia, Lori, Ted and Duncan who had us on his prayer list for some time. Abedi was the happiest person on earth. It was during this time that I received the most loving e-mail from Abedi that his wife, and my new sister in Christ, had accepted the Truth and was baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ. I guess if he never left Benin, that alone was most consoling to him.

The Big Wait

Meanwhile Sis Sonia was having her hands full in working out the travel route. Benin to Guyana

via London was out, the British Immigration was not issuing transit visas, neither was United States and Canada. We tried Benin to Guyana via French Guyana and Suriname but soon ran into difficulties. We finally settled for Benin to Paris, Paris to St. Maarten in the Caribbean, St. Maarten to Antigua, overnight in Antigua, and the following morning we would leave for Guyana via Barbados. Abedi was to obtain the necessary visas for Paris and St. Maarten in Benin with the assistance of Sister Sonia. I would contact the Antigua and Barbuda Embassy regarding the in-transit restrictions on travel.

The hand of Providence

Well, the allotted time for the visas from Guyana had passed and all calls to the Embassy were met with concern from the person who helped me to process the initial application, he promised as soon as any information was available he would inform me. My contact in the Guyana Police Force informed me that they had processed the request and returned the application with favourable comments to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Meanwhile Sis Lorraine Mitchell, who knows a former brother in Christ whose brother is in the Ministry of Home Affairs, began making some telephone calls to contact this brother, who as it turned out was not in Guyana, but on assignment in New York.

A Dinner conversation

My contact at the Guyana Embassy was having dinner with an official from Guyana and he was expressing concern about our application to this individual. The gist of this conversation was that a group calling themselves Christadelphians had made an application on behalf of some of their brethren in Benin, Africa, to travel to Guyana and until now the Ministry had been dragging their feet with the applications. The visitor replied, "I AM A CHRISTADELPHIAN AND THEY ARE GOOD PEOPLE." As providence would have it the same person that Sister Lorraine was trying to phone in Guyana was a guest in the home of my contact from the Embassy in New York. The guest promised to look into the matter on his return to Guyana. True to his word, he called Sister Lorraine who was only too joyful to hear from him. He asked her about these people before she had a chance to tell him and it was affirmed by our sister, the end result, without divulging too many details, was a call I received from my contact at the Embassy in New York. "Mr. Solomon," he said, "please bring in the passports of the family from Africa, I was directed to issue the visas without delay," and then he added, "boy you have contacts in high places" I guess he was thinking of the Ministry, but I added, "VERY, VERY HIGH SIR!" The following day I went to the Embassy and the travel documents were about to be stamped, when one of the officials asked what kind of passports they were. I totally confused him with my answer that they were issued by the United Nations to citizens who are protected by them. The look on his face told me that he was confused. My contact joined the conversation and said, "the Ministry had directed that these visas were to be issued without delay; forget your concerns or curiosity and get on with it". With the travel documents stamped I thanked my contact and left the building. As I was walking to the subway to take the train out of Manhattan I remembered a hymn that we used to sing every time we commenced CYC: "He who would valiant be gainst all disaster, let him in constancy follow the Master. There's no discouragement shall make him once relent his first avowed intent to be a pilgrim."

Breaking the News

The whole team were ecstatic, I remember Sis Lori being so happy that she made a phone call to express her happiness. Bro Abedi and Sis Sonia were elated with joy; for the first time we were beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel. Bro Ted was overjoyed at the news and immediately asked me to start looking into funding. I remember someone saying to me that this

should have been the first thing I should have looked into, but I thought otherwise at that time. All the travel documents were returned to Abedi and a travel date of October 16th was set for this family to leave the desperate situation in the refugee camp.

Preparations to Leave

A member of the team forwarded funds to Abedi to purchase clothes for the entire family that would be suitable for international travel and to have what was left to use in the event of any unforeseen problems that might arise. Sis Sonia meanwhile was also working the phones in contact with the Dutch Embassy in Benin where they were making difficulties for Abedi because he was a refugee. When they discovered that Sister Sonia was a relentless person and that others overseas were concerned about the welfare of this family, they quickly relented and the passports were stamped for transfer in St Maarten.

Funding

The funding came from two sources the KAMF and WCF. On behalf of Bro Abedi and the entire team we are eternally grateful to Bro Don Styles and the directors of WCF, especially Bro Norm; these brethren took us at our word and set about the task of funding this project. Again brethren our profound gratitude. All funds were centralized with Bro Charlie Brinkerhoff until such time that payment was to be made to the travel agent.

The journey begins

After almost 13 months of planning, well over 700 emails ec,etc., Bro Abedi and his family at last left Benin for Paris. On that same day I left New York for Antigua to lay the groundwork for the arrival of the family. On his arrival in Paris, Sis Sonia tried to contact me in New York with the information, but I had already left for Antigua. Bro Duncan eventually got me in Antigua with the news.

Oh! LIAT Airline, where are you? Bro Abedi and family arrived in St. Maarten at 1:35 p.m. on 15 October 2005 and were to leave on a connecting flight to Antigua at 4 p.m. What we did not know was that LIAT Air had changed their online software before they had a chance to work out the kinks, as a result they had some of the family on two different flights. I realised this when I was in New York and left immediately for Antigua to resolve the situation before Abedi arrived in St Maarten. In Antigua I contacted LIAT and they finally had all of the family on one flight, but the family had to spend almost nine hours in St. Maarten before arriving in Antigua about 10 p.m. We had some minor immigration problems and some of Abedi's luggage had not arrived. We were spent the night with Sis Iris Shawt.

Oh LIAT! Not again...Next day we headed to the airport early enough to see if our luggage had arrived. The flight was scheduled to leave at 9 a.m. for Guyana via Barbados. I was issued my boarding pass, they were claiming Abedi and the family were late and as a result they would have to go as standby. When it was realized that I was with Abedi they became very concerned. I asked to see the manager who was very gracious as he apologised for the situation we were in, he gave us vouchers for lunch and promised to put us on BWIA on a 5 o'clock flight. Well 5 o'clock came and went and the manager was very dejected as he informed us that LIAT could not produce tickets for us since their system was not up and running, and BWIA was charging them \$1000 per person. To make life easy for him I said we would wait until the following day. He was so relieved that he put us up at one of the best hotels on the island courtesy of LIAT.

Dinner at The Royal Antigua

We had a wonderful dinner, after which that we retired exhausted to our rooms with Abedi

concerned about his suitcase with books that had not arrived. Sister Iris came to visit us to bring some articles that the girls had forgotten; I know that the roads from her home can be treacherous at night but was comforted that she came with her brother and his wife. The following morning we headed for the airport and this time we had no problems and soon left Antigua for Guyana via Barbados.

Oh Beautiful Guyana!

We touched down at Cheddi Jagan International Airport, the plan being for us to congregate on the tarmac until everyone in the group came off the aircraft. Since there were only about 30 passengers we spent very little time at immigration. I had collected all the passports and went to the Immigration Officer, who processed my documents first and asked me how long I would be staying in Guyana. I replied two weeks at the most. He then looked at the remainder of the documents, examined the visas and began stamping them, not as per the requested time in the visas which was six months, but based upon the information I gave which was two weeks, we were so happy at the time that we did not realize this until two days later. As we left Immigration and looked for our suitcases we were still missing one containing Abedi's books. We were assured by LIAT in Antigua that it was going to be on the flight but it was not, yet that was the least of our concerns as we were embraced by Sister Lori and Brother Jerold (JJ) who had come to meet us. The conversation lasted for 26 miles as we headed to the city. We left for Mocha after taking Sis Lori to her house. We were to sleep the night in Mocha as guests of the Josephs. Bro Eric and Sis Alice Joseph are getting on in years and the brunt of the preparation was left to Sister Ana Lou and her lovely daughter.



Arrival at last! Left, Sis Loraine Mitchell; Right, Bre Clive Solomon and Jenold Joseph with the Abedi family.

A dinner fit for kings

After we had a showered and washed we were treated to a dinner fit for kings, and later reviewed the activities planned for the following day, but we were all tired and soon retired for the night. The next day we expected to leave for Berbice but the CYC from three ecclesias had planned a welcome evening for the family at Eccles Hall which precluded our travel, but it was well worth the stay. The meeting commenced though the area had a power failure, so we had to read by candlelight, sang with joy and feeling and had a great time in fellowship with brethren and Youth Circlers. Brother Abedi sang with Diane and Rose, two of his daughters, and then he spoke on behalf of his family expressing his profound gratitude for all the brotherhood had done. It was a joyous time that ended too soon.

Home at last

By mid-morning the following day we took our leave of Mocha and headed for our final destination at Kilcoy Corentyne, Berbice after some 6 or 7 hours of travel. We were greeted by Brother Jimmy Hart and his family, as they were in charge of the preparations to welcome the family. It was a lovely home with lots of land for farming and poultry rearing. Bro Jimmy and family had prepared dinner and after giving thanks we left nothing to waste. Bro Abedi and family

are well pleased with the home and the surroundings and vow to make the best of the situation by the grace of God. Yes! there is still a lot to be done, and even as I am writing, I have received information that the children have been registered in school.

Outlook for the future

Application was made to the Ministry of Home Affairs for an extension of stay, which was to be issued. Some help is being given by the CBM till they have settled down. If any kind brother or sister is willing to assist this family please contact Brother Solomon at solreginal@aol.com.



Bro Abedi and family now in Guyana [Abedi looks rather different from the cut and beaten brother in the earlier pictures].

Bro. Clive Solomon (USA, ex-Guyana)

Envy

Isaac became rich in a foreign land. He had possessions of flocks, herds and manservants. Because of these riches, the Philistines envied him (Gen 26:13,14). King Abimelech also joined hands with his citizens and chased Isaac away (Gen 26:15-16).

People don't see you well when you are successful in life. If you have good children, a good husband or a good and beautiful wife, people envy you. Envy is the primary cause of witchcraft in Africa. Joseph was sold by his brothers into Egypt through envy (Gen 37:10,11; Acts 7:9). Abel was killed by Cain because of envy.- "The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect" (Genesis 4:4,5).

Rachel envied her sister because she had children but she had not born children to Jacob (Genesis 30:1). So envy comes in when success emerges. But to us, as the servants of the Lord, let us keep ourselves pure in heart. The Kingdom of the Lord is for the righteous, not for envious people.

Bro Samuel Mariita (Kibera, Kenya)

No one with Greater Love Than This

There was a boy who loved to see the passenger train passing near his home. Every day he went near the rail line waving hands to greet the engine driver and the passengers. One day the boy found a bad thing. Oh! The foes of the world have broken the rail bridge. The train is nearly due and it will plunge into the river and all will die! He has no chance to run to town to get help. What can he do to stop the train? The train is very near, the rails are rattling. No this, no that, the boy

himself stood in the middle of the rails waving his hands forcefully to stop the train. However, he knew that the train could not stop in the emergency.

The engine driver was alarmed and tightened the brake but the train crushed the boy, his friend. When all disembarked from the train, oh! They saw the great danger of the broken bridge. They noticed that the brave boy had saved their lives. "There is no one with greater love than this," Jesus said, "for a person to give his life because of his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus, Son of God, gave his life in order to save us from eternal death.

Bro Leonard M Lar (Ndhiwa, Kenya)

Latvia Visit Report

This visit was from Nov. 15-25th, 2005, and was centred on Riga, the capital city. Bro. Martin Rozestraten, from Holland, and three from England, Bro. Marcus and Sis. Gwladys Heaster and myself attending.

Latvia gained independence from the USSR in 1991 and very recently joined the European Union. Population is approximately 2.5 million and about one-million live in or around Riga. Riga has excellent roads and some motorways and is being continuously developed. However, there is still much poverty, with many families living in one or two small rooms in seemingly endless dilapidated blocks of flats. (They seemed endless when Marcus and I delivered leaflets and, because they all look the same, at one point we found ourselves going round and round in circles, almost delivering to the same block twice! "Haven't you been here before?")

Bro. Martin and Bro. Duncan (of Riga) visited three Sisters – Alexandra (an old lady who survived two years hidden in the forests during the German occupation), Aija, who is unwell and Lilia, who has no fixed address and was living in a shelter. Lilia was able to join us later at the Bible School. Further visits to members of the Riga ecclesia followed on Thursday.

On Friday we went to the very modern centre of Riga where we delivered leaflets at the busy shopping centre and the railway station. Later, we helped pack the car with provisions for the Bible School held at Lielupe, a suburb of Riga. All those able to attend stayed in an old 'Soviet era' hotel where we were permitted to do our own catering organised by Sis Cindy. About 30 attended, including two or three friends not baptised.

The Bible School began on Friday afternoon, with Bro. Martin giving two excellent studies, one on "Every member of the body is important" (e.g. 1 Cor. 12:21 – "and the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you...") and the second on The Prayer of Hezekiah.

On Saturday, I gave an illustrated address on 'Justification', with special emphasis on explaining the atonement achieved by our Lord Jesus. Bro. Martin spoke on the conversion of Paul and I gave an exposition of Dan. ch. 4.

The happiest event was the baptism of IRINA (sister in the flesh to Sis. Tanja) who had been in contact with the truth for about two years.

On Sunday at the breaking of bread our new Sister was given the right-hand of fellowship by Bro. Duncan and I was privileged to give the exhortation. Sunday afternoon was sad, as we had to say 'Goodbye' as, one by one, brethren and sisters took their journeys home. However, after clearing up we were able to travel some 80km to visit two Sisters, Anita and Sulamite her daughter. They showed us a weaving loom acquired following the death of a relative. To supplement their tragically low income in the struggle to survive they are making scarves to sell, especially to brethren and sisters.



Scenes from the Latvian Bible School



Photo: Bro Duncan, Sis Sarmite, Bro Marcus, Sis Gwladys

Sunday night I said farewell to Bro. Martin as he had to leave very early on Monday morning to fly back to Holland. He speaks excellent English and such was our rapport that I felt I had found a new friend in the faith – one full of the truth and very sensitive to the needs of others.

On Monday, the 21st. Marcus and I delivered leaflets advertising a free meeting to be held on Tuesday evening, the 22nd.

To me, Tuesday, the 22nd, was a highlight. Bro. Duncan drove us over 300km to visit Sis. Sarmite (pronounced 'Sharmeeta') in isolation. She lives with her husband in a house in the forest about three miles from the nearest houses. Their water comes from a well near the house! Baptised a year ago, Sis. Sarmite is an ex-'Jehovah's Witness'. I could see she was totally in love with the truth and she has tried to tell the true gospel to all her acquaintances, but they will not listen – as yet! Living where they do, many think the forest is inhabited by 'demons' and 'tree-spirits', such is their superstition! (superstition, incidentally, on which thrives the false beliefs of orthodoxy and JWs.).

Let us realise that God is calling people to Himself, not just in cities, but sometimes in remote villages and lonely houses, far, far away from the mad bustle of city life. Maybe in such places, closer to nature, people have more time to think about God and to ask the vital question, 'What IS life REALLY all about?'

Tuesday evening we went to a local hotel where over 50 people of all ages came to our free meeting to improve their English and to learn about the Friends, at the Speaking English Course, based on Mark's Gospel truth from the Gospel according to Mark. Let us pray that the Lord will bless this work as it proceeds and call yet others to the glorious hope of life in Christ.

I thank God for being so encouraged spiritually and for meeting so many lovely brethren and sisters in Latvia. Let us all pray for the blessing of our Heavenly Father on the work in this country, to support the ecclesia in Riga and those in isolation and to spread His Word to His eternal glory.

Bro David Webb (Walton, UK)

The Manna

Manna is translated in English as bread, literally meaning a food for the stomach. But when it is used as a symbol it means the word of God, a food for a spiritual mind. During the time of Moses (Ex 16:19,20), He gave an instruction to the people of Israel not to leave any manna until the morning. Yet they disobeyed His order - the following day it had bred worms and stank.

We may presume that during those days, when modern technology did not exist, bread could not be stored or left till the next day. Hebrews 4:2 gives us a good example for comparing the manna with the gospel: it was preached yet did not profit, not being mixed with faith.

As with some churches around us, it is easier to be in a crowd than sticking with a few who study the doctrines and get a deeper knowledge of the Bible. But to those who are conformable to the mind of God, they know what Isaiah says: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:9).

Sis L Mandap (Hong Kong)

Divisions in the Church (1 Cor 1:10-14,21)

Paul thanked God for the good things he saw in Corinth, but then he had to tell them that some things were wrong. There were divisions in the church and some of them were following one man and some another. This was the result of pride in human wisdom.

Paul heard that there were four divisions in the Church, each group boasting about a human leader. Some said they were followers of Paul, so he explained that this was wrong. Paul wanted the Corinthians to agree to allow no divisions among them, and to be perfectly united in their

thinking. Paul appealed to them to all think the same things. They were proud and Paul reminded them of the Lord Jesus Christ who took a low place (Phil 2:2-8).

Paul heard from people in the family of Chloe that the Corinthians were quarrelling. We do not know who Chloe was, but the members of her family were not afraid to openly tell the truth about the assembly at Corinth. Paul could plainly say who had told him. This is important, we should not say anything bad about others unless it is true, and be willing to let them know who said it.

Their quarrels produced divisions. The Church became four groups, each of which took a special name. Some said they belonged to Paul, some to Apollos, some to Cephas. It was very bad to follow these human leaders, but the other group was worse still. They took the name of Christ for themselves, as if the other Christians did not really belong to Him! Paul was a great teacher, Apollos was a great speaker, Peter was at first the leading apostle, but it was wrong to divide the assembly in this way.

Paul asked them three questions, all had the same answer: No. Christ is not divided and no group of Christians should say that they are the only ones who belong to Christ. Christ died for us, all of us, not just for Paul or any other man. The Lord commanded us to baptise believers in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:5). The believers in Corinth were baptised, but certainly not in the name of Paul (Acts 8:8).

More about the division in Corinth. Paul began in 1:10 to speak about the divisions in Corinth. The believers thought it was a mark of their wisdom to choose human leaders and take the name of an apostle as a name of part of the church. Paul has explained that human wisdom has no place in the church. Now in chapter 3 he continues by saying that the believers were not mature, that Paul and Apollos were simply servants of God, His people, that everyone is building on the foundation and is responsible to the Lord as to how he acts in the church.

Bro James Mwanda Kambobe (Mansa, Cameroon)

Man

Man is a product of creation (Gen 2:7), formed by God in His own image and likeness (Gen 1:27) to be fruitful and multiply, and to replenish the earth, and to subdue it and to have dominion over all that God had created.

MAN BEFORE THE FALL Before transgression, man's position was that of being "very good", just eating and obeying God, and though created naked, was not ashamed (Gen 2: 25). However, man's attempt to seek wisdom (Ecc 7:29) resulted in his fall (Gen 3). Man had a choice. Sadly, man made a bad choice and had to suffer the consequences - cause and effect. Here today we are in the same situation of either accepting Christ for our salvation or rejecting him for our doom.

MAN AS THE AUTHOR OF SIN Having sinned, man became liable to suffering: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1). Here we see why we all must suffer. But let our suffering bring us closer to God. In spite of the advances made in science and technology for an easy life, man remains spiritually in sheer ignorance and confusion. "Then I

beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek out, yet he shall not find it” (Ecc 8:17).

MAN’S DEATH “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17). Sadly, man disobeyed God and ate of the tree. As a consequence the death sentence was passed, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return” (Gen 3: 19).

VANITY OF MAN As the quest for materialism remains unabated, man remains in total ignorance and confusion. Ignorance of what shall become of his wealth after him confuses man as he sees life as a race for survival. In this regard, man seeks flashy cars, huge bank accounts and sophisticated villas: “Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased: for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him” (Psalm 49:16,17). Also, “vanity of vanities; all is vanity” (Ecc 1:2). Life without God is vanity, our riches should be to the glory of God

MAN’S REDEMPTION Man’s redemption is conditional on the acceptance of the knowledge of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus. We must have faith and let it be manifest in us. Faith should go with works. “For our conversation is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phil 3:20,21).

MAN’S SOLE RESPONSIBILITY Man was created by God to be obedient and in that obedience man’s true well-being was to be found. Sadly enough, man disobeyed and excluded himself from the presence of God. Man’s sole duty is to “Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”. Why? “For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil” (Ecc 12:13,14). We have a choice to make: either to be counted worthy at the judgement seat, or to be rejected when the Master returns.

Bro George Nwanzeah (Munyuka, Cameroon)

Caring For Our Sisters

We have in many ways neglected to care for the needs of our Sisters. In Africa a woman dies every minute from pregnancy-related problems and among our community there have been fatalities in childbirth, other complications and sufferings which might have been preventable, or controlled in their early stages by providing medical knowledge and, where possible, medical attention. Whilst we may not at the present time be able to afford for paid medical attention, we would like to make a humble start at trying to at least do something. Our front cover picture shows ten Sisters from five Ecclesias on a three day residential seminar in Malawi sponsored by CAT. where we helped arrange for a qualified nurse to go through many matters relating to the care and health of our sisters’ bodies. We decided on having a small group of ten sisters so that they could all participate in discussions, problem-solving exercises and demonstrations. One aim was to create a relaxed atmosphere and give them a complete break from their normal lives

to allow them to concentrate upon the seminar and at the same time widen the bonds of fellowship and enable them to confidentially discuss and hopefully resolve individual questions and problems. The text book used was, "Where Women Have No Doctor" and they were all very pleased for the beneficial knowledge and experience they received, which justifies arranging further seminar's on these lines. Owing to costs, initially at least, the number of seminars must be very limited, but we would like to help make the book more readily available in the Mission field to those Sisters that can understand English. Incidentally we are pursuing the possibility of working with others to make it available in local languages. MH.

'Where Women Have No Doctor'- a health guide for women.

All over the world women rise to their daily work, care for their families and participate in community life. Too often, women must face these challenges whilst struggling against illness – lacking even basic information about their health. 'Where Women Have No Doctor' combines self-help medical information with an understanding of the ways in which poverty, discrimination and cultural beliefs limit women's health and access to care. Developed with community-based groups and medical experts from more than thirty countries, this book can help anyone understand, treat and prevent many of the health problems that affect women.

Clearly written with over 1000 drawings, 'Where Women Have No Doctor' is an essential resource for any woman who wants to improve her health. It is also invaluable for health workers who want more information about the problems that affect only women, or that affect women differently from men. It helps women identify the obstacles to good health in their communities and shares ideas on how to overcome them.

Topics include: *how to solve health problems, *ways to stay healthy, *understanding the reproductive parts of women's bodies, *sexual health, *HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, *pregnancy, birth and breast feeding, *mental health, *health concerns of women with disabilities, girls, older women and refugees, *the politics of women's health, *rape and other violence against women, *the use of medicines in women's health.

There is obviously going to be a limit on the number of books we can send as this 584 page book (including postage), is expensive, costing £15 each. This means initially it has to be limited to Ecclesial Libraries and those in isolation who can understand English. The number of copies that can be sent out will largely depend upon the copies that are sponsored financially by others. We have been blessed in that the Horley Ecclesia have paid for the purchase of the first hundred books - and we thank them for this - which gives us a good start, but many more will be needed to satisfy demand, so any help will be most gratefully received.



SPONSORS NEEDED for 'Where Women Have No Doctor'

Those in the Mission areas wishing to have a free copy of 'WHERE WOMEN HAVE NO DOCTOR' can request it from CAT, writing clearly their full name, address and the Ecclesia to which they belong. Those wishing to help by sponsoring copies can do so by making their donations payable to Christadelphian Advancemet Trust, 49 The Woodfields, South Croydon, Surrey CR2

OHJ, England. The cost of the book, inclusive of postage is £15 (Aust\$36; Canada \$30; New Zealand \$38; US \$26, We have no problems with changing cheques from these countries.

If you would like to know to whom we send the copy/copies you sponsor please put 'yes' in this box []

Post to Christadelphian Advancement Trust, 49 The Woodfields, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 OHJ, England.

I wish to sponsor copy/copies of 'Where Women have No Doctor' a cost of £15 each (or equivalent) and enclose £/\$ to cover the cost.

Name.....

Address.....

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'Growing a Balanced Diet'

The material already distributed to produce a balanced, healthy diet has helped many and it is gratifying to have had so many letters indicating that the advice has been helpful and already produced results. Not only is there a need to grow a variety of crops in order to provide the nutrients for healthy living, but these can also enrich the soil and provide food, even in adverse weather conditions.

From time to time, Africa suffers from drought, so we have emphasized the growing of some drought-resistant crops. These need good cultivation, using quality seeds and a rotation of crops in order to not impoverish the ground.

There is a wide selection of suitable literature in Africa, often free to those living in Africa, but relatively expensive to those in non-African countries. We particularly recommend the series of books by the Swedish Cooperative Centre, these are self-study manuals for drought mitigation in rural communities, available from the Swedish Cooperative Centres at: 70 Livingstone Avenue, No 1 Verona Gardens, Harare, Zimbabwe; SCC, P.O.Box 32012, 93 Kudu Road, Lusaka, Zambia; SCC, P.O.Box 45767, Bairobi, Kenya.

The titles are:

Principles of Planning Vegetable Production

Traditional Vegetable Crop Production

Root Crop Production

Production of some exotic Vegetable Crops

Seed Production and Vegetable Processing

Conservation Farming

Whilst more expensive, there is a series of small books for small-scale sustainable agriculture in the tropics by the Agromisa Organisation, P.O.Box 41, 6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands.

There is also a wide range of information and advice to be had from local Agricultural Advisers to help those with a little land to produce food for themselves and even to sell, but it does require effort to achieve results.

The increasing needs of the poor, and general world conditions, economic circumstances and changing weather patterns, mean there is an increasing possibility that the available food supply in Africa could be very much reduced and consequently there is greater need where possible for people to learn how to become self-sufficient.

In cases where you are unable to get the required information CAT will do its best to let you have, for example, any of the above six booklets from the Swedish Cooperative Centre.

What About Witnessing

The majority of Christians never win a soul to Christ. In fact, they never even try, and worse still, many never let their neighbours, friends and fellow students or employees know that they are Christians. One questions if a church member who never witnesses in any way really is a Christian. You cannot just be like a parasite on Christianity, only receiving and never giving yourself. Jesus said: "You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" (Matt 5:13). A Christian who never confesses his faith to his fellows is like the salt without taste, and Jesus went on, "It is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot".

Many people are willing to testify for Christ where people don't know them, but never do it to their neighbours and friends. Yet it is not the strangers whom you could witness to best, but to those who know you and can see the change in your life and thereby understand that the gospel works. You can lie to strangers about your changed life and they don't know the difference, but you cannot lie to those with whom you live, work and have fellowship. So everyone of us can witness. You don't need to be someone special, to have an unusual gift or miraculous power, in order to witness for Jesus our Saviour. The most valuable testimony to the gospel is WHEN PEOPLE SEE THE CHANGE that has taken place in our lives. You may remember the incident of Jesus casting out demons from a man who had been living among tombs (Mark 5:1-20). The healed man wanted to follow Jesus who refused him, telling him to go home to his friends and tell them how great things the Lord has done for him. The grateful man obeyed. His testimony had power because all his friends saw the great change in his life. So the testimony of the word is not enough; the unsaved want to know whether Christianity works in our businesses, homes, schools - things that are our everyday life. A true Christian doesn't become a witness because he is one.

We do not need to witness in our own strength. Jesus promised the apostles, "And you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). We have to start in Jerusalem - that is our home - and go on even to the ends of the earth.

Bro George Ndiege (Songhor, Kenya)

God Is Love and God Never Gives Up

In Genesis we read that, God created man in His image and He said of His creation that it was very good. Man was given the power to subdue and live in the Garden of Eden. Adam who was in charge of everything, sinned against God. It was shameful because Adam was told that he mustn't eat the fruit of the tree in the middle of Eden.

God knew that man had sinned when Adam and Eve hid themselves (Gen 3:9). But God had pity on them and did not destroy them. He showed His love when He provided clothes for Adam and Eve. God also showed great love to Adam and Eve after Cain killed Abel by granting them another son (Gen:25).

The earth was filled with people, through Adam, again showing the love of God Adam. The people were sinful in the sight of God. So God was very sad and sorrowful and thought to destroy people off the face of the earth. God showed his love again through Noah, saving him from the flood (Gen 9).

After the great flood, God told Noah to give birth to many people to subdue the earth. This showed that God does not give up but shows forgiveness. Also God gave Noah a covenant to show his great love.

On the face of the earth, the people multiplied more and more but became wicked. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24) but saved Lot and his two daughters from the city, this also showed His great love.

When the Israelites had come out of Egypt, they were to trust in God. God tested their faith in the desert of Sin, when they had no water to drink. The Israelite's forgot the love of God in bringing them out of Egypt and grumbled at Moses and God saying: "Why have you taken us out of Egypt to let us die in this desert?" God did not give up on his people and he provided them with water to drink (Ex 17:3) again showed great love.

Mount Sinai and talked with God and was given the Law. Moses spent many days there (40 days and 40 nights). The Israelites thought that Moses was dead. They made their own God, a golden calf who they followed. God was very sad at this and told Moses that He would destroy the whole of Israel and make a great nation from Moses. But Moses cried and prayed to God to forgive the people. If God did not have love, he would not have listened to Moses.

Even after the bad report following the exploration (Ex 14:36,37), God merely punished those who offended. On the other hand, when Korah gave bad thoughts to the Israelites, he was destroyed with those who followed him (16:20). But God showed his love by saving the other Israelites.

Bro Dzingai Sumburera (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe)

Discipline of the Tongue

Every religious system of philosophy or code includes advice on curbing the tongue – what is described in the Christian Bible as “an unruly evil, full of deadly poison”. Here is some guidance for governing this obstreperous troublemaker:

- Avoid lying: only speak words which are truthful and sincere
- Avoid exaggeration: speak with simplicity and truth
- Avoid deception: do not deceive by word, look or gesture
- Avoid evil speaking: practice good will
- Do not listen to, act upon, or repeat an evil story; He who speaks evil of another, cannot find the way of peace
- Avoid idle conversation: learn how to be silent. Do not let the tongue rule: do not talk about the private affairs of others
- Avoid accusation, recrimination, condemnation and raillery: practise forgiveness. Do not condemn those who are not walking on the righteous path, but protect them with compassion
- Avoid frivolous jesting and irreverent speech. Be modest in your works. Gravity and reverence are marks of purity and wisdom
- Avoid fault-finding: practise self-control. Avoid unprofitable arguments. Do not enter into wordy strife even with one who strongly opposes you: let the other have the last word.
- Do not dispute about the truth, but remember that living the truth cleanses our heart. Acquire goodness and practise virtue
- Some might even begin by adopting a vow of silence for one day a week, or for one hour every day.

Bro Mondest Gwademba (Tirika, Kenya)

Pakistani Brethren Visit India

Thanks for your prayers for our visit to India to have fellowship with Indian Christadelphians. We have been to Hyderabad Daccan, Vashkapatnam and New Delhi. The Brothers and Sister from Hyderabad ecclesia were our main hosts and they arranged Bible Truth Camp for nine people from Pakistan.

The group reached New Delhi early in the morning where Brother Anil Sharma, Brother Lucky, and Brother Babu received us at the station and took us to another station where the train was going to Hyderabad. It was a super fast train that took 27 hours to get there.

During the journey we had a nice time and shared the word of God with each other. We reached Hyderabad next day at 12:05 pm where Brother Ravi and Brother Sandeep received us and they took us to the Mission house. We were welcomed by the Brothers and Sisters there along with Bro Shawn from Canada who was getting married to a sister from Hyderabad. After lunch we were taken to Shunum Home where we had Bible Truth Camp, there were about 50 there. We had a prayer and the children sang and welcomed all those from Pakistan.

The next morning we had Truth Camp and Brother Tim Galbraith facilitated the people to know The TRUTH from the Bible. He had sessions on Bible Truth about God and Jesus; Tabernacle study and personal lessons from its structure.

August 13, 2005, we had sessions on: Man, Death and Resurrection; Bible Truth about God 's Promises and the Kingdom; Bible Truth about Sin and Suffering and Tabernacle study.

On Sunday we all went to Hyderabad city where we had the Breaking of Bread meeting with Hyderabad ecclesia. The Meeting hall was full with Brothers and Sisters from different areas. Brother Mathew from Moinabad Home for Children shared the word of God with Brothers and Sisters. The message was translated into different languages including URDU Pakistani language. After that all Brothers and Sisters were invited to Shunum home to share lunch and Brother Ash spoke about the Lord's work in Pakistan and answered many questions. Bro Tim prayed for Pakistan brethren.

Next day we went to the Shunum home where children are studying and they prepared a wonderful program for us. The Pakistan delegation was invited by the Principal of the school to witness the program there. Delphia a young girl from Shonum prepared some wonderful items for us. Bre. Tim and Ash spoke and thanked the school for inviting us.

We went to Moinabad Home for Children where Bro Matthew and his wife and children were waiting for us. There we had a presentation of the home, how the idea was evolved, and working now. After lunch a young man from Hindu background shared how he was inspired and decided to be baptized. He shared his understanding about the Christadelphian doctrines and we also discussed with him and asked some questions to know how much he knew and then he shared why he wants to be a member of the Christadelphian community. It took more than an hour to share with him the word of God and Bro Tim Galbraith baptized him.

A Muslim convert Brother Naeem-u-din, stayed with us and took us around, he was a great help as he was Urdu speaking. So the delegates found no difficulty. We did not feel we were in a foreign country; we felt like we were in Pakistan, said one delegate.

We were able to stay with Brothers and Sisters at Gujwaka and Vashkapatnam. Brother Geddian took us to visit other ecclesias. It was nice to see the children when they were having fun and learning the word of God. Girls who were helping them seemed very active and full of spirit. I got the opportunity to speak to these children and told them how Pakistani children are also learning about the word of God, for instance that Jesus Christ will come to this earth and will build the Kingdom of His Father; when somebody dies he/she is not going to heaven or 'hell' but become dust and when Jesus comes he will raise those who are responsible and have been baptized and striven to serve the Lord, and will be the part of the Kingdom that Jesus will build on this earth.

Bro Jacob from Gujwaka ecclesia and I shared the word of God with many people. Brothers and Sisters like interaction very much. I told them that we are divided by man's geography, but there will be a time when we shall be together in the Lord's Kingdom.

It was such a nice fellowship, meeting Brothers and Sisters in India. We exchanged our stories with each other and how we all are growing in Truth and helping others to learn and to be baptized. We are thankful to all the Brothers and Sisters in India who helped us financially, for

our stay, food, transportation and most of all for our getting together to feel the oneness in the Lord. Please pray for the All Pakistan Christadelphian Church that it grows.

Bro. Ash

Denial of One's Salvation

I am thankful to have gone through a book entitled, "How Sure Are The Foundations?" The book is written by Bro Colin Badger. The writer appeals to the Roman Catholics on their claim and belief in foundations, which are clearly opposed to the scriptures.

Among many of the RC's doctrinal foundations that our Brother has narrated are: the authority to baptize, child or infant baptism, immortality of man's soul after death, advocacy of the Holy Spirit, the Pope's infallibility, authoritative teaching, exhortation through the gift of the Holy Spirit, etc.

Brothers and sisters, many of us once believed such things, and it is not a surprise if the said foundations are still stuck in our brains. If they are then, of course, they jeopardize our faith in Christ. And because of our indigenous cultures and poor standards, most of us have not been able to abstain from bad things we inherited, but wrong teaching will lead us astray from the TRUTH and deny us salvation.

One among the many beliefs third world community members practice and take for granted is the offering of sacrifices to idols in commemoration of the deceased. Most of the remembered dead bodies are parents and grandparents who are thought to hear and answer prayers after the offering of sacrifices. This is a false dogma. With thorough knowledge many of us take part in feasting on whatever has been slaughtered and offered as sacrifice on the pretext that one is not concerned with the separations. That is very wrong and un-Christian.

If we fellowship those who hate God, He counts us as hating Him. If we fellowship with the darkness of apostasy, we share the same relationship with God as they (pagans) do.

Note that our Lord Jesus Christ ordered the healed Jewish leper to report to the priests (Matt 8:4; read also the law to the Jews, Lev 14:2-9). The covenant we are obliged to observe every Sunday and on whatever day is recorded in Matthew 26:26-28. After the resurrection from the dead, the Lord Jesus Christ, said to his disciples "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:18-20). He talks of the AUTHORITY of a new covenant for us to abide by, and to remember that Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself for us for the cleansing of our sins. I appeal to you brethren and sisters who practice this type of traditional blood sacrifice to abstain from it. Stick to the TRUTH.

Bro Brown Silvane (Songea, Tanzania)

Forgiveness

If you are offended, it is important to face the emotions that the offence has left in its wake. Feelings are not sin, and acknowledging the reality of them is not wrong. God already knows exactly how we feel; in acknowledging such feelings we bring them to the surface in preparation for letting go of them. Burying our feelings and denying their reality will cause us to by-pass true forgiveness and even magnify the pain brought on by the offence.

Bringing our emotions into the light of God's grace makes it easier to look at them clearly and to see where they are leading us, as well as what they are telling us. Once we have acknowledged to God and to ourselves what we feel, the next questions are:

- Will we you choose to forgive despite how we feel?
- Will we wait until we feel like forgiving?
- Are we being sincere with your feelings?
- Are you really willing to allow God to work with our feelings: revamping, removing and restoring it?
- Will we continue wallowing in the pain and the misery of our bitterness to our own destruction (may the Lord forbid)?

When true forgiveness is at work in our lives, the outward extension of it to the offender is practically possible. Without true, wholehearted forgiveness, any impression created in that direction is counterfeit at best, and deceit and hypocrisy at worst. Many times forgiveness does not lead to reconciliation, because the offender has not repented and cannot ask forgiveness. On the other hand, when the offender does ask for forgiveness, it must be given. Jesus said, "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says 'I repent', forgive him" (Matthew 18:22). "Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but unto seventy times seven" (Luke 6:36,37). "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father is also merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not and ye shall not be condemned: forgive and ye shall be forgiven". (Matthew 6:14,15). "For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses". Paul says: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Colossians 3:13). In practice, this would certainly not be easy to do, but it is what Jesus has admonished us to do, and enables us to do, if we truly trust and have faith in him.

By freely forgiving again and again, we model the limitless forgiveness that God extends to us. Forgiveness is a gift that we offer to those who have offended us. We give out the gift; what the recipient does with it is up to him or her. A true gift is offered without any expectation in terms of remittance or compensation. The book of Proverbs as well as the gospel of Matthew reminds us that doing good to our enemies invariably brings the Lord's blessings.

When we find that we still have memories of the past, we tend to question and wonder whether we have truly forgiven. But forgiving is not the same as forgetting: they are not the same virtue. However, God has promised in His Word that He will remember our sins no more, but He has not equipped us with the power to make that same statement. We can choose not to call to mind our hurts, not to dwell on the past or to be obsessed about what has been done to us. As humans, however, we may not have total control of our memories even though we may be able to let a memory fade away by not dwelling on it.

While Jesus was crucified on the cross he said: “‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do’. And they parted his raiment and cast lots” (Luke 23:34). Likewise Stephen, when stoned, said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, ‘Lord, lay not this sin to their charge’. And when he had said this, he fell asleep” (Acts 7:59,60).

Both the Lord Jesus Christ and Stephen, when at the point of death, prayed to God to forgive the sins of the people. It has happened that brethren and sisters sin against other brethren and sisters, and yet they do not pray for forgiveness of their sins. They only show hatred, jealousy and fault-finding.

Joseph’s brethren carried out evil against him, and many years later: “And when Joseph’s brethren saw that their father was dead, they said ‘Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil we did unto him’. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying ‘so shall you say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin: for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father’. And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said ‘Behold we be thy servants’. And Joseph said unto them, ‘Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones’. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them” Genesis 50:15-21). Joseph forgave his brethren, as Jesus forgave his brethren. God also forgives us, so we ought to forgive each other and talk kindly and not to speak evil against a brother or sister, for Jesus’ sake.

The more we rehearse a memory, the harder it is to let go of it and its accompanying emotions. Letting go of hurtful memories and feelings requires a daily renewal of the decision to forgive. Even if the forgiveness has actually taken place, memories of the circumstances surrounding an offence in the past may resurface momentarily in our mind. It should end right there and no longer find its way down into our heart as a consuming fire. At this point the offended has been able to completely release the offender and no longer hold anything against him.

May the Lord God greatly guide us all as we have taken that narrow and slippery road to that glorious Kingdom of the Lord. May the Almighty heavenly Father pour out His abundant showers of blessings upon us all.

Bro Joseph Oppong (Shama Junction, Ghana)

Just Some Reminders

The Blessing of Life: We did not work for it. We cannot give it to ourselves and we cannot of ourselves retain it. It is a gift. Then consider the air we breathe to retain this life. We do not work for this vital commodity and we cannot provide it either. God has made this freely available to us. Let us think that if He had entrusted the governments of this world to dispense this, how would the unemployed and disadvantaged manage? Those with jobs would have been taxed to death, literally. Yes, the cost of ‘living’ would have been beyond us. Again we look at the food that sustains this life. The scriptures point us to its source – “For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may provide seed to the sower and bread to the eater” (Isa 55: 10). The

source of our food is therefore directly from heaven, and not, as commonly thought, from man's skills and technology derived from the energy he obtains from this very food.

The same chapter at verse. 2, brings to our attention the futility of our efforts at survival, when this is diverted from the vital issue of this life, and continuing in vs. 3 urges us to consider the source itself – our Creator - to concentrate our efforts on the way pointed out by Him, in order to fully live and enjoy the gift of life, directly from Him. Taking time every day to track our main thoughts and our drive in our lives would reveal to us if we are on the direct path of life itself, or if we are lost somewhere on the sidelines leading to nowhere. Let us start each day by thanking God for His gift of life, asking Him to help us to perceive His care and direction in this, and for the wisdom and strength to follow Him throughout the day.

Sis Ester Worrell (Canada)

Compare These With The Present Day

“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh” Matt 24:37-44.

Bro Benard Wabene W'lkola (Lugufu, Kenya)

Obedience and Faith

Saul was enthroned as king of Israel at the age of thirty and he ruled Israel over a period of forty years. King Saul was a person with a problem of obedience. On one occasion he failed to wait for just over a week. Instead of waiting for the rightful person, the prophet Samuel, Saul performed hastily the religious duties which should have been done by Samuel. On another occasion he was told by God through the prophet Samuel to destroy the Amalekites but again he disobeyed. Instead he spared the Amalekites' king, Agag. He also spared the best of the Amalekites' livestock. If he had only obeyed he could have passed on his throne to his descendants. Instead he was, alas, rejected as the king of Israel (1 Sam 13:8-14; 15:1-23).

Our Lord is not delighted in what good things we do, what offerings and sacrifices we make. He wants us to obey and heed His precepts. We are not to be like Saul who followed his own wisdom. We ought to be obedient to God through Jesus Christ and leave all in God's hands (1 Sam 15:22; Mark 12:33).

We must take the first step to respond in faith and obedience to the gospel. As Christadelphians we all share in the very sure hope of living for eternity on earth with the Lord (Psalm 37:9-11).

Bro Elvin Muntemba (Kitwe, Zambia)

Preaching in Swaziland

Here in Swaziland I live within an atmosphere of total heathenism. Swaziland is an animistic state as opposed to a Christian one. Those who call themselves Christians believe in magical powers of the Head of State as well as magical powers of their Pastors or Reverends. This type of false faith is obtainable from Catholics down to the Protestant of insignificant description. I have seen a need for adding extra material on the Bible Course for the benefit of Bible students around here, to rid them of all forms of superstitions. It is equally true that the Bible Course here in Swaziland needs to be half correspondence and half face-to-face tuition. There are over 300 students on the Bible Course. False worship here frustrates the spread of the Truth because the majority of students seem to follow our Course for commercial reasons instead of joining the Truth through baptism, hence the need for face-to-face tuition.

Bro. Fanuel Sithole

Christianity - A Religion of Peace

Christianity is a Religion of Peace which needs a Peaceful Manner of Dissemination

The Bible tells us that before Jesus Christ was finally arrested and crucified, he sent his disciples to continue to preach the good news of God to the world, to every nook and cranny: "Go to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, preach this message: 'The Kingdom of God is near'" (Matthew 10:6-7). Jesus gave his disciples this instruction to preach because he wanted them to continue from where he stopped, so that at the end no one could say, "I did not hear the message".

Paul says, "Faith comes from hearing the message and the message is heard through the words of Christ" (Romans 10:17). This means that if the good news is not preached to people, they will not hear, they will not have faith. Paul also asks, "How can men preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:15). Here Paul is trying to make us know that, before anyone can become a preacher, Jesus is the one who strengthens or ordains him to do so.

Preaching the gospel peaceably like Jesus did. Further Paul says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:15). In Isaiah, we see a similar statement: "How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of those who bring good news; who proclaim peace ..." (Isaiah 52:7). These portions of the Bible no doubt are telling us that those who are chosen to preach the glad tidings should do so in a peaceful manner.

We have heard of some cases when conflicts occurred between some religious preachers and the people they preached to. We have also heard of some preachers of some other religions trying to force people to believe or accept their beliefs willy-nilly. A case in point is that which

happened in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria, between Muslims and Christians some time ago, which claimed the lives of many intolerant believers on both sides. This happened because the two parties involved were destitute of religious tolerance which abounded in the Lord Jesus (1 Peter 2:23).

Another case in point is that of a Christadelphian martyr, Bro Faris of Kandahar, Afghanistan, who was beheaded by his father-in-law for being a Christian convert instead of a Muslim. This case was reported on the front page of the 'Gospel News', in the issue of March/April, 2004.

Paul says, "But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him" (2 Corinthians 2:14). Paul is telling us here that God always makes us succeed in our preaching or evangelical work if we use the sweet and friendly method of Jesus in preaching the words of God. In 2 Corinthians 5:20, we are told that we are ambassadors for Christ. Being worthy ambassadors for Christ, having been called to God's vineyard as labourers through our baptisms by immersion, we should therefore preach the gospel peaceably as Christ did, by avoiding rancour or hurting our hearers' feelings in the course of our preaching.

Paul in 2 Timothy admonishes us not to quarrel with anybody in the course of our preaching the good news of God: "And the Lord's servant must not quarrel, instead he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him must be gently instructed" (2 Timothy 2:24, 25). We are told by Peter of the great tolerance our Lord Jesus had: "When they hurled insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats" (1 Peter 2:23).

In Isaiah we are advised not to cry or make a noise in the streets, as some other religious preachers do in the name of preaching. We are all aware that during the preaching of Christ and his disciples, they were never heard shouting in the streets, condemning other religions as many preachers do offensively these days. "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets ,," (Isaiah 42:1, 2).

As Christians, we may have times of storm and unrest. This may be caused by the cooling of your relationship with Jesus. He wants us to be hot in our relationship with him. In speaking to the church of the Laodiceans in the book of Revelation, he said: "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spue (spit) thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15, 16). If this condition makes Jesus sick, it is no wonder that a man feels as though he is in a storm when this condition exists. It may be that Jesus is allowing a time of testing. He brings circumstances into our lives to show us our direct dependence on him for everything. He may have caused the storm on the sea. Why does Jesus allow such times of testing to come on those he loves? He knows that even as Christians, we have a tendency toward sin and selfishness. Even at our best, we cannot live a righteous life in our own strength.

The Old Testament prophet Jeremiah said in a prayer: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). We can surely see from this scripture that we must receive our guidance and strength from God. The apostle James says: "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). Jesus has done so much for us by showing us how to live a life pleasing to God. He died on the cross giving his life as an offering to God for our sins. He has done all he can without forcing us against our will. So, when he comes to our life with tests, don't do as the disciples did, Cry out in fear, thinking he has come to harm us. Be sure we are in the right relationship with him when the waves of testing

come so we can grow in our faith to a closer walk with him. For the disciples, the storm in their hearts was more frightening than the storm on the sea. As Christians we should not let outward conditions affect the peace in our hearts. The prophet Isaiah wrote: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee" (Isa 26:3). Another reason Jesus allows testing times to come is to teach us faith, so we can help other Christians in their testing times. The Bible says that God "Comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor 1:41).

When testing comes, the Bible has many promises of God's care. God allowed difficult times in David's life. Sometimes when David sinned, God worked in his life to bring him to see where he stood with him. Often it seems David allowed his troubles to 'get him down'. He wrote in the book of Psalms of his struggle: "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?" (Psalm 10:1). "How long with thou forget me, O Lord? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?" (Psalm 13:1). "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" Psalm 22:1).

But then David speaks of the greatness of God being with him and delivering him: "In my distress, I called upon the Lord, and cried out to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple and my cry did enter his ears" (1 Samuel 22:7). At another place, David writes: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous". Now read Psalm 23 to find more of the care God provides.

Remember, Jesus said: "Be of good cheer". This means "Be cheerful". Are our troubles too much for us to handle? If they are, we can be sure Jesus can help. He said: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden light" (Matthew 11:18-30). When troubles come, "Be of good cheer". They need not lead to despair. Jesus is more real to us even than our troubles. Remember, he walks on the waves to deliver us. They will pass but he will stay with us. But we are so often absorbed with our own affairs, trying our best to steer straight, anxiously watching the events around us, and allowing ourselves to be overwhelmed.

We may be so taken up with the things around us that we have no time to look across life's waters to see who is coming through the storm to help us. We must keep our eyes and total attention on the only one who can help us. God said to people who turned from Him: "In returning and rest ye shall be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isaiah 30:15). Are we always aware of Jesus' presence with us? Is he really your best friend? A favourite hymn of many is:

"What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to hear,

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.

O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear,

All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer".

If your troubles are great, call on Jesus. He will answer and help you. You may want to go to a Christian friend and have him help. He may have had victory over similar experiences in his life. Tell him your problem and then pray together, claiming Jesus' promises. Jesus said: "Be of good cheer, it is I. Be not afraid" (Matthew 14:27). The lesson was left for us all. Whatever our

weaknesses, whatever the sins we commit, we could not have a more understanding God, and a more fervent Saviour and mediator. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). The paralysed man, forgiven his sins, was able to jump for joy. The realisation of the marvel of forgiveness we received should cause us to end each day happy in the knowledge that we have been so privileged (Matt 14:23).

Consider the Lord when he was a solitary figure, in a lonely place, under a full moon, conversing with God. Alone one can experience a greater frankness and earnestness. It may be that prayer is more effectual when the mind is not encumbered or distracted. "Be of good cheer". How can we respond to it unless we read and live the word every day? How can God listen to us if we seldom bow in prayer? How can He answer if there is no plea from us? God is more than aware of all that we do. So if there is a solid faith now, with no wavering on the way to Zion, if we live our lives to the glory of God and the praise of His dear Son, he will come back for us. As we come to the emblems of the Lord's sacrifice, we will think of that surge of joy for us all, as we are welcomed with the words: 'Be of good cheer; the Kingdom is yours'.

Bre Aigbosare & Frank Efeiretin (Urhonigbe, Nigeria)