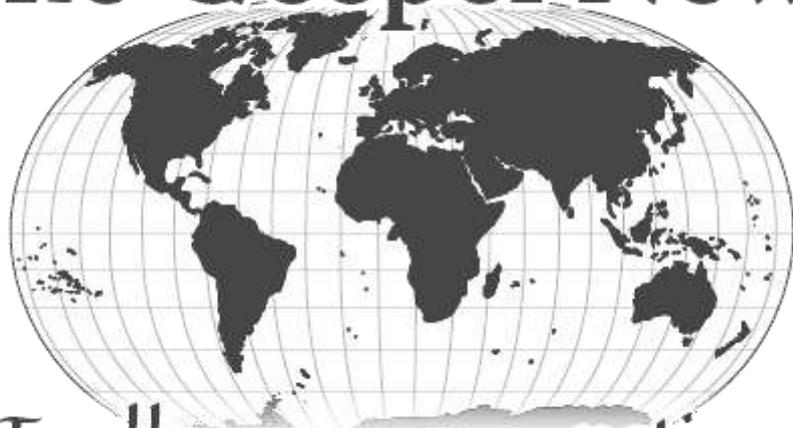


The Gospel News



“To all  nations”



EDITORIAL: "Conflict And Reconciliation"

The hurt of broken relationships is significant, and it affects us all. We are asked to pick up the cross of Jesus as our own experience; to not merely be vaguely associated with His death and new life, but to actually insert ourselves into His very death and rising again. We may think that our lives are wonderfully comfortable compared to what He went through; yet without minimizing *His* suffering and pain, I suggest that we can also minimize our sufferings. We should be able to say with Paul that we are indeed co-crucified with Him. For most of us, this co-crucifixion isn't in terms of literal pain or violent persecution for His sake. So in what terms, then, are His sufferings articulated in us? Surely, therefore, in our mental suffering with Him. Thus Paul can quote a prophecy of Christ's crucifixion and apply it to our sufferings as a result of bearing with our weak brethren (Rom. 15:1-3).

All the hurts which come from interpersonal contact within the ecclesia have led some to retreat from ecclesial life into an isolated existence; occasional attendance, visiting websites, a few emails. Yet we are to approach the ecclesia from the viewpoint that we are here to give rather than to receive. The ecclesia is designed by God to be the arena in which we learn to show patience, forgiveness and the love which gives for no return. Thus the idea of not resisting evil and offering the other cheek (Mt. 5:39) we normally apply to suffering loss from the world without fighting for our rights. Yet Paul took this as referring to the need to not retaliate to the harmful things done to us by members of the ecclesia (Rom. 12:16,17; 1 Cor. 6:7; 1 Thess. 5:15). Paul evidently expected believers to have a pretty rough ecclesial life. Perhaps we ought to warn new converts about this; for all too many have joined us with high expectations, only to become bitterly disillusioned after a few years by the behaviour sometimes within the ecclesia. It's a strange paradox - for the unity of the ecclesia, the radical love between believers, is what attracts unbelievers to Christ. But then they soon find that the body of Christ is seriously divided and dysfunctional, and this has led many in recent times to fall away. Whilst on one hand the ecclesia is the body of Christ, we still have to separate out church from God, the Lord Jesus personally from those who are in Him. There are weeds sown among the wheat; that's a fact, which we inevitably sense, but it's equally a fact that we are unable to discern who's who. Seeing we cannot make the ultimate judgment, we must simply accept all those truly baptized into Christ as our brethren, and feel towards them as brethren. For the ultimate divide is between the believer and the world not between believer and believer. Paul's letters are a great example of this; yet his positive approach to his brethren didn't mean that he personally could no longer tell black from white or right from wrong. Our parents drummed into us from childhood: "Because they do it, doesn't make it right". And that's simply so.

Telling The Lord

But what, then, are we to do when brethren... refuse to speak to us, divide our families, cause others to stumble; and all the other long list, the endless sentence, which we could now write or come out with? How are we to feel, how are we to cope with it? When the fellow believers saw the unreasonable attitude of a brother against another, they were "vehemently distressed" (AV "very sorry" doesn't do justice to the Greek; Mt. 18:31). Matthew uses the same Greek words to describe how distressed the disciples were to learn that there was a betrayer amongst them (Mt. 26:22). That extent of distress can destroy men and women. So "they came and told their Lord all that was done". The parable suggests there was no response from the Lord to the grieving servants. He called the offender to Him, asked for an account, and punished him. This speaks of how we shall be called to account at the Lord's return. But until then, there's silence from the Lord. But that silence is to develop our faith and perspective in the day of judgment. If there

were bolts of fire from Heaven in response to our prayers, there would be no faith required, no longing for the Lord's return, no trust in His ultimate justice. The Greek translated "told" means 'to declare thoroughly'. Tell the Lord every detail of what happened, how you feel; what colour shirt he was wearing, exactly how she looked at you - just as children artlessly retell every detail of a hurtful event. When they saw "what was done", they came and declared thoroughly to their Lord "what was done" (Mt. 18:31). The double repetition of the phrase suggests we should indeed tell all the details to Him; but not more, and stripped of our interpretation of them.

More Practical Advice

- The doing of right often leads us into conflict. Conflict situations shouldn't always be read by us as meaning that we are guilty. Go out into this world and try to serve and help people and you won't be met with open arms. Those whom you try to assist will so often turn against you. Only those who sit on the sidelines and don't get involved avoid this kind of conflict. But this kind of conflict is what the cross of Christ was and is all about; that was the ultimate facing of the issues which there are between God and us. No papering it over nor avoiding the crux of the matter. The Lord Jesus came to gather fruit from Israel to God's glory; to sit down with God's people at the Kingdom banquet, because all things were ready. Whilst the crucifixion was foreknown by God and predicted by the Lord Jesus, this takes nothing away from the fact that it need not have happened. Jesus didn't come to die, He came to be accepted. But Israel rejected Him. The pain of that rejection and crucifixion was all because the Father and Son had bothered to get involved with this ungrateful and rejecting world. If we are to carry even something of the cross of Jesus, we are going to have to experience rejection and the conflicts involved with that. "As much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18) surely suggests that Paul saw conflict with others as arising due to others' attitudes over which we have no control.
- It's easy to take false guilt for the fact others don't understand us. We are candles lit to give light, and we shouldn't "cover" that light (Lk. 8:16). Yet the same Greek word occurs again in 2 Cor. 4:3, where we read that our Gospel is 'covered' or "hid" to those who choose not to see it. Others' attitudes to us can therefore result in our light being covered and not get through. The fact others fail to perceive us for who and how we really are can in some cases be their fault and not ours.
- Have a Kingdom perspective. In Lk. 12:13-21 we encounter the Lord being asked to get involved in a conflict between two brothers over an inheritance. The Lord's response was to tell the parable of the rich fool - a parable which ought to be seriously worrying for every one of us, rich or poor. He put the immediate argument between the brothers in the perspective of eternity; the eternity we may miss because we got too distracted with the immediate argument of the moment. And the Lord's basic message in this case was: "Be rich toward God. Give Him whatever you have". This cut right across the issues of life's unfairness, missing out on wealth, not getting our share of respect... to the essential question which should have made both brothers feel uncomfortable. Had they - have we - given all they had to the Lord's cause? We can surely analyze our own conflicts, at our own pace, in the light of eternity; and regain perspective, even if our opponent fails to do this.

By Grace We Stand

We must also never forget our own need for grace. Paul progressively realized the depth of his own failures and need for grace. In his early letter to the Corinthians, he speaks of himself as the least of the apostles (1 Cor. 15:9); some years later, he tells the Ephesians that he is "less than the least of all saints" (Eph. 3:8); but as he faced his end, he wrote to Timothy in his final maturity that he felt the chiefest of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). Yet the letters to Timothy show a growing assurance that he believed he truly would live eternally in God's Kingdom. And in Paul we are to find our own pattern of growth (1 Tim. 1:16). You, me... we shall live for ever. And ever. And ever. We who are but water, bones, complex chemicals. We who are so very weak. For ever and ever. And the quality of that eternity is wonderful beyond words; for "we shall be like *Him*". And God... just thought this up for us, decided to bring us into existence so He might lavish His grace upon us throughout the eternal ages to come (Eph. 2:7). We cannot get even a moment's glimpse of that future which awaits us without being moved to show grace, compassion, acceptance; and without knowing that we ought to be giving our lives to thinking up how we can in our turn lavish grace upon others. We will not live through those eternal ages alone. We will spend them in community. There's only one man who has ever resurrected to live for ever, and that's the Lord Jesus. Our experience of this will be insofar as we are "in Him", in His body. But His body isn't just us; it's all the others baptized into Him. If we reject them, won't forgive them, won't tolerate them, don't want to fellowship them... we are signing ourselves out of the hope of salvation

Reconciliation: Radically Important

Picture a judgmental, unforgiving brother or sister whom you know, who's always stirring up strife by their intolerance of others; yet remember their constant Bible reading, preaching, writing, unworldliness, clean living, constant attendance at meeting, hall cleaning... how their lives are simply full of their commitment to their understanding of the Lord. And think of this person standing before the Lord at the day of judgment and being condemned. Maybe he was the Secretary, or she was the secretary's wife; the Bible School speaker, the writer. And they are told: 'Go away. I don't know you. You rejected my weak little brothers and sisters. You drove them from My table. You criticized and beat them down, some never to rise again. You demanded, demanded, demanded... conformity to how you understood things, to your standards of spiritual achievement in a few areas. When you yourself seriously failed Me, disobeyed Me, and yet you never really worried about that'. That well known face, with tears flowing down the cheeks and teeth banging against each other in rage, forehead contoured as never before as he thinks of his loyalty to his clauses, his points, his constitution, his denomination; the emails and articles he laboured so long to write in defence of the faith... is ushered to death in the lake of fire. His committee members, friends, family who told him 'You did the right thing there...' are all strangely absent, and he walks unusually alone, as we watch, maybe reciting 1 Corinthians 13 to ourselves. Now I'm not saying this is how it will be; I'm sure God's grace is big enough to cover very much self-righteousness and very, many blind spots. But... it might be. And, according to plain Bible teaching... it may very well be.

The Christian life is likened to a man on his way to his judge along with his adversary (Lk. 12:58); he ought to settle his differences with his brother before he arrives, for this judge will be extremely hard upon those who refuse to be reconciled to their brethren. This would suggest that the Lord foresaw that getting along with our brethren would be a major part in the development process of His people; and as they draw closer to the day of meeting with Him, the more urgent is the need to settle their disputes, as He will be unsympathetic towards them. The Lord prefaces this parable by appealing for His people to 'judge righteously' because His

judgment is about to come (Lk. 12:57 Gk.). By forgiving our brother, we are judging righteously; we are in essence deciding our own judgment which is to be revealed at the Lord's return.

Duncan Heaster

News from Africa

news from botswana

The Botswana group of brethren and sisters is meeting every Sunday and having Bible Classes on Wednesdays at the home of Sister Madii. This is very encouraging.

news from cameroon

DOUALA

I had a bad experience with bandits attacking me. But again I tell myself that God is with me and we have to experience all such trials from Him. I am committed to standing firm in my faith.

Bro. Guy Walter

news from congo

Do please join us in prayer for the global situation so that the Almighty God provides strength and increases faith to His sons and daughters in this deep sorrow the world is going through. Anyone can see that the global sorrow goes from bad to worse in some cities of the world that has negative impact even to (some) Christians and requires the help of God so that one remains stout in the faith. Thus, we require your prayer support for the recurrent trouble in Congo, D.R. that touches the ecclesia and its members as well. Let us pray one for another

Bro Kims



At Bible study



At breaking of bread service. At the middle position you will see Brother Kims conducting the service.

news from ghana

All is well with us here. Sometimes, whilst I am in isolation, I do not always feel I am as I often visit. My nearest ecclesia – Accra, is about 198km away from my home region! I enjoy fellowship with those of like faith, sharing other things in common and sometimes spending a night or days before or after the Memorial Service.

The Ecclesia recently designed a card – looks like complimentary card, recipients are informed of Christadelphians' beliefs and meeting place. It opens up discussion anywhere, any time one finds us. It is really a GREAT NEWS FOR THE WORLD!

I have found more comfort in the reading of the Bible through Bro Roberts' Reading Plan (The Bible Companion). reading the Old Testament once and New Testament twice a year.

Sometimes we tell our pupils here the syllabus allows about 70% of the teaching work whilst they take part of the remaining 30, at their own accord. We should get people interested in the Reading (and study) of the Bible, daily through the Bible Companion. There and then can our introduction of Biblical teachings/doctrines be taken seriously. This will be overshadowed with divine intervention, if God wills. This is why we are really saved by grace. God has seen the effort through our zeal for His word, just like the Eunuch in Acts 8;27-38! Lets pray for God to make a way in our clients' hearts.

It was another surprise to have another welcome package! *The Real Christ* and the fifth edition of *Bible Basics*! in a completely new style, very well designed. The other leaflets are also much appreciated.

I've enjoyed the introductions to the two books and one wonders how often the average Christian make use of his or her Bible. We need to be serious about this and take the readings seriously.

Wonder Wornyo

news from kenya

BUNGOMA

A good leader is one who brings people to the kingdom by living and preaching the gospel. Being Christians, everyone is a leader now, Jesus Christ being the Light of the World.

John 3:16: 'For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.'

Sis Gentrax Mutabasi



Sis Gentrax Mutabasi and Sis. Beatrice Wechuli

Thank you for the good work of God you are doing to let people know the fundamentals of the true doctrine. I also appreciate much your helping hand in sending me the book, 'The Real Devil', which now continues to set my strong base in the true faith.

Without any prejudice it is a great treasure that we, the human race – people perverse and sinful in nature – are being elevated to an equivalent position with Christ, the only Son of God, and therefore becoming partakers of the Divine nature like Him (2 Peter 1:4). In Jesus no sin was found, though born of a human mother and had our very own nature.

However, this elevation and the high profiling of the human race is conditional. Not every being has been given such an honour and unspeakable love of God freely, but only to those who believe in Him (John 1:12-13). So the choice is with everybody, which will ultimately determine the fate of each one of us, to either resurrect to the crown of eternal life or eternal punishment – death.

However, people seem to be less concerned with the doing of God's will and even those who call themselves 'Christians' seem to have hidden agendas besides the one they are known for. They often behave in surprising ways. They are ever busy with the perishable, thinking in material terms and ever worried about how to better their future lives, as if they had the power to dictate the length of their lives and to exactly tell whether they will be living in the next minute or not.

The grace of God is upon all of us, that we may believe Jesus whom God sent into the world so that we may be saved. John 3:16. John goes further to give us certain and encouraging promises in chapter 6 verses 39 and 44. Our bodies will not be lost eternally in the grave but one day, already pre-determined by God and in store, we will be resurrected and rewarded each as his/her measure deserves. May God bless you plentifully.

Bro. Grffin Wafula Wanyama

Thank you very much for your letter, including another one from a contact. I also thank you for the lessons that you are sending him. I can see he is a very good student. I will soon write to discover his whereabouts and tell you.

Bro. Clement Fwamba

I have been appointed as an elder for Luuya ecclesia and now am leading about 80 people of whom 65 are baptised and the rest are friends. We are delighted to announce the baptisms of 11 candidates, among whom are: Roger Mayemeso, Syiredia, Voilet, Pereina, Silas, Janet, Daisy and Fridatt. May they run the race to the Kingdom with every blessing along the way. Due to this, please could you send me some copies of the Bible Companion so that I can distribute these to them?

Bro. Boniface Juma



Bro. Boniface Juma, Kenya.

BULIMBO

I have enjoyed “Why are we Here?” book and it has made me thirsty for more literature. I converted to Christianity from the Moslem faith in 2003, so I have been a Christian for seven years.

I have been ill, but have managed to read the Bible every day following the Bible Companion system. Gospel News enables me to keep in touch with what is going on.

Bro. Emmanuel Joumer

I was very happy to hear from you because not so many people have reached this year 2010. There have been many disasters of floods, accidents, ferry failure and so on. This is a sign of God loving me and you to keep us communicating year after year until He will say ‘enough.’

Thank you again for Gospel News and its enclosure. Thank you, and may God bless the work of your hands. Sincerely speaking, my friends are very interested in reading more copies of Gospel News, and I usually share with them my copy which you send me. My faith is not the way it was before I started reading the copies – now I am bright in the Lord.

Sis. Imelda Nasilumbi Makokha

CHWELE

Thank you very much for another letter with news about daily events, about Israel, and for your promise of some old Christadelphian magazines sent by sea mail; we hope we will receive them soon.

Bro. David & Sis. Jacklyne Wanjala



Bre. Patrick Sava and. Moses Wekesa finishing the flooring of the latrine of Makhange CBM Plot.

ELDORET

Communication within Families

- Be clothed with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; genuine caring and concern. Colossians 3:12-13.
- Intellectual devotion and careful listening – James 1:19-21 (Note) Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters! Everyone must be quick to listen, but slow to speak and slow to become angry. Human anger does not achieve God’s righteous purpose.
- Verbal affirmation – As ‘high’ as you want your marriage to go, your words must go there first. ‘Her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praises her.’ Proverbs 31:28
- Love ‘speaking the truth in love.’ Eph.4:15; Proverbs 3:3-4. Kindness and truth are the balance. Do not keep resentment in your heart because it will become aggressive, negative behaviour. Real love must contain truth and real truth must contain love.

- Faith – have faith that God is the God of truth and that He is able to work in your mate’s and children’s lives. Proverbs 3:5-6; Heb.11:6
- Surrender your speech and ways to God – Romans 6:13; Eph.4:22-26. Commit your communication to the Lord – Psalm 141:3 ‘Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch over the door of my lips.’
- Seek wisdom – Ecclesiastes 7:1-19; James 1:5-6,19, 27.

Bro. Jacob Okoth

KABABU



Sister Jane Akingo singing to the Ecclesia



Bro John Odhiambo singing a Hymn at the Ecclesia

KISUMU

The book of Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us that ‘There is a time for everything and whatever happens has its purpose’. We therefore should stand and remain firm in whatever critical conditions we are undergoing. All that we see and experience are tests from our God, and that doesn’t mean that our Father is not a God of love; He loves us, but tests our belief and the amount of love we too can give Him in the light of our circumstances Eccl.3:18.

Our Heavenly Father cannot forget His children – He is always alert to help His people. I therefore urge my fellow brethren to stand firm and learn all purposes of God and His principles which will bring us to His Kingdom. Isa.49:15-16.

Bro. Richard Oduma

KITALE

I was very happy when I came across a book entitled ‘Wrested Scriptures,’ and another, ‘Why Are You Here?’ in one of our quarterly Bible Studies, when I travel 15km with our friends. For that I was advised by Bro. Martin Chemiati to request a copy from you.

Also we looked in the Gospel News and found ourselves to be behind. Brother, we shall be very happy when we receive another copy and we would request some Bible Companions.

Bro. Herman Kisabuli

MBITA

Our ecclesia is moving very well. The Bible says that if you see problems and strange things around you, that means the day of the Lord is near. I’ve seen that our Lord is ‘at the door,’ so I’m requesting our brothers and sister to watch, because our Lord could come at any time. Jesus

told us that if the owner of the house knew what time the thief was coming, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Nobody knows the time of Jesus' coming, so we must keep on watching.

Bro. Daniel Ogembo

MOMBASA

I am really being blessed with our Gospel News articles contributed by our brothers and sisters from all over the world. By reading through, I hear some of our believers in Christ are suffering after believing the Truth. I have nothing to help them other than praying for them, that our God of mercy will keep them till we meet in His Kingdom.

I am enjoying Duncan's books which you sent me, especially 'The Death of the Cross.' I should be grateful for a book or a leaflet explaining the day that Jesus died, according to Matt.12:40, Jonah 1:17, 2:1-2.

Bro. Edward Kunikina

NAIROBI

When we read the history of migration in Kenya, we are told that the Bantus group (i.e. where I belong) migrated from Congo Forest to the place where they are settled now. It seems our land (Kenya) was not settled. They came to this place and got it by chance. In this life, there are so many things we get by chance: for example, the job I am doing today, I got by chance.

When Jesus spoke of going to heaven, he told his disciples he was going to prepare for places for them and return. This place is the Kingdom of God (John 14:1-3). For you to be one of the people who will inherit the Kingdom of God on earth, you have to see that you abide in the law of God always, and keep yourself pure in heart (Philippians 4:8).

Bro. Samuel Maruta

NAHIWA

I rejoice that the Breaking of Bread gives me the opportunity to remember Jesus and to celebrate his resurrection; to acknowledge that neither the cruel, excruciating death on a cross, nor the burden of this world's sin could keep him in the grave. I am assured again of his eternal presence and his promise to never leave me nor forsake me; and to accept by faith the hope that only he can give (Hebrews 13:5-6).

When one views the memorial service from this perspective, the things I once thought were important suddenly seem so empty, so meaningless and so insignificant. Our worship, praise and thanksgiving will give us strength and encouragement to pursue our path to the Kingdom.

Bro. Allan Ketoya

NANGO

I am glad to write to you and let you know that I have received your letter, the leaflets and other enclosures and wish to thank you.

This year, we have had some rain and right now every area of Kenya is very green, and farmers are now getting vegetables from the farms freely, and water, which used to be very scarce during

this period of time, is in plentiful supply now. We thank the Almighty for His gifts to mankind. The rain has both blessings and problems, however.

When I read the Newsletter on current events and Middle East events, I am convinced that our Master may come any time now and when we least expect him.

I hope you will continue to send me some more spiritual gifts by sending me Scripture-based reading material, while we are awaiting and preparing for the Master's return.

Bro. Raphael Aimo

I am grateful to you for putting me on your mailing list for Gospel News and hope to share it with my school mates. The Present Day Event articles you enclosed are also very useful, for they add quite a lot of value for their support from the Scriptures. So please continue to send me those items, as the signs keep appearing while we are waiting for our Master's soon return.

Erick Obhiambo

NDALU

You know the work of a pillar in the house of God. The material you have been sending to us frequently has created Bible awareness to many, and it has also revealed to us hidden verses in the Bible and their meaning.

I am happy to see many signs of the near coming of our Lord Jesus being fulfilled during my lifetime. Yet the Bible gives us warnings of a time of trouble such as never was. This has enabled many believers to make several Bible studies to help keep us ready for the coming of our Lord.

Bro. Johnstone Kaliwanga

SINDO

I was happy to receive the latest Gospel News, and took time to read of the welfare, the love of brothers and sisters at Haiti, and the work of the Gospel there. We need to pray for them and give them more spiritual help and fellowship.

The Gospel News must be given first priority as our link to listen, and observe the work of real witness to the Truth.

If you desire in your heart to do the work of God, you will do it. Your heart of devotion and your strong desire to be a witness for the Truth will contribute to the success and the revelation of God's truth to the people around you. 'As a man thinketh, so is he.' We are therefore warned all the time to observe carefully what is before us. Proverbs 17:3: 'the Lord tests the heart.' Verse 22: 'A joyful heart is good medicine.' The Bible is full of references to the heart, but above everything we must never forget to walk with God all the time.

I have schooled my heart, my thoughts, desire, vision and imagination since I was baptized in Christ on 21st August 1976 in Nairobi by Bro. David Rowley. My desire is that God will turn the hearts of my family to come to the Truth so that we can worship Him together in the Kingdom of God on earth when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ rules the kingdoms of this world.

(Rev.11:15)

Bro. John Onani

SUNA

Besides thanking you for the good articles you are offering in Gospel News, I have a request to make. So that I am not left behind when people are talking about the times and the things which happen worldwide which indicate the end times, I would request that you print the part indicating the Bible quote. In many magazines I can read the Bible quote, but when it reaches the place where the book is written you find it faded – so please can you make it clear?

Bro. Samuel Masara

SUNA MIGORI

Following signs of the times prophetically, we are living in the last days. There is an urgent call for each one of us in the mission areas to rise to the plight of our brethren in endangered zones. Thank you, in collaboration with Carelinks, for what you are doing for the brethren in Haiti and all Christadelphians worldwide.

The study of the word of God is profound. What we think we know, we may just partly know, or we may not know completely. As those responsible because we have studied, heard the teachings of prophets and apostles, let's scrutinize the underlying circumstances. They shed some light in an area that has been marred due to ignorance. The die has been cast, we are either for, or against. Time keeps on ticking, the decision we make today has a far-reaching effect on our position in the Kingdom to come.

Bro. Joseph Onyango

I am very grateful for the books I received, which will be very helpful to me and others here in our Ecclesia. I received 11 Bible Basics, 5 'Women in the Church,' and 'The Real Christ.' These I have distributed to brothers and sisters and also to our contacts, who are now ready for baptism.

I have requested our area elders to organize and come to my place for interviews and baptisms, God willing.

Bro. Samuel Masara

TONGAREN

May I praise God, the giver of our life. This way Tongaren Ecclesia is very strong in our faith, only waiting for our Brother Jesus to come and establish his everlasting Kingdom on this existing earth.

Yes, brother, due to the complications which affected our former address, some of the letters are being lost, possibly by the Post Master. Due to this problem Tongaren Ecclesia has opened Box 83 for faster communication for letters and other documents. All the mail sent via Box 259 has been lost.

Brother, nowadays I am having problems with reading the Bible – I need a Bible written in bigger print and in modern English – if you have such a Bible please help me. The one you sent me is printed in small letters and I have a problem reading the Bible daily according to our daily readings.

Bro. Isaac Kapa

BALAKA

Thank you for sending the 'Christadelphian Expositors' with some other literature. In answer to your question, my wife was baptised into the Christadelphian faith in 1990 and I married her in 1994 and we have been blessed with five children. I was baptized in 1985. Many of us bought our own Bibles from the Mission Centre here, so the Bibles are not a real problem but if possible could you please send 'Bible Companions' because many of us do not have them.

Bro. Edson Makwecha

The Balaka Christadelphians would like to thank you for remembering us in many ways with books, prayers and newsletters. Here in Malawi this year we have experienced spells of drought, mainly in Balaka district, Chikwawa and Nsanje, so we have nothing to harvest from our gardens, which is why we need your prayers. God is God and is good always. Please send us more English Bibles and Sunday School books.

Bro. Micky D.S. Mbawe

BOLERO

There is no room for thinking we have got nothing to do. "The rich shall not give more nor the poor less...". God has set the contribution at an amount which every single member of that congregation could afford. The brother or sister who might think they have no talent could not be more wrong. So what is demanded is this enthusiastic, generous giving of all our talents and blessings so that the brethren put in charge have to say, "Stop, we have got more than enough for the work of the Truth."

Bro. Lajanga



Bro. Lajanga and friend.

CHIMIMBE

We do need some books at Chinamwali for use in our Church and also a Bible Reading Planner as the one which we had was lost in the house where we lived that collapsed due to the earthquake earlier this year.

Sis Maicoch

DOWA REFUGEE CAMP

You know that we are considered heretics and hated by our former friends in the JWs. Despite this condition we are still preaching the word of God as it is and we want to do more in this noble ministry. We have relodged our application for freedom from this place but no feedback. Please pray for us.

WE were very pleased to have a helpful visit from Brother Thomas Mleso to our Ecclesia of 9 Brethren, 5 Sisters, 5 children and 4 very interested contacts making a total of 23 and we meet in a temporary hall the Camp Administrator allows us to use. In addition to the regular breaking

of Bread meeting we hold regular Bible Classes and the following are some of the topics recently discussed. –Satan, - the war in Heaven, - the sons of God came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them. (Are the sons of God spoken Genesis 6: 4 Angels or not?). - Jesus, son of God or God?, - Sheol, hell.

Thank you very much for the literature which is a great help to us.

Bro. Innocent



Photo: Bro. Innocent, his wife and children in the mud house they built in the camp.

WE were very pleased to have a helpful visit from Brother Thomas Mleso to our Ecclesia of 9 Brethren, 5 Sisters, 5 children and 4 very interested contacts making a total of 23 and we meet in a temporary hall the Camp Administrator allows us to use. In addition to the regular breaking of Bread meeting we hold regular Bible Classes and the following are some of the topics recently discussed. –Satan, - the war in Heaven, - the sons of God came into the daughters of man and they bore children to them. (Are the sons of God spoken Genesis 6: 4 Angels or not?). - Jesus, son of God or God?, - Sheol, hell.

Thank you very much for the literature which is a great help to us. We received the *Bible Basics* with great joy and are distributing them in the camp. We still need more Bibles in French and more of Swahili hymn books.

Bro. Wabene Ikola Bernard

DZALEKA

After a long time of there being only one family in fellowship God has increased the number of His followers here in Dzaleka Refugee Camp as follows:- In April we received Bro. Wabene Ikoh with his wife, Sis. Sophia Kilinda and their children, from Lugufu Refugee Camp, Tanzania. We have also received Bro. Shadrack Ngambi from the Democratic Republic of Congo together with his wife Elizabeth. Now the number has increased to six baptized members; four brothers and two sisters. With God's blessing, perhaps our number will still increase. Despite our number we should not keep quiet as we have also five contacts and 10 children for our Sunday School. We meet twice each week; Sunday and Wednesday. As for the Breaking of Bread, we used to contribute some money among us to get bread and Coca-Cola (instead of wine), but this has become difficult sometimes because this contribution comes from food we receive from the UNHCR. Being a small quantity it is sometimes difficult to organize the whole service.

Bro. John Abwe

GONDA

The gospel news is spread in so many different ways:-

1. Cornelius received the gospel through a vision first and then Peter preached to him, Acts 10:3-8 and vs. 17-23.

2. The Philippian jailor received the gospel through a great earthquake which opened the door of the prison house because of Paul and Silas's prayer. The jailor trembled with fear and needed salvation and Paul and Silas preached to him the gospel, Acts 16:25-33.

There are many other examples of how the gospel was preached in the first century after Christ.

Because of the drought I left the family and went into town to start working and was employed as a temporary worker. If God wills, I will become permanent in Bharat Trading Company Ltd. which makes tourist things, even though there are less Safaris. There is a proverb which says that half a loaf is better than no bread. I am happy to tell you that in this working factory I continue to help people reading Bible Basics. At this time one family is interested in this Study and I gave him a book and he is also to receive a Bible Study course, as I did.

Bro. Robert Folley



Bro. Robert Folley with his wife and children - "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:6-7).

KADEWERE

If possible, please send me more articles and items for reading. At present, here in Malawi we have a shortage of rainfall; the maize stalks are drying up which will result in famine later this year. The rice will not be cultivated, even in the Government scheme, because the rivers are unable to sustain enough water for irrigation.

Bro. Kenneth Maganger

KASUNGU

I am living in a mud hut thatched with grass and its windows are nailed with sacks empty fertilisers sacks. If we want to go shopping we borrow a bicycle and cycle for about 30km. A thief can easily steal without breaking the house so I am living in unprotected shelter. We face a lot of problems in this rainy season, especially when it is raining during the night. If we eat potato leaves today then it means that tomorrow we will have cassava leaves and the other day pumpkin leaves. We repeat this as it is a cycle, so we have nsima (a product of maize flour and water) and these leaves as our relish.

I lost my good days when I joined the Public Health under Globe Funding. Most of the time we get our monthly salary after 50 days but sometimes after two months and we always get a one month salary no matter how long they have delayed us. I thought things would change; we were just saying maybe this month, maybe this month, until two years have elapsed and now in June this year we are finishing our third year with the Ministry of Health and by June next year we are finishing our temporary work. We are the lowest paid class in the whole Ministry of Health. Our fellow Health Surveillance Assistants (H.S.A.) are paid much higher than us. Even a maid, cleaner or ground labourer in the Ministry of Health is higher than us.

We need more English Bibles and other books. As for Bible Basics in Chichewa, I am sure that every brother and sister in Kasungu has their own copy. There are very few who can speak English.

Bro. Harmony Ntchalachala.



Bro. Harmony and Sis. Susan studying the books of Ezra and Nehemiah while sitting on a mat.



Bro. Harmony with his youngest son, Glesta. Leversey is carrying a small chair.

MTENTHE

One day as Jesus was teaching, a rich man came to him and asked him what he could do to gain eternal life. Jesus told him to keep the commandments. The man said, “Which ones?” Jesus named several of them, and the rich man said, “I have done all of these; what else do I need to do?” Jesus told him if he wanted to be complete and mature in his Christian life, he should sell what he had and give money to the poor.

The young man was unhappy with what Jesus told him and with a heavy heart walked away, unwilling to pay the price that Jesus had asked of him.

Why is it hard for a rich man to be saved? A wealthy person is one who has many earthly possessions. He is one who has more wealth than he needs to live. When someone is so well supplied beyond what he needs, it is hard for him to be saved. In Hebrews 11:6 we read, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him (God), for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

When the rich young man came and asked Jesus what he could do to have eternal life, Jesus knew what his problem was. The young man’s problem was that he was breaking one of the first commandments (Exodus 20:3) e He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

- ‘you shall have no other gods before Me’. This man was trusting in his good works to save him.

The Bible often refers to wealth as a hindrance in doing God’s will. Too many people are too concerned for their own welfare. Jesus said, ‘Your Heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.’ (Matt 6:32-33).

Romans 10:12 says, ‘The Lord Jesus is rich unto all that call on him.’ Here we can see that true riches are in being saved. Again in Romans Paul says, ‘O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God’ (Romans 11:33).

“With God all things are possible,” but we must put our lives under His control. Paul says in Romans 10:9, “if thou shalt confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved”.

Bro. Henderson Sosola

MZUZU

Thank you for sending me the book entitled 'The Real Christ' which has aroused much interest in so many brothers and sisters here. I have experienced a lot of trouble of mind due to my one and only brother's death and the sickness of my only son, who is suffering from skin wounds which started first like blisters or burns over a year ago. I have taken him to the local hospitals as I cannot afford a private hospital but the treatment has not helped him.

As the time of Jesus' coming is near lots of strange events are happening in this country, including sexual immorality between men. Also over thirty earthquakes have occurred in this northern region resulting in leaving many homeless in Karonga, Rumphu, Mzuzu and Chitipa.

Bro. Dutch Mphayah.

I always appreciate all that CAT is doing for us and for all your encouragement. It is good to hear what is being done for brothers and sisters in Haiti, because of the earthquake disaster. It is my prayer that the Lord God may continue to bless all that you are doing. I very much appreciate the batch of Bible Basics which are very useful for serious friends who may be interested in our beliefs. Many thanks for introducing me to a Bible student; I am delighted to have his name. I marked the work he did straight away and am waiting to have his response. Lastly, I want to report that this year at least there are fewer areas that are experiencing hunger due to lack of rain and moreover some areas got rains very late and this has contributed to the lack of enough food in other places. However, the general experience here in Malawi is that the worst months for food shortages are January and February of each year.

Bro. Sylvester Tembo

NENO

There are four men, three of them teachers, who are very interested in being baptized and I hope that soon they will be and that they will also benefit from the books sent to me. I have six sons and four daughters and eight grandchildren who will also benefit from these books, and, God willing, there is another grandchild on the way. We all know that Jesus lives and will live for ever and that is our hope that as we do better we will also be like him. We have the hope that soon he will be coming to make the world free from current problems and bring people back to God.

Bro. A.D. Liwawa

NGABU

I am the firstborn in our family and go to school in Saindi, I am in class 4 and like playing netball as my best hobby. One thing I like most is praising God as my Creator. I am a Christadelphian member, as my father is an elder of Tigwirizane Christadelphian Church here in Ngabu area and I am also choir-mistress of this Church. The subject I most like is English, because it is our international language. I was born of a poor family and my mother died when I was only two-and-a-half years old.

Sis Cynthia Wyson Sozinyu



Sis Cynthia Wyson Sozinyu

NKANDA

It is God's purpose to reward His faithful people with eternal life at the return of Jesus Christ. This eternal life will be spent on earth. God's repeated promises concerning this never imply that the faithful will go to heaven; only Jesus went to heaven and he promised his followers that although they could not go there, (John 13:33), he was to come back to earth and be with them there, (John 14:3). Our salvation and eternal life will be experienced in a bodily form, (Romans 8:11-23).

Such honour and privilege inevitably bring responsibilities, yet these are not designed to be too heavy or onerous for us. If we truly love God we will appreciate that His offer of salvation is not an automatic reward for certain works, but a loving desire on His part to do all that He can for His children to grant them an eternal life of happiness through their appreciation of His marvellous character. Never are His loving eyes away from us; never can we forget or undo our knowledge of Him.

Bro. Lyton John Nkanda



Brothers and sisters of Nkanda Ecclesia, from right to left – Bro. Lyton John, Bro. Fabiano Zimbulani, Bro. Aubry Zimbulani, Sis. Kwangule, Sis. Sambu Jumbe, Sis. Ides John and the young boys Clement and his brother.



Bro. John Moyo, grandfather, born in 1901 and baptized in 1997 at Nkanda Ecclesia.



Bro. Lyton John

SALIMA

I am running short of 'Introducing Bible Basics' for a number of scholars, which are increasing. I also only have a few "Bible Basics" both English and Chichewa. There are indications that more people now have a zeal to learn what the Bible teaches through the Christadelphians, only that

the study materials are inadequate. Most of them are able to read and understand our vernacular language which is Chichewa.

Concerning people living in my area, I have now found five members who wish to meet me at their doorstep to convene an indoor meeting on the issue of the truth of the ONE GOD not Trinity, the Sabbath day and true worshipping.

Bro. Austin F. Nyirenda

With greatest sorrow I wish to report that we have lost my beloved wife Sis. Nellie, who fell asleep on 2nd May after battling with pneumonia. The brotherhood gave us a very strong moral and spiritual support and she died at Mulanje District Hospital. Please pray for the three boys who were following the Truth under her guidance.

Bro. Ignatius Maluwa

NB. We send our deep sympathy and love to our Brother and his family.MH.

TSANGANO

Here God is still loving us. Please send as many copies of Gospel News and other magazines as you can because every two months we receive three or four new members who join us from other churches. We have opened a new Church called Gomo La Mpingwi which started with 25 members but has now increased, so we need more literature as we obtain much knowledge and encouragement from it. It is very difficult for us to communicate through the internet but the time will come when we will do so. We want to thank CAT for the wonderful job they are doing in sending us this literature. It is wonderful that, as God's children, we can eat, drink, sing and share what we can as Christians. You talk about some of the problems you are facing when you are sending some of our materials. Let us ask our Heavenly Father to help us deal with all problems as we depend on you to send us Bibles, and other things to help our lives in Christ.

Bro. Peter Mbingwani



Left, Bro Samisoni Massina, Middle, Bro Kondwani Nkhoma, Rt, Bro Selemawo Gama. The Elders of the Goma la Mpango Ecclesia

ULONGWE

I am still suffering due to the car accident I have already told you about. Please help me because I am in danger of hunger and I do not know what to do with the children that are looking after me as I am not working.

Bro. Harry Benito

news from nigeria

ABA

I have received *Bible Basics* in English together with the *Gospel News* am very grateful especially in helping me and others to a greater spiritual understanding in our walk towards the kingdom of God. I will like to continue receiving *Gospel News* and one *Bible Basics* for a sister who is interested in it. It is heartening and encouraging us as we learn more about our brothers and sisters world-wide. We are pleased to announce the baptism of Bro. Henry Ugorji Okorie who has been called out of darkness into God's marvelous light. May the Lord preserve him in his ways and desire to further develop our Ecclesia in ABA.

Sis. Elizabeth Ojike.

CALABAR

The Gospel Publicity League news on the World Watch, the Benefits of Yahweh's Secret of Events, comments and Bible quotations has reached my hands. I have to thank the Almighty God and you for the pains, time and money spent to send this news and information to me.

With all these events that are taking place we should be expecting the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ at any time now. May the Almighty God grant us that love and grace to be with our Lord in his coming Kingdom. Amen.

Bro. Igani U. Eteng

ENUGU

We are here praying for the help of our Almighty God. I praise all of you who are trying to contribute one thing or another for the welfare of others. For us here, our conditions are like Haiti. There is no earthquake here, but our situation is almost the same. Lawlessness is rampant, and everything is scattered. Brother Dafydd's team who were to have visited us were not allowed to come East because of kidnappers and dangers to their lives.

Is it not better that when the earthquake occurred, although people suffered, both the wicked and righteous alike were swept away. Those who have faith, however, are assured of waking in resurrection when Christ returns. Here we live among evil people who affect our daily lives. All our prayer is that our Father, who is in heaven, will send His Son Jesus back to us here, so that we will not see death.

Our landlords are disturbing us by increasing house rent without notice: not everyone should seek to build houses – we are travelling only towards Jesus.

Enugu Ecclesia's members are all well, by the grace of God. We all went to the gathering – about three hundred miles away. We left in the morning and finished our journey in the evening. We spent four days there.

Bro. Goddy Nwosu

IKWUEKE

In most cases when things are tough or something is lost, people do not want to blame themselves. They try all means to blame either someone or something. They want to be sinless and innocent. I think it is very good for everyone to look first and examine or judge themselves, because God sees all and knows our thoughts (Heb.4:13).

The sin of the first Adam, who brought sin and death into the world (Romans 5:12), the second Adam (our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ). brought life into the world, He commanded us 'Go ye into all the world and preach to every creature' (Mark 16:15).

Over the centuries there have been many changes in church thought, belief, customs and outlook. Yet there is but one Gospel, one God, one Lord Jesus Christ, one Hope of Israel and one true Bible., which are unchangeable.

Sinner, I ask you: will you open the Word of God and check its teachings with current belief? The result may be amazing to you, but it will give you satisfaction and reassurance, and a peace that passes understanding. After all, life without God (Deut. 6:4) AND HIS SON (Matt. 20:28) is barren and meaningless.

Bro. F. E. Enyiogu

news from tanzania

KIGOMA

The members of Nyarugusu II Ecclesia would like to appeal for help in order to make a Garden Project. This kind of project is fruitful to brothers and sisters because we are in a troubled situation in this camp. We are suffering from a shortage of food at this moment, but our project will be continuing.

We cultivate cabbages, onions and tomatoes. That is why we come to ask for your help with tools, etc. In the 'photos you see how the inundation has broken a house, and we are still accommodating brothers until the rebuilding of the house is completed.

Bro. Daniel Sabuni

MUSOMA

In the recent heavy rains parts of Musoma is were flood and 45 families had to migrate to other places and they lost their belongings. No death is reported except there was also a road accident caused by a bridge as it went off with the water and 45 people died and five taken to hospital. This happened in Mwanza Region... the world is full of disasters.

Good News, one Bro John joined the breaking of bread after Bro. Michael Owens interview. God is great there are also three more contacts for next year God willing. We are all doing well.

Sis Monica Achieng



Sister Monica and her family, except the little boy, a neighbours child

news from uganda

BUSIA

I want to thank God for giving us life and the wonderful hope of the Gospel. Since 2007 I have been active in the Truth and have encountered many problems including the loss of my bicycle and mobile phone. At present I am studying hard for the 'O' level exams in October and November, and if successful will then proceed to the 'A' level course, so I need your prayers for God to help me get a good grade and also to serve Him as I should.

My mother and most of our family have embraced the Truth, apart from two who are keen to do so.

Bro. Mangeni Rogers

BUTIRU

Thank you for what you are doing for God's people. The Gospel is extending to very many people because of the energetic efforts you have shown in sending books and spiritual notes. I have received all the M-bags at the cost of 9,000 Uganda shillings (£3) charged by the post administration. But due to the help I have found in your literature, I struggled for a way of raising funds until I paid for it.

I promise to use these Bible Basics properly, especially when we meet for Bible Study classes.

Lastly, I would like to request you to pass my greetings and those of my wife to all members of our fellowship, and I request you to pray for me to receive God's blessing that we may have help to complete our house.

Bro. Boniface Buyeyi Masakala

Scenes from the Sisters' Seminar at Butiru



Sis. Evelyn Buyeyi presiding at the seminar.



Singing together.



Two visiting speakers from Mt. Elgon.



The Butiru Ecclesia

JINJA



An Elders workshop at the Jinja YMCA which they all found constructive and encouraging – indeed one says it “changed his life”.



Bro. Boniface Masakala, with Sis. Faith Boyd and Bro. Hassan Matzatza.



Bro. Jonathan Johnstone and another brother at the workshop.

LUMINO

The idea of supplying Bibles is very good and necessary. At Lumino and our area at large Bibles are very few and most brethren and sisters share Bibles in the meetings. Visitors just listen to the readings and Sunday School scholars do not have any books apart from lesson books but their teacher has a Bible. There is a need to provide as you did with the Bible Basics last time. With Bible Companions, we photocopy the ones we have and give them to our visitors and those who need them.

Yes, many people are turning to the Bible for their solution to this world’s troubles. I and my family read the Bible together daily. In our Bible Class we do much study in Bible Basics with our visitors. We shall encourage members in each ecclesia to form little groups to read the Bible and Bible Basics together, a few pages or a chapter, and then discuss them together, and the same with our visitors or contacts, as routine.

It is true that the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few, as the Bible says. At Lumino we have suggested a new way of spreading the Truth, by going to the water sources like boreholes, wells, springs etc. where people get water and we get involved in various work like washing all jerricans and other containers, cleaning (sweeping) and pumping/fetching water for all the people around the water source. We also help in any repairs needed in case of any damage. As we do these tasks we talk about God’s Word in the Bible and Bible Basics and we also give out leaflets. The community leaders/members where we visit are so happy with our Bible truth and our work and support there that they visit us in our meetings and Bible classes. What do you think about this kind of preaching?

What you say about the gradual aid to Haiti seems to be true. Our general fund has been cut by 25% and other aids like projects, welfare emergencies and famine problems have been reduced.

Bro. Godfrey Egessa

MADOWA

Let us work for the Kingdom of God, not for the things of the world. Let us fight for eternal life in the Kingdom of God by living and preaching the good news to all people - Luke 4:43. Blessed are you when men hate you because of the son of man, Christ Jesus - Luke 6:20-23. Be spiritually rich in the eyes of God. Jesus said that God has given to you the secrets of the Kingdom of God – Luke 8:10.

Brothers and sisters, we will be in the Kingdom if we seek it and are doing good things for God – read Luke 12:31-32. “I tell you the truth, whoever has left home or wife or brother or parents or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God will receive it.” Luke 18:29-30. Let everybody follow Jesus Christ as did the disciples, Simon Peter, James and John, as we read in Luke 5:8-11.

Bro. Patrick Muboli

news from zambia

CHIPATA

Thank you for “Present Day Events” and other magazines which I feel are very helpful. They help me a lot to know more about events in these last days and things which are happening in this world, especially in Israel. Please do not give up sending me these magazines which increase our spiritual knowledge.

Bro. Donald Mwale

FRINGILLA

Every day our lives ought to be a day of thanks; therefore we are blessed to be alive and we have to give praises to God. Therefore let us change our well-being by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and living soberly and righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. However, we live with friends and relatives to whom we should reveal the Word of God. Moreover we should not become weak, we should always pray to God to give us strength and courage to do his work in harmony.

KABOMPO

The brothers and sisters are suffering many difficult challenges, unpleasant situations caused by present conditions in the world economy, persecution and other circumstances. It is a fact that hardship creates the right situation for people to consider God. Really, the signs of the times are stimulating at the moment and we wonder how much more have to be fulfilled before the return of the Lord.

Despite all these difficulties our Heavenly Father is in control. Through the magazines we remind one another worldwide of the signs of the times, as it does seem that the coming of the Lord is very near and we all have to prepare ourselves for that – “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord. Giving thanks always for all things unto the God and Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Eph.5:15-20. The reason is that we are the temple of God.

The *Gospel News* helps us understand not only events and signs of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ but also it plays a major role in uniting us in the love of our Lord in our walk to the Kingdom, because we read in it news from our brothers and sisters worldwide. This is a wonderful blessing from the Lord and may our Heavenly Father continue to bless you and use you to send us literature to encourage us.

I came to know the Truth and be baptised through the advertisements you put in the newspapers in Ndola in 1979 to 1980. I also thank you for sending me all the books which I use as reference books during our group Bible studies and as library books to lend to my Bible students. I am happy that Bro. Denis Kombe of Ndola has been sending names of new Bible students to the linkman, Bro. David Nicholls and many have now begun receiving their 40 lesson postal courses. We expect the baptisms of three people soon, two men and one woman who have been studying with us.

Jerusalem, the City of the Lord, shall be given a new name when God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations. (Isaiah 61:11); "And the Gentiles shall see God's righteousness and all kings thy glory, and thou shall be called a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." (Isaiah 62:2).

"But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." (Isaiah 65:18-19). Such will be the lifestyle of the subjects of the Kingdom of God when the Lord rules the world with his saints, who will be kings and priests with him.

We have a huge responsibility therefore out of love for the return of our Lord, to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God and it is for this reason that the Kabompo Ecclesia, of which I am the secretary, has a project known as "Sowing Seed Project", aimed at enhancing the preaching campaign in Kabompo district this year, using door to door campaign preaching and distributing Christadelphian pamphlets and visiting Bible students, encouraging them to read the Bible as well as to study the 40 lesson postal course.

Really I am not alone, you are with me and I am with you and the Lord Jesus Christ is always with us. We shall do all things by the power of God who sustains our lives for a purpose as it pleases Him. We do not desire riches but we daily seek His Kingdom and His righteousness that we may be found blameless through His righteousness, not our righteousness, for not one of us apart from Him can earn eternity or life immortal in the age to come. Surely no infirmity or illness can stop us from proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, for the love of God in Christ Jesus cannot be overcome by these conditions. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

I have come to learn that all those who preach the Word or Gospel of the Kingdom of God are not loved by the world because they and the world are opposed to each other and indeed, "Who has believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Jesus Christ, our Master, grew up as a tender plant, as a root out of a dry ground: he had no form nor comeliness and even when he was seen he had no beauty that they would desire him. (Isaiah 53:1-12).

He was despised and rejected by men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and people hid their faces from him. He was despised and they esteemed him not. But surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows away, (that is why I do not any longer consider my own

illness as a hindrance but a positive condition for me to preach and proclaim what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished for us. He has provided the atonement for our sins. He has put on us his righteousness, so as to be our garment, lest we appear to him naked at his appearance with his holy angels soon). We should esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted and wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon him and with his stripes we were healed.

Therefore I count myself, by faith, already healed of my disease because I no longer value the present body of sin and corruption, but I regard myself as one of those chosen to put on immortality at Christ's return. What I hope for is of much higher and of more noble value than the present I seem to possess or be in this world. Then if our Lord opened not his mouth when he was oppressed and afflicted and was dumb when he was murdered, judged and imprisoned, why should I complain about my illness which is a result of my former sins and the sinful nature I am in the moment, which will be swallowed up by immortality at Christ's return. (1 Cor.15:51-58).

Indeed, our labour, my brothers and sisters in our Christadelphian community worldwide, is not in vain (1 Cor.15:58). So we should be steadfast, unmoveable, but always abounding in the work of the Lord, for our labour is not in vain, we shall behold the glory of God at the return of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Yes brother, the harvest is plentiful but indeed the labourers are few and indeed that is the situation we are in now. I am grateful indeed for your assistance. I was at the farm harvesting maize, so that we may dry it well, following to heavy downpours in February and March. The yield would have been good, however we have enough for our domestic consumption this year to last us to the next harvest. Thanking you for your prayers. We are all well and the ecclesia is well too.

Bro. Reuben Kaambeu



Sis. Carol Bwlaya, baptised 25.10.09.



Si

s. Sarah Kaambeu, daughter of Bro. And Sis. Reuben Kaambeu.



Lilly Musumali – a serious Bible student.

KAFUE

Greetings in the redeeming Name of our Lord Jesus Christ and Saviour. Thank you for all the support you have been giving me in my times of need, which has given strength to my feeble bones and strengthened me in the disappointments I have encountered in all my ways. May God richly bless you and your families.

I have sad news in that ever since I started working last year I have only been able to attend a Sunday service once and I am trying to negotiate with the company to give me a day off on a Sunday. I usually have my day off on a Tuesday when I spend it at the ecclesia cutting the grass and weeding around the area. The reason that I do this kind of job is that I have no one to depend on and some took advantage of my vulnerability, so I decided to work in order to stop this. I am optimistic that the same God who provided me with this job will enable me to attend the meetings again.

It is recorded that the Apostles set about their preaching in just the same way as Jesus addressed himself to converting them. He had showed himself alive to them “by many infallible proofs”, and they were the witnesses to present their proof to the world. (Acts 1:3). The word “witness” is appropriated to them in the preaching. (Acts1:21-22). When

They appointed another apostle to replace the traitor, Judas, they were scrupulous that he must have proper qualifications, having been familiar with Jesus from the beginning and up to the time of his resurrection and ascension, and so be able to add his testimony to theirs. (Acts 1:21). They also invited their hearers to note the intimacy of their acquaintance with the risen Lord. “We did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.” (Acts 10:41)

But they also appealed to the Scriptures in their dealing with their Jewish fellows. So Peter appealed to a Psalm of David to show that Jesus could not remain in the grave, and later in a letter, summed up the evidence of the Old Testament in words remarkably like those that Jesus is said to have instructed the disciples. (Acts 3:22-24). Philip could convert a man who was reading a prophecy about the suffering Christ by beginning at that same scripture and preaching Jesus. (Acts 8:30-35).

Finally, brothers and sisters, let us read the Bible in our everyday life despite the challenges we pass through as we journey towards our God’s Kingdom.

Bro. Stephen Siamabi



Bro. Stephen Siamabi

KALOMO



Bro. Ackim Sikabuli

KASAMA

I lost my job in 2008 so I decided to settle down at our family farm. At first it was hard for me to be living here but eventually I got used to it. You and Duncan are welcome to stay at my house. We are situated about 15 kms. from the town centre. After losing my parents in 2004 and 2006 I

look at life and measure it to be meaningless. I think so much about my parents. You never know the value of parents until you lose them. I thank God that he is always at my side.

It is important for you to keep that spirit of encouraging members to be strong in the ecclesia. Here in Zambia it is now the Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses who are still moving in all corners to have support from the lost sheep. I am once again asking you to send me some Christian magazines.

So many things happen in my village here, e.g. last year an elderly woman was burnt to ashes in her small hut. Then a young boy accidentally axed his young brother and a young man aged about 25 years married and with two beautiful children, committed suicide. My own daughter Beliya stopped school in grade 11 at the age of 18 and became a mother, so I am now a grandma of a lively boy. I hope that one day that Jesus will bring you here to see the children you helped to know Christ.

Sis. Jane Bwalya Daka

KAZEMBE

Just after the curing of a damsel, Paul and Silas suddenly found themselves dragged into the market place, lied about, severely beaten and thrown into prison. Paul and Silas had certainly known better days! However the mistreatment they endured did not crush their spirits. About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and other prisoners were listening to them. (Acts 16:25).

Then an earthquake hit the prison and all the cell doors flew open. Even the chains that bound the prisoners came loose. When the jailor woke up and saw what had happened, he feared his punishment more than he feared death. Braving his sword, he was about to kill himself when the voice of Paul came from deep within the prison. He said, "Do not harm yourself! We are all here!" What happened next is the basis of this study: The jailor called for lights, rushed in and fell before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:29-30).

There is so much that we do not know about the jailor. Was he kind or cruel? Did he worship in the temples of idols? Before that night had he been spiritually interested at all? Had he heard anything about Jesus or Christians? We simply do not know. What we do know is that he was terrified by his near-death experience and he was thankful just to be alive and to have a second chance. Some power greater than anything he had ever known had shaken the foundations of the prison and his life. Was there anything he could do to be saved?

WE CANNOT SAVE OURSELVES. Before we look at what the jailor was told to do it is important to realise that we cannot save ourselves, we cannot earn salvation and we cannot provide a worthy sacrifice for our own sins. In writing to the Ephesian Christians, Paul stated this clearly. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph.2:8-9). On another occasion Paul wrote to the church in Rome, "Just at the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.....God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."(Romans 5:6-8).

Without Jesus we are powerless sinners, incapable of doing anything that would save us. So whatever the jailor was told to do that memorable night, he was not challenged to save himself;

only Jesus can be a Saviour! But the jailor found that there were things that he needed to do to respond to the Saviour's invitation.

Bro. James Kambobe

LIVINGSTONE

God takes the home to be a very important place in the believer's life. The family was made by God for the keeping of much that is worthwhile in life. If less attention is put to the home even our progress in life goes down. Home is a means of developing spiritual qualities, one's fitness for leadership in the ecclesia grows out of a man's character in the home. There must be a family altar in a believer's home where the family gathers for Scripture reading and for prayer. The father must have authority in the home and he should use it in wisdom and love. The mother must know that her first responsibility is to God and the family in the home. Father and mother should show a godly example to their children. Both parents must come together on matters concerning the disciplining of their children. God places discipline very highly. (Heb.12:10-11). Some parents spend much of their time away from their children. This is bad because children may suffer from lack of affection. It is important to keep the family unit. In every believer's home, work for the Lord should be put first. Whether at home, at work or wherever we may be, we should know the fact that we represent our Saviour and so every word and act should be worthy of him and should be governed by him.

Bro. Likando Ileshebo

I thank Almighty God for His love in bringing us together as one family in Christ. We must put our trust in knowing that when we die or when the Lord Jesus returns we have been promised a place in God's Kingdom and we have no need to be frightened. We should always remember that great and precious promise. Many people today are concerned as to their future prosperity, no longer considering the things of God.

I am sorry for being silent for a long time but now I am able to write and indeed strong in Our Lord. He certainly is the only certain hope in life. A great difficulty has faced Livingstone which we never experienced before. Due to heavy rain many people's houses have been submerged, bridges damaged and fields washed away.

I hope this letter finds you and your family in good health in preparation for the coming Kingdom. I am happy for the great help to me concerning the book I asked for. It will help me in my plan and I appreciate your concern. Please continue this spirit of dedication for the work of the Lord.

Bro. Caphes Sikanyika



Bro. Caphes Sikanyika

LUSAKA

Thank you for sending *Gospel News*. Please continue to send it to me and I am very happy if you put my letter in the magazine. I am your fellow soldier in the conquest and advancement of the Gospel and pray that the good God will continue to help, provide and protect you.

Bro. Aaron Samalo

Being lonesome is a situation where you feel neglected with no one to talk to. In life we need somebody; the one you delight. He or she is your companion; you are attached together in one mind and have one common goal. When you are separated you begin to feel desolate. It is not a good condition.

We have such a wonderful being and we are warmly attached to one another. He is our Counsellor, a Saviour, a Prince of Peace, a Lamp of God, the one who cares most. Without him we feel irritable. Let us call him to our hearts, let him build us because he is a big cornerstone to our hands or our bodies. Winds will come to destroy the building but it will remain for it is on a good foundation whose builder is Christ himself. He is the shepherd, he cannot allow us to perish. See the cross where he died! It is where redemption was won, his blood, a ransom to cleanse us from our iniquities, all our sins covered at the cross of Calvary. "If you obey my commands you will remain in my love; just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love." John 15:10.

Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Jude : 21. Read Isaiah 45:5-6 and Isaiah 46:9-10.

Name withheld



Taken at Mulungushi Hotel. Sis. Sarah Stevenson and Bro. Michael Ashton were among others who came from the U.K.. Bro. Joshua Mushili, on left side and Bro. Gideon to the right side putting his bag on the ground.

MAZABUKA

It is always uplifting to read about how others are doing in the Mission Field and testimonies of how others came to know the true teaching. Do keep up doing such a splendid work in the Lord's vineyard. I had fainting bouts earlier this year and I am glad to report that I am well again, through the grace of God. May God be thanked for all the blessing of health and life we have, not that we are important and that is why we live, but that God has a purpose for our lives. We have only a short time to prepare for Jesus' return, which will be soon, and may we all be found to be like sheep without blemish at Judgement Day.

The old friendship between the U.S.A. and Israel is beginning to fall apart. This is a sign that the return of Christ is near; Israel will soon have no other friend in the world. This will encourage Israel's enemies to attack her, which will lead to the last world war and will be the worst ever, with nuclear, chemical and bio weapons. Keep looking at Israel. Pray for God to give the Israelites a soft heart because as things are now, their hearts are made of stones.

I had the privilege of being called by St. John's Catholic Church to share Bible studies with their youths. I am glad to report that my studies from the Bible Basics were liked and I would like to request more leaflets, books and materials for Bible study.

As we wait for the soon return of Jesus Christ, let us work hard to tell as many people as we can the good news, to bring people to God. Brothers and sisters around the world, can we bring God and the hope of life in God's Kingdom for all believers and where there will be no more hunger or

thirst, to our friends and neighbours: It is urgent! Let us teach the people to accept God and his Son Jesus Christ. Let us make the Word of God plain to them so that they can understand the Gospel, as we learned from it. We are now children of God and a brother or sister of his Son, Jesus Christ. We are now in God and Jesus' hands and protected. I shall pray for you in this respect as well, to be successful in your preaching efforts to bring more people to safety and I do pray also for God to help us to find ears willing to hear the message of God and understand it, so that we can bear fruits as we labour together in the Lord's service.

I also pray that we will become a shining example, full of enthusiasm for the Word of life and that God may help us to find listeners to hear the Gospel. I know that we can do it with the help of God and his Son, Jesus. With everlasting love for God, the Creator and Jesus his Son, I greet you all with the brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.

Bro. Gideon Timothy Hankomone

NDOLA

I am going through the public debate, "Are the miraculous gifts available today?" It is a good book and I am enjoying it. When I was looking at the Christadelphian hymn book I came across hymn no. 308. It goes like this:-

Shall we behold the promised land,
Its streams and long down-trodden dust
Delivered from the alien hand,
And given to the just?

Shall we be there with saints of old
Assembled round the judgment throne,
When making up gems and gold
The Lord selects His own?

Shall we with pure and strengthened voice
Join in that saintly choir to sing
And with immortal power rejoice
To praise the chosen King?

Compare Psalm 89:15-17, Psalm 95:1-2, and Psalm 98:4-9.

We know the end, we know the way,

And some with life he will endow,

Shall we be with him in that day?

We make the answer now.

Read: John 6:67-68 and John 14:4-7

Luke 23:42-43

Joshua 24:13-15.

Brothers and sisters, ask yourselves this question, "Will I be there on that day?" As the hymn goes on, make the answer now'

Remember the glory,

Remember the land.

May the LORD GOD'S Good Hands be with you all, Amen.

Bro. Harris Mulongesha



Bro. Harris Mulongesha at the Copper Belt Fraternal

news from zimbabwe

CHEGUTU

All is well over here and the house of God is in order and look forward to the return of our Master. Our ecclesia has a big Sunday Bible Day and it has started on a big note. We do hope that we will continue meeting and upbuilding one another until the return of our Master. The support you are giving us in this time of need is greatly valued. May God bless the CAT. Let us all work for the Lord and he will be pleased with us.

Bro. Farai Phiri



Chegutu Ecclesia



The Youth Group with Bro. Itai Tembo



Sisters preparing the meal



The Sunday School.

CHIPINGE

Thank you very much for the Present Day Events as well as the Carelinks newsletter. These days I am without news as my radio is not working. I used to tune in to 'Voice of America' Africa

service, where I used to hear news around the world, including Israel. Anyway, God is in control because I am now utilising that time by reading the magazines by Christadelphians as well as books written by brothers. So far I have finished reading 'The Real Christ' and I have re-read 'Beyond Bible Basics' by Bro. Duncan, 'My Days and My Ways' by Bro Robert Roberts, with an appendix by Bro. C.C. Walker and I am now busy reading 'Christendom Astray' by Bro. R.Roberts; he was such a clever brother and I am looking forward to meeting him and speaking to him face to face in the coming Kingdom. Duncan helped me a lot before I was baptized. While I was in South Africa he wrote to me and introduced me to Bro. Paul and Sis. Leonie Verster, who later arranged for my baptism. As if it was not enough he travelled from Latvia and helped us to establish Rimbi Ecclesia, in the company of Bro. Paul and Sis. Leonie.

We have started rotating meetings for breaking of bread here in Chipinge north, with Bre. Farai and Simeon, Sis. Evelyn and myself, either at our farm or at Ratelshoek, where Farai and Simeon work. Though things are difficult for us all, I hoped and felt that somehow the means would be provided by God Himself. We are busy harvesting and this season we are going to realize 80% loss because of climate change.

I have received the bound volumes of the Christadelphian magazines. most of them are over 100 years ago and the latest is 90 years. I have also received 'Bible Basics' and Bible commentary plus another box with books written by Christadelphian authors. While at home I caught the flu and was given Co-trimoxazole. Another big problem was created as my legs swelled and I was in great pain. I went to see a doctor and he prescribed me another drug. Even though I am in pain I am doing my daily readings and am exhorted to attend to my business in the fear of God, seeking first the Kingdom and righteousness and having food and raiment therewith to be content.

As troubles thickens in this time of the end, men's hearts are failing them for fear, looking for the things coming upon the earth. Apart from the Hope of Israel how appalling is the prospect!! Having the light of God's Word upon the situation, we can discern the working out of His revealed purpose and proof in the current troubles that Christ is at the door. May he soon gather together his waiting servants.

On the 16th July 2010 we met at Rimbi; myself, Brethren. Nyasha, Patrick, Rhobson of Bulawayo. We held two interviews and one was successful.

The 18th was a real blessed day as brothers of the Chipinge district ecclesia walked to the banks of Tanganda River. It's still winter here, but that day the sun shone in the beautiful blue sky – a real blessing for the baptism of Maxwell Mashapa. The baptism was witnessed by Brethren Tumai, Nyasha, Shadreck,Patrick, who did the baptism, and myself.

Before the baptism, we read Romans chapter 6. The reading was done by Bro. Shadreck and the baptism talk was given by Bro. Moses, concluding the talk by reading Colossians 3:1-4.

Before giving the newly baptised Brother the right hand of fellowship, we normally sing Anthems 37 and 38, but because everyone had come with our Shona yellow hymnbook, we all read Numbers 6:24-26 together with firm, loud voices.

Bro. Moses Dhlakama

KWEKWE

Through the blood shed for our redemption there are triumphs to be achieved that will bring glory to God and the Lamb. Christ will not be satisfied till victory is complete and “He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied”, Isa.53:11. All the nations of the earth shall hear the gospel of his grace, but not all will receive it but “a seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation”, Ps.22:30. “The greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High”, and “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord” Dan.7:27, Isa.11:9.

The greatest gift of God had been given to the world.

Joy to the poor; for Christ had come to make them heirs of his Kingdom.

Joy to the rich; for he would teach them how to secure eternal riches.

Joy to the ignorant; he would make them wise unto salvation.

Joy to the learned; he would open to them deeper mysteries than they had ever fathomed; truths that had been hidden from the foundation of the world would be opened to men by the Saviour’s mission.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” John 16:19,20.

Bro. Melusi Ndlovu

MAGUNJE

We are fit and strong in the Word of God. My preaching is very fruitful and many people are responding to our gospel proclamation. Your letter and some leaflets of the news of Israel and its neighbours reached my letter box thank you so much. My preaching and campaign giving Glad Tidings books and leaflets in different subjects is so encouraging to students and I need more. We have met Bro. Steve and Sis. Ruth Moore recently and had a good meeting with them. We are encouraged as our redemption is near and we pray that Christ will come soon. Zimbabwe is still a mess and we need your prayers. My Australian magazine stopped coming last year and I do not know why. I am looking for spiritual food from the saints and hope to hear more from you and my brothers in Christ.

I am going to use my talent, my shield of faith; I have put the helmet of salvation on my head to keep it. My mind is protected through the Bible. I am renewed in transformation of my mind. I thank God and His Son every day of my life. Hope to hear from you very soon.

Bro. Stanford Kuuzha

MHANGURA

There is a protection behind the breastplate of righteousness. If we do what is right we will be safe. If we are careful, committed and ethical in all that we do, say and think, we will enjoy protection and victory. Let us then be pure, clean and right before the Lord and before others in all of our attitudes and actions. Our motives – the deep purposes of our heart – must ever be to glorify Him and do His Will. Let us be worthy unto Him so that our names remain in the Book of Life (Rev. 3:4-6).

Justification is just the beginning of our great salvation. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power (authority, the right or privilege) to become the sons of God...” John 1:12. The word “power” is important in this verse, it should be translated “authority” since it is the Greek word *exousia*. This is a word of privilege, right or permission. Let us take it in this way; when the

traffic signal turns green you have the exousia (right, permission or privilege) to proceed forward. If your car runs out of gas at that instant, you do not have the power to go even though you have the authority to go. So when we receive Christ we are given the permission, the right or authority to become sons of God. Similarly, the Israelites had the authority to enter Canaan and possess it, but they perished in the wilderness in unbelief. So as Christians let us receive him, follow him and believe in him for us to become sons and daughters of God.

Bro. Joseph Zishechi

MPATA

I am a brother living in isolation at Chinhoyi rural and I enclose my postal address. I shall be very happy if you will send me another book, "The Death of the Cross".

Bro. Benjamin Makuti

MUTARE

Thank you for sending me a pamphlet on how to hold a funeral for a Christadelphian. Recently we had a good time with Bro. Steve and Ruth Moore from U.K. We did Bible studies with them and two students were interviewed and baptized at the Wise Owl Motel in Mutare. We are still fighting hard to make sure that most people in Mutare know about the Christadelphians. Most people are no longer using 'snail mail', but e-mails and mobile phones for communication and the Post Office's business is being affected. I will continue writing to you.

Bro. Gilbert Tevere

RATELSHOEK

It was a very Good Friday to witness and to welcome Bro. Simeon Mudhimbayo into fellowship at Ratelshoek. He went into the water in Chibudzana River and was baptized by Bro. Moses Dhlakama. We waited a long time for Bre. Admire and Patrick who failed to come for different reasons and at long last we started the work of God. All went well in peace and harmony, witnessed by four other Bible students who attended the scene. Bro. Moses gave a talk about baptism. The Bible tells us that no one will enter into the Kingdom without being baptised into Christ, a symbol of dying once with Christ under water and rising again with Christ out of the water to a newness of life. Romans 6 and Colossians 2. We enjoyed a nice meal prepared by Monica Mudhimbayo, the wife of Bro. Simeon. She is doing Shona lessons with five other students.

I would like to thank brothers and sisters of Chipinge Ecclesia and those of the worldwide community who gave donations to the Memorial Service for Sis Vheina.

Bro. Simeon was given the right hand of fellowship at Rimbi Ecclesia by Bro. Rhobson Sithole of Bulawayo. To all Chistadelphians in the worldwide community, pray for us here to grow in Christ, and please keep sending us books and pamphlets to let the Word of God grow here at Ratelshoek.

Bro. Farai Makandeni.



Bro. Farai on his horse, Talent.

HARARE (Ruwa)

I appreciate your encouraging letter. As we get older we experience different pains in our bodies and we put our hope of a new healthy and pain free life in the resurrection when our Lord Jesus comes again on the earth to establish his Kingdom. I trust very much in God's plans and promises to his people, some of which have been fulfilled, such as the seed from, Abraham and David who is our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Also in Isaiah, when God said to Israel that he would scatter them into a foreign land and carry them back to their own land by eagles' wings. For a long time, since I started reading the Bible at twelve years old, I wondered how eagles could carry people with its wings, but when I came to understand the good doctrine, through the Christadelphians, that is where I found the Truth.

When studying the Bible I find it difficult to explain some passages to those who have no Bible and when you give them a question to answer they need a Bible. I have supplied some copies of Bible Basics to some people who are seeking the Truth. I have a few problems with my two Bibles, which are a King James version and an English Standard version, copyright and edited 2001 in Korea. Both Bibles sound to me as if they have shortened some of the references and some passages are quite different from my old Bible, New International version, which I really loved but which was destroyed by fire in 2005.

I found some of the pages missing or shortened, for example, in 2 Kings when on one occasion some young boys blasphemed, mocked and laughed at Elisha the prophet for his bald head and after Elisha left them they were all eaten by a lion. In my latest Bible versions this passage is just not there. Also in the New Testament gospel record, while Peter and others were fishing, Peter was half naked when Jesus arrived and he quickly wrapped a cloth around himself and Jesus told him that the time would come when he would not be able to dress himself and someone would do it for him. Again, in Revelation a plague of locusts were mentioned which would harm people on earth, a sign of the time of Christ's return to the earth. The missing of some of these references have confused me as it is written that no word should be added or taken away from God's Word. Although I am now short sighted and I have searched very hard, I cannot find any of these references in my two Bibles. I have been into a big book shop in town, where I found a copy of the New International Version like my old one, but I was not able to afford it due to the price, so I had to leave the shop and prayed that one day I will be able to afford it.

I am very glad to learn that the good news of the Gospel is spreading all over the world and such news is reaching Haiti and many other places where the gospel is being preached. We pray that God may bless and take care of those preaching for his Word's sake, and bring them back safely to their homes. I sometimes meet with some hard questions but through the help of our Lord Jesus I try to do my best. Some ask me why we were created black, from which nation, how did it happen and will we be accepted in the coming Kingdom? I tell them that the colour of our skin does not matter only our belief of Jesus' teachings, repentance and faith and trust in him and his Heavenly Father. God loves all creatures He has created, whether they are lame, blind, deaf or dumb but if we do not worship and obey him we will not be accepted by Him.

Bro. Maxwell Mlakah

TRIANGLE

I was very pleased to see my article published in the January Gospel News. I am still aiming to send you more articles to be published. I have arranged three meetings a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, so the scarcity of Bibles has disturbed the studies.

Bro. Tavaremba Mugova

ZAKA

Thank you for the books you sent us, 'Parables of the Messiah', 'He Healeth all thy Diseases', 'Dr. Thomas, His Life and Work' and 'The Ten Commandments in the Twentieth Century'. Would you please carry on supplying us with more information to guide us spiritually until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. I greet all the brothers and sisters in Christ, worldwide.

Bro. Svuuure Faustino

News from Europe / Eurasia

news from belarus

I try to interest people here in the Gospel, but they are old and think of very limited things: how to survive, how to preserve their harvest to eat over the winter. Anyone who thinks more progressively has gone to live or work in the towns. I think and pray often for you all.

Sis. Nina



Photo: Sis. Nina milking her cow

news from czech republic

We are delighted to report the baptism of VITEK. May the Lord keep him in the way to His Kingdom.

Thank you very much for your prayers. Here are a few pictures of my baptism in the river. I was baptized by Brother Gareth J. Barker from London (don't remember the name of his ecclesia). Thanks for all, especially for your books but also for your exhortations. Thanks also for the links to your exhortations and talks in Russian, which are of great help for my learning of Russian.

Bro. Vitek

news from denmark

I have made an advertisement for free in a Danish newspaper referring to Bible Basicsonline.com and also given my address and phone number if people want the book in Danish (I still have 20 copies). I will try to advertise your website also on different Danish websites so people can either read the book online or have it sent to them. I'm sure a lot of people will see it and hopefully some of them will respond positively.

Bro. Johnny

news from finland

We are delighted to report the baptisms of SANI, RIKHARD, KIMMO and JAN. May the Lord keep them in the way to His Kingdom.



Photo: Brother Kimmo just after his baptism at a lake near Tampere.

OULU

Sometimes I feel very sad about all the wasted years of my life. All the lives I've ruined and made miserable. Even though I feel so alive and free now that I'm properly *in* Christ.

Bro. Henrik

news from germany

We are delighted to report the baptism of VERA. May the Lord keep her in the way to His Kingdom.



It was a wonderful experience to meet Sister Lindsey from Luxembourg and to be baptized! Now my great wish is that my children will grow in the things of God and the Bible. I am planning to visit my relatives in Kazakhstan soon and will take them the *Bible Basics* in Russian which you left.

Sis. Vera

news from iraq

We are delighted to report the baptism of WISSAM. May the Lord keep him in the way to His Kingdom.

news from israel

Thank you that you don't forget us two old people. Zlata and I so enjoy reading the Magazine, we read it all through, every page, and then read it again. We are very much with you and waiting for the Kingdom to come.

Bro. Vladimir

news from kazakhstan

The situation is about the same here, as we don't get any visits from CBM any more and it's hard for us to meet together. So we each must make ourselves strong from God's word individually. Please pray for us all here.

Sis. Elvira

news from kyrgyzstan

We are delighted to report the baptisms of brothers SASHA, BORIS and VLADIMIR; and sisters IRENA, TATYANA and DILARA. May the Lord keep them in the way to His Kingdom.

Here we are continuing to try to teach more people of the Gospel, but more especially to rejoice in the great hope of the Kingdom myself. I am trying to share this with my grandsons, I walk all three of them to school each day and try to explain things to them as best I can. Please be praying for us here, there are simply so very many problems in this country.

Bro. Anvar



Photo: Bro. Anvar with his daughter and grandsons.

news from latvia

We are delighted to report the baptisms of BASHIR, FRANCINE, GABRIELLE, PEDRO, KEITA, CHARLES, TANYA, ALEKSANDR, VLADIMIR, NIKOLAJ, OLEG, MIKHAYEL, DAINIS, RITA, AIVARS, ARMANDS, OLGA, SERGEJ, LEONID, AIVARS P and ULDIS. May the Lord keep them in the way to His Kingdom.

AIZKRAUKLE

I would like to thank those who send me welfare parcels, they always come at the right time. May God bless you and hasten the coming of Christ.

Sis. Irena

news from lithuania

Now I have a computer in my classroom I can communicate better by email. The situation here is not good, many various problems because of the financial situation. But anyway I hope it's possible to cope with all the problems with the help of God.

God bless you all

Bro. Albinas

Thank you so much for your love and care toward us and so many.

Sis. Ludmila

I have just returned home from another spell in hospital. The lupus is now eating me up, the doctor said I need immediately a heart and lung transplant. Please, pray for me.

Bro. Mantas

news from malta

I moved a couple of months ago and would like you to kindly take note of the change of address.

The Refugee Camp Administrator has received the *Bible Basics* books you sent last time. I was not around when they received them – I saw one on the table and one of the staff was reading it.

I sincerely appreciate your efforts which have so far helped me to increase in an accurate knowledge of God, and I am grateful for the assistance you have provided me with.

Bro. Solomon Oyinlade

news from morocco

We are delighted to report the baptism of ABDULLAH. May the Lord keep him in the way to His Kingdom.

news from norway

I am so excited to have the *Bible Basics* in Chichewa, I will be reading it very much, God bless you.

Bro. Claude

news from poland

We are sad to report the falling asleep in Christ of Sister Krystyna Grzegorzcyk; she did so much for the Truth in Poland in previous years and we confidently look forward to the great day of resurrection.

news from russia

KAZAN

Here I am facing some huge domestic problems which may leave me without anywhere to live; I may even have to go into a shelter. At my age I fear this greatly. Please pray for me.

Bro. Viktor

I marvel at how the same truth of the Gospel has been there from the time of Abraham to our own days in this 21st century. I see, too, how always the true way of God has been persecuted and opposed, and I suspect that such a time of trouble yet awaits us before Christ returns. May we be strengthened to endure and enter the Kingdom.

Bro. Alexei

I am pleased to inform you that brother Valeryan Matveev has returned to our meetings, he was baptized a long time ago by brother Duncan. My health has been poor, but I am trying by all means to write an article for our Magazine.

Bro. Anatoly

MOSCOW

Brother Igor Sipiagov and I have just bought our tickets to go to the Voronezh Bible School, we are so looking forward to it, an oasis for us.

Bro. Igor Pr.

PETROZAVODSK

I am pleased to say that Nastya and I graduated together quite fine. So this will be my last communication for a while, as we are leaving in the morning to live and work at our posting in the far north of Murmansk Oblast. Please pray for us and know we shall love you all in Christ even in that far place!

Bro. Kostya

ST. PETERBURG

Although the Government is more lenient towards religion than in previous times, they are really only allowing the Russian Orthodox church to have any publicity on radio, television and newspapers. Anyone who teaches otherwise is labelled as a 'sect', and I find it hard to interest people in our message for this reason. I continue to break bread here and take great comfort from my meetings with the Lord.

Bro. Valerij

SHAKTHY

Well we arrived home OK from the Bible School, very elated. The world is as a furnace and we were able to get out of it for a while to be together at the School, thank you so much that it could happen.

Bro. Andrej

SHANINO

I have had a huge shock in that my sin-in-law suddenly collapsed and died. He did everything around the house and we simply don't know what to do. There's nobody else in the village to help us with things and I cannot do hardly anything myself now at my age. So truly I am casting myself upon the Lord, for Him to sustain me.

Sis. Tamara

VOLGODONSK

I returned home from the Bible School eventually, but it was such a long and hot journey, I spent half the night waiting for the second bus. But the School was a blessing for me, the first one I have ever attended. I do treasure the photograph of us all together.

Bro. Robert

VORONEZH

There is some anti-climax for me after the Bible School finally happened; so many things were stressful because of the problem with the hotel, but I am so glad to have met so many brothers and sisters.

Sis. Julija



Photo: Sis. Julija washing up at the Voronezh Bible School

news from serbia

BELGRADE

I continue trying to interest people here in our faith. There is some response, the problem is getting people to go further than just agreeing with one or two points.

Bro. Vladislav

news from spain

I have distributed more than 1000 copies of the discs with recording of the audio Bible. I give them to all I meet. I am so hopeful some fruit will come for the glory of God and His Son. Amen.

Bro. Rachid

news from turkey

We are delighted to report the baptism of SASHA. May the Lord keep him in the way to His Kingdom.

I am sorry I can't come to the gathering and baptism planned in Istanbul, it is all night on the bus for me from Antalya and it's 43 degrees; I am finding it very hard these days to cope with such travel. But as you know my thoughts and prayers are with you.

Sis. Anna

news from ukraine

We are delighted to report the baptisms of PIOTR, NIDYA and IVA. May the Lord keep them in the way to His Kingdom.

KRASNIJ LIMAN

Our son Aleksandr has gone to Russia to work, as there is little work here. We are missing him. Every day we read the chapters from the *Bible Companion* and break bread each week. We feel the Lord's presence in our lives, even though they are sad.

Bro. Vasily and Sis Lena

LUGANSK

Well, now I have a computer and can use internet, I am in contact more, including my dear ones in Latvia. We here in Ukraine so eagerly anticipate each year the Bible School in Poltava, it is such a wonderful thing to be together as well as to study the word of God intensively. I thank God for you.

Sis. Tamara

LVIV

I am fine. Recently we have a new child, a girl, Olenka. Older son, Oleh is already three years old. I continue to grow in Christ, thanks to your written books. I continue to speak with my wife about the essential doctrines of the Bible. I am thankful for your ministering of baptism to me.

Bro. Ihor

There is so much false teaching around, it's so hard at times with those former friends who keep pushing it upon us and wanting to argue all the time. I have a lot of experience discussing with Jewish people, let me know any who speak Russian who'd like contact about the Gospel.

Bro. Piotr



POLTAVA

Once again I spent time in France caring for an old lady as I usually do each Summer. Each year I wonder if it will be the last time I see her. Although I do it as a job it is also a welcome break for me. I very much love this old lady and so wish I could break through to her about the Truth.

Sis. Veronika

News from the Americas

news from guyana



Bro. and Sis. Mathews with a Canadian Sister at the home of Bro. Clifford

news from haiti

Thanks to God I am still breathing. But physically I am suffering but I am hopeful that nothing can separate me from the love manifested in Jesus Christ; as Paul mentioned it in Romans chapter 8:38 "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor heavenly rulers, nor things that are present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord". Your reward is great before God for coming to Haiti to establish this ministry of the Truth, if you had not made the first step, up to now we would be still dwelling in the darkness of the false religions.

Bro. Esmath



Distribution of Clothing received from CAT soon after the earthquake

news from jamaica

KINGSTON

We've had several enquiries about the welfare of our brothers and sisters in Kingston given the

recent violence and over 80 deaths so far in the rioting, mostly in the vicinity of the ecclesia hall in Kingston. Brother Davion Sinclair is the Secretary of the ecclesia in Kingston and he informed, during the problems, as follows:

"The situation here in Kingston is very bad, however I must say that all our brethren in Kingston and surrounding areas are OK. but at times we came under heavy gun-battle with the thugs and the force. There was the killing of a security guard in front of our premises. the city is in a total lock down. At the moment the situation is slightly better with lots of controversy. Our meeting will be closed until further notice as it sits on the battle line in Kingston.

We here in Kingston and Jamaica are very terrified of the situation. On Sunday when the operation was about to go forward our meeting hall came under heavy gunfire from each side and our members were eager to get out and go home. It was a bloody and scary moment for all as there were non-stop gun-battles and explosions. Please continue to pray for us as we encounter on a daily basis news of bodies still lying on streets and in homes decomposing".

Bro Davion Sinclair



The Kingston Ecclesial Hall

Gospel News is so very encouraging, especially to read the testimonies of faith in our brothers and sisters in far away lands, places which I have never known or heard of before. I ask the Lord to continue to strengthen you spiritually and physically as you continue to present the gospel story to thirsty souls in their needful hour.

I am in isolation, so am unable to report fraternal activities, but I enjoyed solving the crossword – I was able to solve all the clues except 'Nimrod,' I had to go to Gen.10:8-9 for that clue – it was a good brain-tester.

I continue to enjoy fairly good health in spite of old age problems which must be endured, and I am looking forward to my 97th birthday on July 28th, if it is God's will. Continue to remember me in your prayers and keep up the good work.

Sis. Daisy Allen

COMMENT: Sis Daisy, you are one of our oldest active readers. You certainly have an excellent memory to have answered all those questions; I guess it must be due to years of attentive Bible reading. You are an excellent example to us all. MH.

news from trinidad

You know how it is with letter-writing for me now, so I am only now able to write to you, but of course you are all in my prayers every day.

I have been keeping okay, thanks to God. I was disappointed that we lost our court case, but that has not really affected me: we have two appeals – to our local Appeal Court and to the Privy Council in London, our country's highest Court of Appeal. I am just trusting in God to give us success in one of these appeals, so that I will be given a fixed length of sentence, and can look

forward to being outside to fellowship with my brethren and sisters in the Truth. If we are not successful before the local court of appeal, I feel confident that the Privy Council will not tolerate the authorities keeping us in prison much longer. But if we have to reach that far, the process could possibly take about two years. In the meantime, I will just continue to work on trying to make myself a better Christian, as we look forward to our Master's return.

Teaching English has kept me pretty busy, but I am enjoying it. Last week Bernadette's husband, Bro. Sam, came to see me, together with Bro. Gary Smith from Canada. Bernadette came last month.

You are right in saying that if I hadn't been through this experience, I would not have found the Truth; I realized that years ago.

Because of few computers the lessons are going at a slow pace, but they expect to receive some new computers soon, which should help the situation. We have no Internet connections, though.

Good to hear that Duncan continues his great work for our Lord: we pray for God's blessing on his efforts.

Bro. George Constantine

news from usa

Bro Charlie Klennert continues to work with large numbers of requests for *Bible Basics*, and reports the baptism of RICHARD as a result of this work.

News from Asia

news from china

We are delighted to report the baptisms of TAN, LEE and BANG. May the Lord keep them in the way to His Kingdom.

Brother Bang wrote out a short account of his conversion as follows:

"There are lots of churches around the town. They have many activities on Christmas Day. One year, my friends asked me whether I was interested in going to the church and celebrating the Christmas eve. I thought it over for several minutes. Church, a sacred place, Bible, as the world's important literature. So I went from curiosity. After all, I'm interested in history and western culture. I then started to attend the church on Sunday. But later I found many wrong doctrines which contradict the Bible itself. For example, Catholic Church treat Mary as mediator and pray to her. But the Bible says 1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus". So I started looking for truth. This time I became smarter. I prayed before God, prayed for wisdom, patience and thirsted for righteousness, as well as perseverance, I prayed to the Lord that He can give me a good teacher. Praying to the Lord all the time. Eventually God answered my prayer. I found your website and learnt from you and now

have been baptized into Jesus Christ. Thank God for the leading, He gave me wisdom, gave me a guider to His kingdom".

Bro. Donald writes about the baptism of Br. Tan:

Tan used to be a very devout Buddhist, his family were Buddhist devotees . He found Buddhism to be somewhat pessimistic and he had tangled himself in the Buddhists doctrine for a long time, until he met a man in the village and learnt about the Christian way . He found it very painful to accept the Christian faith because of his long affinity with Buddhism. He hesitated for more than four months. Finally he believed in the Lord, because it was not like what Buddhism teaches, where everything is predestined. Now, after learning the Truth, he found this decision to turn to Christianity was not wrong. He has had many problems because of his decision. I used a passage in the Bible from Job to encourage him to grow in faith. Job lost all of his family, all of his property. But finally God not only healed his body, but also blessed him much more. As long as we always trust, always rely on Him, God would like to provide Tan with the strength to get through these sad times. He will comfort and lead him. Amen".

Thank God, life and work are very good in this new city, I am in a new company, the boss and colleagues are very kind. I just got a Bible New Testament from my boss, the bilingual version: NKJV and Traditional Chinese Union version!

God bless you!

Bro. Jaky

news from myanmar

Our brother Suum reports another visit to *Bible Basics* contacts and comments: "This time we need your prayer support to stand firm and do more for the Lord, Pray for our government; we are limited in worship and not allowed to pray and worship God sometimes".



Photo: Burmese brother with the Bible Reader's Calendar.

Begin Again

Let us cast aside the hurts
That rankle in the heart,
Let's try to mend old quarrels
And make another start,
Forgiving the old grudges
And bitter words once said,
Decide to fill our life with love

And happiness instead.

Harbouring resentment will
Destroy our peace of mind,
We find our views distorted,
Unloving and unkind.
Forgiveness is the gentle balm
That comes like fresh Spring rain,
Blessing all within its reach
When we begin again.

Kathleen Gillum

The Tail of a Donkey

One of the main possessions of some in this day and age is a vehicle of some sort. When we purchase a vehicle, there is a fair amount of anticipation and excitement that builds up towards the moment when one actually gets into the driver's seat and drives out, enjoying ones new means of transport with a fair amount of personal pride and joy.

In Biblical times, transport was provided by animals – yet we can surmise that similar expectations and sentiments must have been experienced by those who acquired their means of transport for their own uses. Some, like our car dealers of today, bred their animals to sell as a source of income, some bred to keep the offspring – all according to their respective needs and business practice.

Imagine being the owner of a donkey in Israel during New Testament times, and it produces a foal. This foal shows signs of being a strong specimen and worth keeping, or able to fetch a decent price for your benefit at some stage. You would nurture this animal well, and make sure it would grow up in a well protected environment. You would check on it every day and look forward to the time when it was grown enough to be able to break the animal in and make use of it for the first time.

There was one such man who lived in Bethany. His donkey had produced a foal and it was being well looked after, awaiting the day when it could be ridden for the first time. We cannot say for sure, but perhaps as part of the training process, he took it into his village one day and tied it up, going about his business. While he was away, a group of men hurriedly came up to the donkey, and untied the colt to take it away. Those standing by exclaimed:

"What are you doing, untying that colt?"

They replied: "The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly." (Mark 11. NIV)

The men disappeared with the animal. Imagine when the owner returned and learnt of the incident. How would you have felt in his position?

We know why the Lord required this animal. He was to ride this donkey's colt through an incredible procession of palms and acclamations into the Holy City. Jesus sat atop the colt

never ridden before, and was hailed as the person who was to ignite "...the coming kingdom of our father David!" (Mark 11:10 NIV)

But because of the importance of this event, we sometimes forget all the details of the story. What happened to the colt, and how important is it to know?

"The Lord needs it ...and will send it back here shortly."

What would you have done if you were the owner? Would you want it returned? Would you be upset the colt had been taken, or would you lean on the general knowledge of this man Jesus in Judea and rejoice that your animal was to be used for such a great occasion?

We may wish to consider these questions as insignificant in the greater picture – after all, what is a borrowed colt in the context of the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem? But this is not the nature of the Saviour we worship, no matter how small issues may seem to the reader of these events. Having made his entrance into Jerusalem, he went into the temple and saw what was going on there - but as it was already late in the day, he withdrew from the city. He could have decided to go anywhere for the night as there were plenty of places around Jerusalem at the time of Passover - but Jesus had made a promise regarding borrowed property. So we read in Mark 11:11

"Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve" (NIV).

And so it was, that as the sun set on yet another day of Jesus fulfilling God's will, a group of men walked into a village called Bethany, bringing back an animal that belonged to someone else. Although not recorded, it is a heart-warming assumption to consider the owner of the donkey meeting the Master, and being thanked for the use of his animal, and perhaps enjoying a time in conversation with the long awaited Son of David – the King of kings and Lord of lords.

We are comforted that Jesus has not changed. Each yearning we have has been thoroughly considered, and every need catered for in all our matters both great and small. Nothing has been left unturned in order to provide our complete atonement. Despite what we are, and despite what we might deem insignificant to the Lord, he loved us and chose us to be his, and remains true to his word. So we can look at acts of our Saviour in things seemingly so small - like the journey on a borrowed donkey's colt - and be re-assured in a Saviour who has worked thoroughly and completely to tend to our every need.

Having done this, he tells us "not to worry" about anything with his fullest commitment, love and care, knowing full well that what he states is aligned with his Father's desire to have each and every one of us cared for and embraced in His Kingdom:

Bro Mark Zeller (Durban, South Africa)

Accepting God's Forgiveness

There is a fallacy accepted by some Christians that once a believer falls from grace and backslides, he cannot return to the Master and be accepted as a child of the living God.

Such a belief is contrary to the spirit and teaching of Jesus. Peter betrayed Christ with oaths, yet he was fully restored into fellowship with him, and it is doubtful if there is a Christian who has not followed, to a greater or lesser degree, in the steps of Peter. If you are one of those

Christians who has failed Christ Jesus, and now feel that you can never recapture your former spiritual state, then stop looking at your sin and, once again, ask for his forgiveness. Thank him for being able to abandon your past failures, and go forward into the future in the strength and power he supplies.

One of the factors that perhaps haunts you is that you have asked for divine forgiveness so frequently that it has almost become a meaningless habit. It seems too easy to pray “Forgive me,” and then to commit the same sins. The effectiveness of forgiveness in your life depends upon your sincerity to keep your eyes so fixed upon Jesus that he will become more real to you than that which has been your previous sin.

Bro David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

What Is Man?

Long ago, king David asked God, “What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you visit him?” (Ps 8:4). People have many things in common with animals. They breathe the same air: they eat similar food; they have many of the same needs. But people are different from animals.

We want to know why we are here; what is our purpose on this earth, since we know that we only live a few short years? “His (man’s) days are like grass. He flourishes like a flower of the field, the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more” (Ps 103:15).

How should we use our time? Should we live only to satisfy the needs of our bodies? The apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, “For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said, ‘I will live with them and walk among them and I will be their God.’ Should we spend our time looking for the pleasures of this world? Because we are different from animals, we want to know where we are going when we die. “By the sweat of your brow, you will eat food until you return to the ground from which you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return” (Gen 3:19).

How can we find the answer to these questions? The only one who can give us the answer is God who created us.

What makes people different from animals? The apostle Paul answered this question when he wrote to the Christians in Thessalonica: “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.”

Animals have social and physical bodies but not the power of reasoning. “A man who has riches without understanding is like the beasts that perish” (Ps 49:12 and 20). “Who teaches more to us than the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds of the air?” (Job 35:11).

Life on earth is very short. Death will soon come to each one of us. Therefore, we are not wise if we live only to satisfy the needs of our bodies. We are also very foolish if we live only for the pleasure of this world. “Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15-17). “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?” (Matt 16:26).

Our purpose on this earth is to bring glory to God by doing what He told us to do in the Bible. A wise man wrote: “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecc 12:13).

Bro Fred Mumba (Mufulira, Zambia)

Weeping With Jesus

In John.11 we read of the death and resurrection of Lazarus. In brief, the chapter summarizes what we may term the mourning and comforting of the family in Bethany. Lazarus got sick and died, vs. 11 – 14. His sisters, Martha and Mary, who had earlier sought Christ’s intervention mourn for their lost brother with the sympathy of their neighbours and nearby friends. The arrival of Christ at the scene brought comfort to the family when Lazarus was raised from the dead vs. 43,44.

We read in v.33, that when Jesus saw Mary and the Jews weeping he groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and wept v.31. Why did Jesus weep? Because we are told that Lazarus was his friend v.11 and that He loved him vs.3, 5 & 36. Or was he moved by the sorrow of the family and the Jews, v. 33 and felt pity for them? That does not say why Jesus wept because we are told that he knew what would come to pass when he got the message from Martha v. 4.

The Man Lazarus

The people were right to say that Christ wept because he loved Lazarus v. 36. But we ask the question, Who was Lazarus? John 11 is the only record that elaborates about Lazarus and yet we are told that Jesus loved him, and that they were friends. The fact that Lazarus’s sisters sent for Christ when he was sick with the words, ‘he whom thou lovest is sick’, give us the idea that Lazarus might have spent some time with Jesus and it may be that the message was sent at his request.

But who really was Lazarus? We look at his family to see if we may have a clue. V. 2 says, Lazarus’s sister Mary was the one who anointed Jesus’ head with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. When we look at Mathew 26:6 we are told that Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper (see Mk. 14:3) and Luke 7:36 informs us that he was a Pharisee. It was in this Simon’s house that Mary anointed the head of Jesus. We come to understand from John 12:1 that this incident took place six days after Lazarus was raised from the dead and Lazarus was present in that house, sitting with Jesus at the same Table – with Simon the leper of course. Then came in Mary and did her anointing.

We may infer that Simon the leper who was also a Pharisee was the head of this family in Bethany, who might have invited Jesus for a supper (Lk. 7: 36), probably as a gesture of gratitude for what he had done for his son Lazarus. Only he, as the father of Mary, could have easily discerned that the daughter (Mary) was a sinner (Lk. 7: 39). And again we may infer that Judas Iscariot was Lazarus’s brother, being the son of Simon (John. 6:71 &12: 4) rebuking his sister’s act for using their treasured oil on Jesus that could have fetched money to the family. But our main concern in browsing this family profile of Lazarus is to know why Jesus loved him and called him his friend.

Friends of Jesus

We now have to first consider who are the friends of Jesus. James 2: 23 says, Abraham became God's friend because he believed in God. Jesus says in John 15: 14 that 'ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you', and we can only do His commands if we first believe in Him. When we do the things of Christ - things pertaining to the kingdom of God, - we become the friends of Christ.

Lazarus, though he might have come from a family with sinners was doing the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Christ knew Lazarus was to assist in his work through his death and resurrection that 'the people may believe that thou hast sent me'. Christ might have thought of the impact of his own death and resurrection on the entire world, how many would believe and be saved. He knew Lazarus would die and sleeping in the grave those four days. Yes Jesus loved Lazarus.

It could also mean that they may not have necessarily met physically to be friends. We are the friends of Jesus today not because He has come physically to our houses, but because we have heard and believe in Him and keep his commands.

WHY WEEP?

What we have come to see is more than what the Jews saw, in that Jesus did not weep because Lazarus was dead. Looking at Luke 23: 28 after the people had consented to Jesus being crucified, Jesus told the weeping women, not to weep for him but for the things that would happen after his absence from this world. Remember what Martha said to Jesus in John 11: 21 'Lord if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died'. Jesus saw how faithless they were with him in their midst - the unbelief, even amongst his disciples. He saw the frailty of mortal man in their weeping and he thought of what he had to do to bring them and us from mortality to immortality. He saw death, the wages of our greatest enemy, sin, and how the world loves sin more than righteousness. Then he wept.

Jesus wept for us, for our sinfulness and its effect on us. He is still weeping because we still sin. We need to forsake sin and make him glad, turn his tears to laughter as he sees the result of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, in all he has done for us in his death on the cross. We too need to weep with Jesus. Weep for those bad things that are happening in this world. Weep for our sins as Peter wept when he denied Jesus (Lk. 22.62).

Bro. Amban Rassendyll (Limbe, Cameroon)

Carelinks Reports

FIRST BAPTISM IN IRAQ

[For security reasons this version of the original Carelinks message is abbreviated and non-specific.]

We're delighted to report that two Carelinks committee members made the journey to Iraq to baptize a Moslem contact with long term interest in the Bible and Christianity. We appreciated

your prayers for this unusual and at times challenging trip. So many things, great and small, nearly went wrong and stopped our meeting, but God was surely with us, and we arrived at our prearranged meeting point within literally two minutes of each other.

We could have done with a satellite telephone- anyone with a spare one is welcome to donate it to Carelinks as we could use one on these kinds of trips.

Our brother travelled a road where there are daily killings, and travel websites advise that travelling it is 'suicidal' and 'looking for a bullet'. He came to meet us in a quieter area of Iraq because of the difficulties for us entering Baghdad itself. Such was his desire for baptism. He was given a Gospel of John 12 years ago, then realized this wasn't the whole Bible, so he got a New Testament, read it, and realized from the text that this, too, wasn't the complete Bible; and so he borrowed money to buy a complete Bible, which he also read. He then embarked upon the path of seeking the correct understanding of the Bible. He had asked several Christian groups to baptize him. However, to baptize a Moslem can result in execution or severe problems; everyone fears converting Moslems. And so he was always turned away from these groups. This was all in God's hand and God's good time.

We were able to give him an NASB Study Bible with maps and concordance, which Sister Anna Ryder had left at the Riga Bible Centre. He was so thrilled with it. He's very much into Christian music, and we gave him some Praise the Lord CDs.

He now rejoices in that everything makes sense in his life. So our brother truly "went on his way rejoicing" although his journey home lay through some of the most dangerous territory on earth. We took this photo with some trepidation- every highway intersection is heavily guarded by security and they don't take kindly to being photographed.



Whenever we hear of yet more deaths in Iraq we can pray that our brother is OK, and especially that he continues to grow in Christ and bring more people to Him in spirit and truth. Anyone who may be travelling to Baghdad on business or contract work is welcome to contact us to see how they could assist.

Latvia: Coincidence or the invisible hand of God?

In Acts 16, Paul is constrained by God in various ways to move through Asia Minor towards Macedonia. We don't know precisely how the Holy Spirit worked in forbidding Paul to preach in one place and not allowing them to go to another. We cannot even be sure what is meant by a vision coming to Paul, but Paul and Silas's conclusion is undoubted – the Lord was directing them.

How easy it is to pass off circumstances as coincidences, unless we are willing to see God at work – and so it was during our week in Latvia!

Within hours of arrival we witnessed the baptism of DAINIS a serious and studious young man who was often spotted during the Bible weekend with his head in the scriptures, discussing the Bible, assisting in the kitchen or mending the temperamental oven! Clearly he doesn't intend to be just a passenger in the ecclesia.

We had hoped to visit Bro Charles - a refugee from Nigeria - fleeing the most awful Moslem persecution in which his mother, sister and fiancée were massacred. But he had just been taken to court for his case to be heard. However, without papers his case was hopeless. Why should the courts release him from the awful prison where such people are incarcerated. Some have been there for years. It was just back to court for another round of formalities before inevitably being returned until next time. Imagine our amazement when Charles phoned Duncan to announce his release asking to see us and to show us his official Latvian papers. The judge had overruled the lawyers and police and he had him transferred to a pleasant hostel in the countryside with freedom to come and go as he pleased! It was an unprecedented decision and most uncharacteristic of the system. Coincidence?

Later we went to visit Charles and he recounted his tragic story. We wept and prayed with him. But Charles had not been inactive in the six hours he had been there. He introduced us to two other asylum seekers from the Congo who were really keen to learn the gospel. And as we stood outside chatting, another man joined us – a Palestinian from Gaza – equally interested. Can we come and teach regularly? If we can't use the common room then they'll arrange for us to use a bedroom



All this and we had not been in Latvia for 30 hours yet!

And so for a quiet day of secular sightseeing in Old Town Riga and meet at a cafe for a snack. Vlad had arranged to meet us all there. He wanted to share his Bible Studies with us (he had taught himself Hebrew and Greek during the Soviet period from Bibles his family had hidden) and wanted to discuss connections he was discovering between the curses in Revelation 7-9 and Genesis 3. He desperately needs an eye operation for his cataracts. Surely we can help here. Every time he gets to the head of the waiting list for his operation, he gets missed because there is not enough money to deal with the corrupt system here. Here is a Bible student with an enormous gift and enthusiasm for Bible study. He spends all his time in the library studying. Our brother has a huge folio of notes on the Scriptures, a result of over 30 years careful Bible study. He brought them along to the Bible School to discuss some points in more detail! You can see them in the photo below:



And so, by chance, Bro Mikhayel comes with RITA. They both used to attend the synagogue. It has taken Rita a long time to gradually come to accept that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. She

agreed to come to the Bible School and said she was now ready for baptism! What an opportunity. And how was it that we just happened to be there at that time.

And so to visit Viktor – one of the brothers being taught the necessary skills to be an ecclesial elder. Although only in his early fifties, he has had a stroke. We were in for an awful shock. He was in a filthy ward and was almost completely paralysed and was already developing bed sores. He could only move one arm and leg. Although mentally alert and responsive, his speech was indecipherable, and the ward was hopelessly understaffed (one doctor and a nurse and 4 orderlies to cover 2 wards round the clock)

One of them came to turn him (Coincidence that Cindy qualified as a doctor last year and knew what was needed? Later she was there and diagnosed epilepsy which the hospital had not spotted.) A surly attendant came and roughly turned him – but only if we paid him first! But what do you expect if they are only paid peanuts. As our brother has no relatives and no work, he was just being left there. They didn't even bother feeding or shaving him, and were intending, they said, to "throw him out" to a "pansionat", where he likely would be put with 6 or 7 similar men in a small room and be left in that paralyzed position, unable to get up or feed himself, until he died [which would likely be of bedsores inflammation, says Cindy]. But he could be in that position for years. It would be a fate worse than death; all because he had nobody to pay for care and therapy at this crucial post-stroke stage.

Cindy tried to show Viktor how to do some simple exercises with his remaining strength. We were to see him again later and all we could do for now was to hold his hand and smile encouragement and pray with him.

And so to the North of Latvia where there is a barn converted into a lovely home for a family and a Bible centre ideal for teaching, eating and sleeping. About 60 came and we counted 9 nationalities there, including Bro Dan Joseph from Australia who organized the catering. We spent the first day getting things ready for a study on the theme of 'The challenge of forgiving' a major problem for people over here who have suffered so much. There were studies based on Joseph and his brothers, some true stories of Christian forgiveness, a look at why forgiving others is good for ourselves, a study on grace and our response and finally a case study of the life of David and Saul in the context of forgiveness.



Many were taking notes – some of them copious – discussing the subject and comparing scriptures. Two sisters came up to the whiteboard afterwards to complete their notes:

And then ARMANDS approached us. He has been learning the gospel for months but the talks on forgiving had struck a chord and had brought him emphatically to the decision to seek baptism. He told us that all the events of his life seem to have been pushing him to this moment. A tough life under Communism, subsequently a cheating business partner, a wife who left him because he would not take revenge, taking his children with her.

And we had the privilege of being in the right place at the right time with the right message.

He had only just caught the bus here and had had to stand for four hours on the journey. And now he gave his confession of faith and was baptised.

AIVARS also decided that now was the time to be baptised. He has had a hard life and the gospel has been like a beam of light for him – a real hope in a world that had side-lined him. So he, too, put on the saving name of Jesus. In addition, RITA the Jewess was baptized. Carelinks had appealed a few months earlier for your special prayers that she would accept the Gospel; we were the first and only Christian church she had visited after quitting the synagogue. Here she is just before her long awaited and much prayed-over baptism:



A sister staying for the weekend had an unexpected visit from her brother. They had had a serious rift some years ago and the relationship had been strained. After he had left, she told us that she had at last been able to forgive him and that they were now reconciled. Another undesigned meeting. Refugee Brother Robert, originally from West Africa, is living at the housing project where the Bible School is held. What a "coincidence" that our newly released Brother Charles, also from West Africa, was able to attend. They were obviously and visibly a great encouragement to each other in this strange land so different from their native Africa. These two African brothers were often to be seen in delighted conversation with local brothers and sisters, somehow reaching through the language barrier:



And so back to see Viktor. We were distressed to find that he had been badly neglected in the hospital, which we later found had all the necessary facilities and skills, but the staff only pay attention to those who pay them. In fairness this is because they have far more patients under their supervision than they can ever care for, so they only care for those who pay extra. However, it was a bit much that they would not even turn over a paralyzed man on his bed without being given two Lats for it. "Where is my "present"? Two Lats!" the male nurse asked when we asked him to cover Viktor with a blanket and move him to avoid bed sores developing.

But Duncan and Cindy began to work on the problem, despite the fact that we knew that it was going to cost at least 10 Lats (GBP 12) per day to obtain the necessary services. We prayed about it and encouraged them to do all that was necessary in faith, trusting that the Lord will provide.

After dropping us off at the airport, they turned to the task with dedication and as I write this report I keep receiving emails on the progress. They have negotiated a special electric bed and proper treatment for the bed sores. Physiotherapy has started and Viktor is beginning to respond. He now has a cassette player and recordings of Bible Schools to listen to. He can hold and read his Bible a bit. The ecclesia are being mobilised to come and visit him. Plans are afoot to get speech therapy and the work will continue to rehabilitation.

Somehow we will raise the money. Offers of help in UK can be sent to me in the first place and I will tell you how we can improve them with Gift Aid if you are able. Offers from elsewhere can be sent to Carelinks in the normal way (See below), but please let me know how much is for Viktor so we can monitor if we have enough or not. And if you want to make a contribution for Vlad's eye operation...

Is this the tip of an health iceberg in the ecclesia that may get bigger? I expect so. Are there others to whom we will have to extend this sort of service? Inevitably. Can we cope? Have we bitten off more than we can chew? It can feel like this, until we turn to Jesus and hear what he says: "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask what you will and it shall be done unto you."

Bro Steve & Sis Sue Gretton (UK)

The House of God

Peace is the ministry of healing. The ecclesia is a house of peace, love, joy and harmony. People who live in the ecclesia are supposed to proclaim freedom for their fellow friends and do what is right in the sight of God. In the ecclesia, people have made a covenant with God. Because of the abundant peace in the ecclesia, David said, "I love the house where you live, O Lord, the place where your glory dwells" (Ps 26:8 NIV).

Palaces or hotels are not houses of peace. King David had his own palace but he desired to be in the house of God. He had his own soldiers and body-guards but he was not satisfied with the things of his day. He wanted something very special, and that is: "One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple" (Ps 27:4).

The truth can only be found in this house and not in palaces or hotels or in any school of thought. Paul said, "If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household which is the church of the living God: the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim 3: 15). The owner of this house is God and not man. We have no authority in the house, but God alone. The truth started here and is supported by the pillar: this pillar holds the truth. If we left our own houses to enter this house, we are supposed to surrender our own customs, habits and attitude, and to adopt the system that is practiced in this house.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Some entered this house for material gain, others because of strife and envy. Very few are called. "It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry but others out of goodwill. The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defence of the gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains" (Phil 1:15-17).

Bro Harmony Ntchalachala (Kasungu, Malawi)

Anger Is Destructive

"Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning... Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness

and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the grafted word which is able to save your souls” (James 1 16-23).

So do not rush to the so-called pastors to remove the so-called demon of anger in which the majority of churchgoers in denominational churches believe. They think anger in man comes from a demon which, they say, is a fallen angel and supporter of Satan. They also believe that Satan was a fallen archangel who opposes God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Brothers and sisters, let us not entertain such unbiblical doctrines when the Bible says “blessed is the man that endures temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him”.

But let us receive the word with meekness, that is, with a teachable, humble mind, a contrite heart, the engrafted word which is able to save your soul (the soul is not just a part of you, but the whole of you), Your soul includes your legs, arms, eyes, head, nails, hair, tongue, flesh and blood. The soul is not a spirit living inside you which flies to heaven as the denominational churches say. The soul is the ‘whole you.’

Only the word of God can save you because the word of God gives you true knowledge that will make you understand God’s plan for the salvation of men and women from sin and death.

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth” (James 3:13-14). So, brothers and sisters, let us be as meek as possible, although we may not attain the meekness of Moses who was very meek above all men which were upon the face of the earth in his life time (Numbers 12:3). We are able to be meek in Christ.

It is possible to say that Moses was a man who displayed anger, as when he looked this way and that and saw no-one, so he slew an Egyptian and hid the body in the sand (Gen 2:12). Also when Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice so that water came out abundantly and the congregation and their beasts drank abundantly. The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, his brother: “Because ye believed me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them” (Num 20:11,12).

So we can see how serious it is to not be angry even when doing the Lord’s work. There is always God’s hand disciplining us. My honest appeal to my brothers and sisters worldwide is that we should pray to our heavenly Father to increase our faith. In most cases those who get angry doubt that God is in control of their lives even in trials and difficult times of life when things seem not to be in favour with them, or in illness or bereavement.

I have personally learnt this hard lesson and out of this lesson, God’s hand has humbled me, but how did I know that God was in control of my life? It was through daily reading and meditating on the word, the holy scriptures. Moses is said to have been the first person God used to write the first five books of the Old Testament. He only did that because he was meek and learnt from God and so did our Lord Jesus Christ, for he was meek (God, his Father, taught him) from childhood. We are taught in the Bible that the meek (those who are teachable in the scriptures) will inherit the earth (Matt 5:5). They shall increase their joy (Is 29:19) and bring good tidings to the meek (Is 61:1). God desires a meek and quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:4) with the ability to learn the things of God without doubting. This is the true faith of the children of God that they

should follow after meekness (1 Tim 6:11). In meekness we should instruct our weak brothers and sisters, but not with an angry mind (2 Tim 2:25). We should be able to show the reason of our hope with meekness (1 Peter 3:15).

Anger is not fitting for the children of God since our heavenly Father loves us. He disciplines us for being angry when doing His work in the ecclesia. We should not even envy those to whom God has given certain talents, because all good things come from above, if we do, the Lord's hand can discipline us. Who are we to question why the Lord has chastened us? God's discipline is for our good to help us destroy the flesh and save the spirit, or rather to kill the natural sinful desires and create in us a new creation that is part of His son Jesus Christ's stature. The purpose is that we may have the mind and character of our Lord Jesus Christ fit for those who will attain immortality and inherit the kingdom.

It is our ambition that we lead a quiet life minding our own business so that our lives may win the respect of those who are of this corrupt generation (1 Thes 4:11). We should therefore participate in our politics and campaign to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God and His son Jesus Christ which He will set up on this earth soon after the return of the Lord Jesus. We are citizens and, above all, kings and priests with Jesus Christ in that kingdom for 1000 years, ruling the nations. What wonderful prospects! So our goal is not selfish desires and vainglory or self-aggrandisement, boasting and desiring to be rich while we are living in this corrupt world, but to share the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. For on the cross, he saved us and himself when he overcame the devil (the sinful nature that was in him) by never sinning. He is truly our representative to God. He is the Mediator between us, his flock who believe and are baptised in his name, and God his Father. For there is no other name who can be our advocate in heaven before God the Father. He died for our sins once for all. All we need is to draw near to him meekly and learn of him as his disciples (students) or, rather, followers.

So let us strive by faith to avoid anger, for anger in man is destructive to our ecclesias and our families. Anger has contributed in a major way to stumbling-blocks in families and ecclesias. We are admonished to be slow to anger because, truly, in human beings, anger rests in the bosom of fools (Eccl 7:19). We should put off anger, wrath, malice, drunkenness and other vices (Col 3:8). Do not be angry with your brother or sister in Christ or even your wife, husband or children (Matt 5:22) but when you become angry, then do not sin (Eph 4:26).

Bro Reuben Kaambeu (Kabompo, Zambia)

The Inheritance Reserved in Heaven

The heading of this article is taken from the apostle Peter's first letter which reads, "...to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pet.1:4). This is an attractive verse and many of our friends and Bible readers regard it as supporting the belief that our loved ones, when they die, go to heaven. This is a comforting belief thinking they will be happy there, but is that what Peter meant by this verse?

Peter made a similar statement about the same matter later in the chapter. To encourage the believers he wrote, "wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace (favour) that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet.1:13)

The revelation of Jesus Christ refers to his return from heaven some time in the future when he will bring this grace to give to the believers. This wonderful event is referred to several times in scripture. For example, the apostle Paul wrote a comprehensive explanation in his letter to the Thessalonians.

The Testimony of the Apostle Paul

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede, go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess.4:14-17).

In this passage, Paul provided some interesting details about the revelation of Jesus Christ. Jesus returns to earth ‘with a shout’ which many people will hear and know about. An archangel will also be involved and the dead in Christ will be raised. This wonderful event of the resurrection of the dead clearly proves that those ‘in Christ’ who are referred to here are not in heaven as is popularly supposed but are resting in their graves waiting for this great event to happen.

Just as in sleep one is unconscious for a while but expecting to wake up later, so Paul refers to these believers who had died as being ‘asleep’ in Jesus, waiting to be restored to life at the resurrection.

It appears that the question in the minds of these Thessalonians was this; will those who are alive when Christ returns receive their rewards before their faithful brethren who have already fallen asleep?

Paul’s answer is clear; those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede those who are asleep as to receiving their reward because the dead in Christ shall rise first. Consequently the living and the resurrected will be caught up together to meet the Lord in ‘clouds’, that is, in multitudes from all parts of the world when Jesus returns.

The phrase ‘in the air’ must be understood in a figurative sense, similar to the way we understand the expression ‘a new heaven and a new earth’. When Jesus returns he will commence to reign in the kingdom of God in its initial stage (Matt.25:31). Eventually his kingdom will fill the whole earth. (Dan.2:35)

Returning to the quotation from Peter’s letter we may now understand the meaning as Peter intended. Peter had introduced the subject by writing ‘Blessed be God...which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you’ (1 Pet.1:3-4). It is because Jesus is now in heaven that our hope of receiving an inheritance will be realised when Jesus returns.

The Testimony of the Lord Jesus

It is worth noting that Jesus used similar language in the Sermon on the Mount. He said, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt.5:10). We have already shown that the kingdom of God will be established on the

earth. Jesus calls this same kingdom the kingdom of heaven because it is God's kingdom and has its origin from Him who dwells in heaven. Previously Jesus had said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." (v.5) This literal statement is clear enough.

We may therefore look forward to the time when this wonderful kingdom will be established on the earth when Jesus returns. He himself said, "And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven (angels) with power and great glory." (Matt.25:30). May that great event soon happen!

Bro. Ralph Green (Torquay, UK)

Witnessing for Christ in 21st Century

The Gospel of Christ is designed to save all – this is the expressed desire of our Heavenly Father.

It has been given to believers of 'no particular note, importance or education' to perform! Have we comprehended this amazing difference? The world does NOT do this, instead demands the highest of credentials for men and women dealing with the lives of others! This Divine 'policy' is more clearly stated by Paul as, "God has chosen the weak things of the world...those rich in faith" 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. Reason: "That no flesh should glory in His sight," that is that no human being should assume the right to glory (in his own particular ability) for it is truly, wholly, and directly given from above.

In the Western world Christianity has its heroes, champions, the 'Goliaths' set up in order to preach their gospel! The personality, the presentation is often stage-managed to advance their cause and to fill the churches. So often this is expressed in hard dollar terms! These TV and travelling evangelists are well known to many of us. Frequently they fall through pride!

How refreshing it is to read in *Gospel News* of the humble work of committed individuals throughout the wide world drawing men and women to the Truth. We see as it was in the first century church, "...the Lord working with them, the Lord adding to their number daily..." The blessed co-operation between 'heaven and earth,' working in tandem is the only obvious conclusion. Is this still our belief and our thinking today?

We read in Acts 5:42 that the believers were, 'Daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach...Jesus Christ.' They had sorted out the best venues, the best methods and the best subject! What we see in them is their whole hearted determination, consistency and continuity.

There are now some obvious conclusions we can draw from this.

We don't need 'champions' - everyone is capable of witnessing to Christ in the eyes of the Lord.

We don't need 'special efforts' - every day, in public and in private, is the Lord's way.

We don't need 'large money' - only the will, the mouth and the feet, to do great things for the Lord.

However, we note the "work of the Lord" did require specialisation, especially needful as the community grew, hence, the record of Acts 6 shows the two functions clearly working with "the

Word of the God” and “serving tables.” Both functions required men of spirit, men of commitment. The Ecclesia is to meet both these needs and we might add, that they are equally important, equally relevant in today’s world.

Carelinks and Gospel News publicise the work of the Lord through faithful brothers and sisters in so many places that it is difficult to understand and comprehend the rapidly expanding scope of all this. This work can only be understood and explained in the terms of our first century examples: a unity of spirit, purpose, resources and gifts being employed in the building together of “God’s House” as an urgent and faith directed work in preparation for the coming of His Messiah.

Bro Neil Todd (Auckland, New Zealand)

The True Brethren and Sisters of Christ

Who are the true brethren and sisters of Christ? There are many answers to this question, but what do you think? Let us see what Jesus says: “There came his brethren and his mother standing without, who sent unto him calling him. And the multitude sat about him and they said unto him, ‘Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.’ And he answered them saying, ‘Who is my mother or my brethren?’ And he looked round about on them which sat about him and said, ‘Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and my mother’ (Mark 3:31-35).

The multitude wanted to see Jesus’ reaction to his family, but his priority was to preach the word of God. Peter had left his family to follow Jesus (Mark 10:28-31) and Jesus told him that he should not worry and that those who do such a thing will inherit eternal life (see also 2 Cor 5:17-19).

The new spiritual family relationships did not come accidentally but were chosen by God (Eph 1:3,4). It is not easy to become brothers and sisters in Christ, since we still have our human nature, our devil (1 Peter 2:1-3). I am reminded of ‘Gospel News’ January-March, 2010, page 29 and the piece on “Backsliding”, where our attention is drawn to the shrinking back from the truth by some brethren and sisters.

There are so many possible calamities which can come upon us (Rom 12:1,2; 2 Tim 4:7,8). The Christian life is a fight. Brethren and sisters, let us all be found among that group which has the good hand of the Lord upon us. God be with you all.



Bro Harris Mulongesha

Bro Harris Mulongesha (Ndola, Zambia)

Satan Among the Sons of God

Job was a man who feared God (Job 1:1-3,6-12). Blessings came upon him from God, so that he was a prosperous man with God's protection around him. The account tells of the sons of God with Satan among them. We will analyse this passage closely and see who this Satan was.

The word 'satan' is a Hebrew word translated into English as 'adversary' or someone who opposes. This Satan was among the sons of God when they went to present themselves in the presence of God (verse 6). They went with different motives.

The sons of God are those who believe in God and obey Him. "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." (Rom 8:14-17). "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor 6:17,18). These quotations are not talking about heavenly angels. God never called a heavenly angel a son, "To which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my son, today I have become your Father?'" (Heb 1:5). The sons of God in Job went to present themselves in the presence of God here on earth, not in heaven.

The first example of Satan among the sons of God is found in Numbers: "Korah, son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and certain Reubenites, Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab, and On, son of Peleth, became insolent and rose up against Moses. With them were 250 Israelite men, well-known community members of the council. They came as a group to oppose Moses and Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far. The whole community is holy, every one of them and the Lord is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above the Lord's assembly?" (Num 16:1-30). These people not only opposed Moses and Aaron, they also opposed God's will – but that would soon be fulfilled in them. These disobedient Israelites were adversaries of God, that is they were satans.

The whole nation of Israel were 'sons of God', thus these satans were amongst the sons of God

A second example is: "The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the Israelites and get twelve staffs from them, one from the leader of each of their ancestral tribes. Write the name of each man on his staff. On the staff of Levi write Aaron's name, for there must be one staff for the head of each ancestral tribe. Place them in the Tent of Meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you. The staff belonging to the man I choose will sprout, and I will rid myself of this constant grumbling against you by the Israelites" (Num 17:1-5). In this passage, the Israelites who were grumbling were against Aaron as High Priest. In other words, as before, the whole tribe of Israel were sons of God, and those who were grumbling were adversaries, satans, against Aaron (and against God, because Aaron was appointed as High Priest by God).

A third example of satan amongst the sons of God is found in Num 12:1-3, when Aaron and Miriam were the satans against Moses.

A further occasion is: "Another time, he (Jesus) went into the synagogue, and a man with a shrivelled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the shrivelled hand, Stand up in front of everyone.' Then Jesus asked them, Which is lawful on the Sabbath, to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill? But they remained silent. He looked round at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, Stretch out your hand. He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus (Mark 3:1-6). In the

passage, we have the Jews (Pharisees, Herodians) who were the sons of God opposing Jesus, the only begotten son of God, doing his Father's will. These Jews were opposing Jesus, they were being satans, especially as they went on to plot how to kill Jesus.

All these examples are instances of satans who were amongst the sons of God. Now compare with Job 1:12.

In times of trouble or adversity, we believers should trust in the living God, the one who is able to take us out of trouble. We should always believe and hope for God's help, as He helped Job. Our belief must be like Job's: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God. I myself will see him with my own eyes: I, and not another" (Job 19:25-27).

Bro Robert Miwele (Kitwe, Zambia)

Break It Open and Pour It on Jesus

One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined for the meal. A woman in that city, a sinner, knew that Jesus was there and took a precious alabaster box of ointment. At Jesus' feet behind him she was weeping and began to wash Jesus' feet with her tears, which she wiped with the hair of her head, instead of a towel. She also kissed Jesus' feet and anointed them with the ointment.

But the Pharisee who had invited Jesus spoke within himself, "This man Jesus, if he was a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touches him: for she is a sinner". But Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have somewhat to say to you." The Pharisee replied, "Master, say on." Jesus said, "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors, the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which one will love the creditor most?"

Simon the Pharisee replied, "I suppose that he to whom he forgave most." Jesus said to Simon, "You have rightly judged." And he turned to the woman and said directly to Simon, "Have you seen this woman? I entered this house. You gave me no water for my feet, but she has washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. You gave me no kiss, but this woman, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but this woman has anointed my feet with ointment. I say, therefore, to her that her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much and therefore much is forgiven."

And those who were at the meal with Jesus began to say, "Who is this who forgives sins also?" And Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

I am certain that in our Christadelphian community worldwide, which is the ecclesia of the household of God, there are many people, both men and women, who cry before the Lord Jesus Christ shedding tears in secret in silence breaking open, not an alabaster box of ointment, but their hearts, to let flow tears in faith and secret prayer to Jesus Christ (Matt 6:6). They have come to Jesus Christ not in the house of Simon the Pharisee, but in the house of God, the ecclesia, the body of Jesus Christ. He takes away the sins of men and women of those who have the same faith as the woman who was despised by Simon the Pharisee and all those who were with him in that house.

In the house of the Lord, there are those who were prostitutes, some having HIV/AIDS, but they have come into the house of the Lord by faith in Jesus. There are others who grew up in the family of God and all of us must beware of despising the ex-prostitutes. None of us must ever forget that all brothers and sisters in Christ are forgiven.

We must love those ex-prostitutes with HIV/AIDS and not shun them, including when we all break bread together. Our heavenly Father is a loving God, willing that none of us should perish (1 John 1:9). So let us not look down upon, or condemn, any of our brothers or sisters. We must accept them and love them as God does. Let us help them in their sufferings by assisting them in their difficulties. Where possible, give them material things that can improve their lives while we are waiting for the return of the Lord. Whoso has this world's good, and sees his brother have need, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how does the love of God dwell in that brother? ... Brethren and sisters, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth" (1 John 3:17,19).

We should not hate our brothers and sisters, even if they were prostitutes with HIV/AIDS because they really are our brothers and sisters in Christ. If we should hate them, we make ourselves murderers, walking in darkness, not knowing where we are going (1 John 2:9-11).

Some of the brothers and sisters who had been 'the greatest sinners' previously, have been blessed by our heavenly Father with talents which should be put to use in the ecclesia for the glory of God. In contrast, if we condemn or despise them, we may find that we are fighting against the Lord Himself. And which of us would care to fight the Lord?

The Lord Jesus Christ is our High Priest in heaven, our advocate, whatever our lives may have been. He is not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities because he was like us, tempted like us even though he was without sin. He is able to help all those being tempted. If we have sinned, he is able to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (Heb 4:13-16).

Shunning any of our brothers and sisters, such as those suffering from HIV/AIDS (unfortunately and misleadingly known as a shameful disease), not always acquired by immorality, will not make us more righteous. Rather it will make us be judges, condemning our brothers and sisters with the disease: but we have only one judge, Jesus Christ. If we act as judges, we ourselves bring condemnation upon ourselves.

Even when helping our brothers and sisters suffering from HIV/AIDS, we should remember to do our deeds of love in the way that Jesus directed: not blowing trumpets, giving advertisements announcing them, as some do (Matthew 6:1-4).

We are all waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. We shall then all be gathered to him for judgement and the giving of immortality or condemnation. This applies to everyone whether afflicted with HIV/AIDS or not (Dan 12:1-3; Ecc 12:13,14). So let us all be humble before the Lord, not proud like Simon the Pharisee.

Bro Reuben Kaambeu, (Kabombo, Zambia)

The Hands of Jesus

Our hands are the workers and achievers that demonstrate our desires and intentions. The scripture says, “We are fearfully and wonderfully made” and our hands have been endowed with the ability to build and destroy – express love or hate – the end product that reveals our innermost thoughts.

Have we not, each one, experienced the handshake of friendship, the beckoning of the hand, or a waved greeting? Have we not witnessed the clenched fist of defiance or the determination to succeed, and the lifting up of holy hands in prayer? Jesus, with grace and compassion, accomplished so much with the soft gentle touch of the hand, healing and blessing: Touching the eyes of the blind, healing the sick, reaching out to Peter on the Sea of Galilee as he began to sink beneath the waves. And these hands have not been withdrawn, they are outstretched to us still, to bless according to our several needs. With Jesus we see selflessness and thoughtfulness towards others, a humility and a willingness to fulfill God’s plan of salvation.

The most beautiful thing about the hands of Jesus is love through sacrifice – thoughts beautifully introduced to us by the prophet Isaiah: “Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have engraven thee ‘upon the palms of my hands’” (Is 49:15,16). God is saying that it is more likely that a woman forget her baby than that He would ever forget us, his children, and He shows this in the hands of Jesus.

It was an eastern custom: a woman who could neither read nor write would have tattooed on her hands a mark as a permanent reminder of her absent son, whom she longs to see, as she goes about her daily life. There is an old Syrian proverb which says ‘What one does through another, one does oneself’. God, through His grace, allowed His beloved son to be crucified for us. The marks of that historic event remain for ever upon the hands of Jesus for all to see. How could God ever forget what Jesus endured upon the cross for us, the greatest expression of love that was ever made for us? How can we ever forget?

Luke 24:13-35 records how that, after the resurrection of Jesus, Cleopas and another disciple were traveling home from Jerusalem to Emmaus and unknowingly Jesus accompanied them, and he remained with them for a meal. Later they recounted their experience to the disciples how that “Jesus was known of them in the breaking of bread”. When Jesus put forth his hands to break the bread, they would have seen the marks in his wrists. Jesus is known of us also in the breaking of bread. Thomas also saw those marks and believed. Zechariah 13:6 transports our thoughts to the kingdom age: “One shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends?” In the kingdom, we too shall see the wounds in the hands of Jesus. Before our eyes will be revealed the greatest love of all. How can we ever forget what has been accomplished for us in Jesus’ sacrifice and redemption?

May we always remember with much gratitude what Jesus endured upon the cross. He died for us that we might live for God. What better way can we demonstrate our love in return than through our own hands? With our hands we can serve the Lord. With his blessing, our hands can accomplish so much.

Bro Andrew Lucas (Australia)

The Good Soldier

When army captains used to die in battle, the troops that he led would all run away. When Goliath, the champion of the Philistine army, was killed by David (1 Sam 17:26,40-50) the army fled. The Captain of our salvation is immortal, so there is no need for any of us to flee.

The followers of Christ are engaged in a fierce battle to conquer the evil principles of the world and their own nature which has a desperately wicked heart full of the deceitfulness of sin. They are like knights, fully clothed with the spiritual armour, going forward to conquer the enemy, and they have to constantly look to their Captain leading the way. They have to keep looking at the example of their Captain, of how he fought to overcome the world and this body of sin. It is not only themselves they have to think about, but stimulate and encourage their fellow-soldiers so that the whole army may be effective and go forth as a unit. Should any faint, fall by the wayside or get injured in any way, they need to help them as every member is vital to conquering the enemy and none should fall to them.

They must never give up, but press on to victory. The battle to be fought is tough and at times defeat may seem possible, but they must stand firm and be very courageous as they press forward; they are not alone and their Captain has and will win every battle.

Every soldier of Christ is encouraged: "All you beloved knights of God, be strong, be manly in the fight, this dreadful storm will not be long, stand fast! Stand true to death, do not allow them to drive you back". A true believer hopes and prays for the return of Christ to establish the Kingdom. That is the secret strength of a good soldier. They keep their eyes on Jesus as their leader and instructor (Heb2:2).

My prayer for all Christadelphians, is that they will continue to be faithful. To such a community of brethren of Christ, God has promised endless glories in His kingdom. We continue to love the truth unconditionally following Christ and observing his commands: breaking bread and taking wine, preaching and baptizing, continuing in prayer (Acts 2:42).

Bro Uka Egwu (Ohafia, Nigeria)

Keep Yourself Holy (1 John 3:3)

When sports teams go on extended overseas tours, they always name reserves who remain at home. Those reserves have to keep themselves in training in case a member of the touring team gets injured. Whilst all the focus is on the touring party, the reserves at home have to keep working hard, hoping that the call to 'pack up and go' will come.

In a similar way, the Christian believer needs to keep himself or herself holy knowing that the call to be with Christ could come at any time. As a Christian, we can never have a break from our faith, take time off, or relax. We have to be in training at all times, not because it is wise to do so, not because we are told to, it is because of the hope that is in us. We always know that the future is coming and we need to be ready for it. Its coming will be a surprise, that much we know. We know that Christ is the holy one of God and that he lives within us. Only his holiness

can keep us from lapsing into evil. We therefore trust in him even whilst we wait for the call from him.

Keeping oneself holy involves constant attention to the discipline that following Christ entails. We must watch our habits. Attend to prayer and meditation. Maintain an attitude of faith and expectancy. Know always the nearness of God. Care for those around us. Keep close to the Christian community.

Bro David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

Life and Its Disappointments

In life we have seasons: summer, winter, autumn and spring. These come and go. The changing seasons show that nothing lasts for ever, but life will last for ever if we cast all our anxieties on Jesus and his Father who is our Creator.

The daffodils herald the coming of spring with sprightly looking flowers, yet later they decay back to earth. Sweet smelling roses look nice and good while in bloom, yet sometime later they also shed their beauty for the provision of manure to the soil of the earth. This has always been God's plan for the earth. But He promises life to those that love His ways and follow His statutes. Human beings have their allotted time, "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die: a time to plant and a time to uproot" (Ecc 3:1,2).

God says elsewhere in the Bible, "I bring to you life and death, but choose life". Beyond death, there is life for those who toil in the Lord's vineyard, for those that endure hardship and for those that run the race to the very end of their time. We have our allotted time: our own spring full of sun and shade, but we also reach the autumn of our lives and gradually begin to fade with ageing. Soon the end of our flirtation with this life draws near and, remember this, it goes for everyone, including you and me. So we should not waste life's precious time worrying or being anxious or being afraid, for the living who believe in God and His word know they will die, but await their reward for a life lived in God's way.

The Bible says, "Come near to God and he will come near to you" (James 4:8). Therefore we should seek the Lord while He can still be found. We should all, therefore, "Cast all our anxieties on him, because He cares for us" (1 Peter 5:7). Life, therefore, is a cycle. We are born, we die and then we live again depending on what we have done for God in this life, "For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt 16:24-28).

Finally, listen to the words of the Master himself as he speaks about life and death: "I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the son of God and those who hear will live ... Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear his voice and come out – those who have done good will rise to life, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned" (John 5:25-29).

Bro Itai P Tembo (Sanyati, Zimbabwe)

Who Will Be Raised?

It is sometimes claimed that if all the countless millions that ever lived were suddenly raised from the dead, there would not be room found for them on earth. This is disputed by others. The fact of the matter, however, is that all will not be raised from the dead; indeed, only a minority will enjoy that experience. The Bible clearly shows that those who lack an understanding of God's purpose will not be raised for judgement (Ps 49:19,20; 88:5; Is 26: 14; 43:17; Jer 51: 57). Paul describes such as "having no hope and being without God in the world" (Eph 2:1). Jesus confirmed the hard truth in these words: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

The Lord declared that those who "believe" will live again, and in doing so he emphasized that "light" or "knowledge" is the ground of responsibility. He who knows the will of God will be raised to judgement whether he performs that will or not, for to know is to be held responsible so to do. Christ taught that those who refuse to submit to the requirements of the truth will 'see' Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with all of similar faith, granted eternal life in the kingdom of God, whilst they themselves will be "cast out" (Luke 13:28; John 3:19). Felix, to whom Paul preached and who had an understanding of what was required (Acts 24:22), trembled when Paul reasoned with him of "judgement to come" (Acts 24:25) because, doubtless, he recognized that he himself will be included among the rejected in that day (Romans 2:7,8,16).

The Bible teaches that the responsible dead, both just and unjust, will be raised and together with the living, will be assembled before the judgement seat of Christ at his coming, to receive "in the body what they have done in this life", whether it be good or bad (2 Cor 5:10; Rom 14:10-12). Those who by "patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honour and immortality" will receive eternal life (Rom 2:7). Those who have rejected Christ's way of life, a "second death" will bring them to the grave again, from which they came briefly (Rev 2:11; 21:7,8; Gal 6:8; Rom 6:12,23).

Most people, however, live in ignorance of divine truth and will remain for ever in the grave, for upon what ground could those who are ignorant of the divine way be judged?

Sis Jackline Wanjala (Bungoma, Kenya)

Mission opportunity at our very doors!

The streets of downtown Auckland began to change! The government policy had opened up to Asian migration. Thousands began to arrive. Schools, universities, shopkeepers were all confused by the Babel effect! These new people to our shores needed to integrate. Language, education, housing, employment created huge barriers for them. New Zealanders stood back aghast! What had we done?

Many of the first 'wave' of Chinese people were those who had seen an opportunity to escape from Communism. Some were from once Christian families. Some were looking for renewal of faith. Others were just inquisitive about the Bible, Christians, churches, rituals.

Asians are driven by 'education' and respond quickly to the word FREE! The Bible Education Class became the catchword and opportunity for our local brethren to get working amongst them. Classes began filling rapidly, forty at a time was quite normal and for us 'beginners' we were way out of our depth! However, God had other and greater plans. Soon we were affecting changes in lives. Bible knowledge and understanding was now being gained, serious faith was called for, life and behaviour changes became challenges to culture and lifestyle.

At the same time the ecclesial members here had mixed feelings about it all. This was unprecedented, unheard of; a bit frightening for some. Moving over to meet the new environment was not always welcomed!

The first baptisms were wonderful experiences!

Soon it was very evident that our standard ecclesial 'ways' were not very appropriate for these new brethren. Dual language, modern TEV translations were not very acceptable' to some. Archaic wording of hymns meant they were virtually unintelligible, and still are, for many. A new 'special needs' ecclesia was quickly formed to better meet the needs. The work expanded rapidly. Everyone was on fire! Attendances of 100% became the norm. Rice, noodles and chopsticks miraculously appeared at fraternal dinners. What a breath of fresh air this was!

A weekly programme now covered four strategic city sites for The Bible Education Classes. Over a few short years nearly forty new members were baptized. All this change occurred in perhaps twelve months only. We were thrilled to be part of this great result.

Our memorial meeting dealt with the basic beliefs, Bible stories and basic NEW LIFE subjects. Translation was a normal feature. These were the halcyon days!

Things began to change. Some new brethren moved to other cities in NZ. Some looked for richer ground in Australia. Others returned to China. We settled down with some 25 members for the longer term. They began to grow more confident in their English skills and gave doubt to the need for translation. Two classes were closed down. Lack of available teachers was one reason given. We were not able or ready to sustain the effort for the 'long term' and ecclesial interest began to wane and retract. The ecclesia began to get a more regular look about it. Exhortations became more detailed, more complex and the proportion of visitors slowed. At one time it might have had a 50/50 ratio of baptized/unbaptized attendees. The change was not particularly noticeable at first. Then one of our very supportive and diligent families gave way to Pentecostal and evangelical urges. This was a huge loss and the ripple effect is still very evident. Right now it is fair to say that we are fighting to maintain the ship on a steady course.

My brethren, there is a vital lesson in all of this.

"Don't lose sight of the least of your visitors/ members!" Walk slowly enough for the little ones. Treat the visitors (whoever they are) as being important and vital to growth. They will give impetus to the work of the ecclesia. The ecclesia must NOT think that a weekly meeting is sufficient to maintain effective witness and hold on to new brethren. *There is just too much week in between!*

Fellowship is a much wider matter than just Sunday 11.00am. One hour together is NOT enough. Fellowship needs to be more Biblical and pursued and forwarded in down- to- earth and practical needs. Our visitors notice our non- attendances more than we might think. Just be there, all the time, every time, on time!

Brethren, pray for one another fervently, especially in the matter of effective witness to the love of the Lord and His mighty power to save.

Bro Neil Todd (Auckland, New Zealand)

An Easy Way of Learning

An interesting series of Bible Quiz Cards has been produced by Bro Tim Galbraith in India. Obviously one would not be expected to answer correctly all the questions first time, but once you have played the game a number of times you would not only know the answers, but where to find the answers in the Bible, so increasing your Biblical knowledge. Full details on how to play, are included in the pack of cards. The following are an example of the hundreds of questions and you can check your answers here.

QUESTIONS

1. What does Babel mean?
2. Who was the first high priest under the Mosaic law?
3. Who was Jethro?
4. On which mountain did Aaron die?
5. Which group of Israelites were not to cut their hair?
6. How old was Moses when he died?
7. Who said "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."?
8. Where did Delilah come from?
9. Which woman had names meaning both pleasant and bitter?
10. How tall was Goliath?
11. Who erected a pillar, so his name would be remembered?
12. How many years was David king?
13. In which river was Naaman healed?
14. How long did the Ark of the Covenant remain with Obededom?
15. How did King Josiah die?
16. During whose reign did Ezra come up to Jerusalem?
17. Who was Noadiah?
18. Who was Vashti's husband?
19. Who wrote most of the Psalms?
20. Who was Isaiah's father?

21. Who was king when God appointed Jeremiah as prophet?
22. Who wrote Lamentations?
23. By what name did God first call Ezekiel?
24. What did God tell Ezekiel the New Jerusalem would be called?
25. In Babylon, what name was Daniel given?

Marcus Heaster / Tim Galbraith

Our Refugee Brethren – Available Ways To Relieve Them

Some time ago in response to my appeals for relief for our brethren in the refugee camps, some people were asking what they could do. I thought I would repeat my suggestions in this issue, as I am sure that there are many who are thinking about this, but don't know how or where to start any effort.

Our brother from the Congo who has had ten years' living experience in the refugee camps thinks that "*the best way to help brethren should be to work out a durable solution so that they can resettle somewhere and work for their living*" - the most effective way of helping them to develop a sense of independence and control. He has cited his own situation as a good illustration in the way he is now settled, can send his children to school and serve his Lord. Even though in his present position, he is still struggling to maintain himself and a family of five, there is that freedom to check out possibilities. Providentially he is now the main support of the ecclesia in that area.

I agree with this brother, because had I been there, this would have been my greatest desire, plus to be self supporting is the best way

Admittedly, the task of resettling our brethren is quite an enormous one, the solution of which may be beyond us, humanly speaking.

The only solution therefore is PRAYER – *uniting ourselves in this powerful activity* – ecclesially and individually – to our Heavenly Father, on behalf of our brethren as King Jehoshaphat did, when faced with an overwhelming problem – "*And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children*" (2 Chron. 20:13).

Encourage our refugee brethren to join us in this uplifting activity, so that we all will be spiritually revitalized, as together we witness the miracle of our Heavenly Father's response.

Together With Our Ongoing Prayer –

Publicize widely throughout all our ecclesias the distressing condition of many of our brethren, and their uncertain future in the refugee camps, also those others who are living in fear of persecution, urging earnest prayers on their behalf;

Consider a monthly collection from all our ecclesias *on an ongoing basis*, encouraging each member to contribute; *this sacrifice would be appreciated when we compare our comfortable*

living conditions or to this present time, our trouble free existence, with that of our suffering brethren;

Encourage those who are blessed financially to, in addition 'adopt' a family, that is to undertake to help as seen fit, the adopted family to ease their burden of poverty; This action could also greatly assist other poor, elderly brethren who are struggling in harsh, cold conditions in parts of Europe, people who are living with constant persecution etc. There are so many distressing cases. *Striving to keep these actively in our thoughts and prayers, will stimulate us into thinking of ways and means of assisting. "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me" (Matthew 25:40 - NIV).*

Establish an organized on-going refugee relief project if not already in process, directly aimed at resettling, firstly, those who are seeking relief from the very harsh conditions in which they are living, and families with young children. *Issuing bulletins periodically on this project will help to stimulate and maintain interest among the brotherhood.*

Encourage volunteer work with our brethren - those brethren with building and other skills, who are in a position to do so, to visit to assist our brethren to build homes for themselves and other brethren who need their help. (I am thinking here of how those returned exiles worked next to each other - notably a demonstration of their interest and togetherness - to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah). This will encourage unity, closing the gap caused by distance and culture. There are many, from various organizations, who are traveling and helping people in other countries. Two of my nieces (Nurses) recently returned from volunteering in Kenya – obviously from the account of their activities on their return, a very positive experience – enriching, rewarding and fulfilling.

Establish a Liaison System: This is a touchy one, but building a solid financial base, perhaps, the Christadelphian body may be able to approach UNHCR with a proposal to open up avenues in stable regions for the resettlement of our brethren, relieving them of some of their numbers, preceding this request with earnest prayers, Nehemiah approached the King for the assistance he needed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem . With his money in his hand, Abraham approached Ephron, through Heth, evidently the influential people of the land, to purchase a piece of land for the burial of Sarah.

The Refugee Camps And Additional Problems: We must ask ourselves *how long the United Nations will be able to take care of these refugees, who are rapidly increasing in number. What happens if it becomes necessary for them to scale down their operation? How will our brethren fare?* I am of the opinion that it is only a matter of time before this happens. Should we wait for this? CBM has been doing what they could to assist our brethren. in and out of the camps, also I am aware that there are funds in the brotherhood, already provided for various causes; but the terrible times ahead prophesied, unparalleled in the history of man, as I see it, warrant more concentrated effort. I am taking into consideration coming world events which certainly will put great pressure on *everyone*. For example, the devastating effect of these nuclear threats, if carried out, could affect vast areas, both in the developing and developed world demanding an extension of UN operation. We have experienced the ravages of natural disasters, with their overwhelming effects on powerful nations, leaving in their wake many displaced persons and related problems. There is on going terrorism, no one knowing the extent of, and how far reaching this will be; there are threatening pandemics, possibly beyond control, persecution, etc., and this will affect rich and poor countries alike. So while we are considering primarily our

present problems, we need to think ahead. Our Heavenly Father has revealed all of this to us in his Word, and, in his love and wisdom, has pointed guidelines to help us to cope.

Follow God's guidance given through his servant Joseph, to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, at the prediction of the great famine, and how Joseph's advice sustained the powerful Egyptian Empire and the other nations around, who came to them for help, at a very grievous time indeed.

Benefit from the disciples' action following the prophecy of the great world famine, given by the Prophet Agabus – every disciple according to his ability determined to send relief unto the brethren in Judaea , See Acts 11: 28 – 30.

I believe the examples in the scripture, which our Heavenly Father has provided for our benefit, are the only effective way of approach to our problems. Following these with singleness of mind is a challenge to our conviction of the power of our God, and evidence that we do not only have a form of Godliness, but believe in its power.

At this time of plenty, let us redouble our efforts, led by prayer, to help those in distress now , and also to prepare for ourselves in the times that are about to come upon the face of the earth. It is only a matter of time, and we have been forewarned.

Brothers and sisters, having brought this matter to your attention, you may want to offer your suggestions and comments bearing in mind that *the sole purpose is to support and help resettle our brethren who are experiencing grave problems.* My own further contribution, for the time being, God willing, is to pursue this matter, continuing to write about this, with God's help.

Sis Esther Worrell (Canada)

Answers to Quiz

1. Confusion (Gen.11:9)
2. Aaron (Ex.28:1-4)
3. Moses' father-in-law (Ex.18:1)
4. Mt. Hor (Num.20:27-28)
5. The Nazirites (Num.6:1-5)
6. 120 years old (Deut.34:7)
7. Joshua (Josh.24:15)
8. The Valley of Sorek (Judg.16:4)
9. Naomi (Mara) (Ruth 1:20)
10. 9ft.or 6 cubits & a span (1 Sam.17:4)
11. Absalom (2 Sam.18:18)
12. 40 years (1 Kings 2:11)
13. The River Jordan (2 Kings 5:14)

14. Three months (1 Chron.13:14)
15. He was shot full of arrows (2 Chron.35:23)
16. King Artaxerxes of Persia (Ezra 7:1)
17. A false prophetess (Neh.6:14)
18. King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) (Est.1:9)
19. David (Psa.1-73)
20. Amoz (Is.1:1)
21. Josiah (Jer.1:2)
22. Jeremiah (Lamentations.)
23. Son of Man (Ez.2:1)
24. "The LORD is there" (Ez.48:35)
25. Belteshazzar (Dan.1:7)

Sin and Salvation

In the first place, let me give you a story about my biological brother. He was in the group of Pentecostal Churches every Wednesday and Saturday, who spent the whole day shouting and preaching to people who were interested. Most of them were passers-by. As people pushed past with their bulging bags of shopping, they would shout out loud, "Repent and believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved from your sins."

The thing was, neither my brother nor the others ever explained what sin is, and why we need to be saved from it. You were just supposed to know. Why do we need to be saved from our sins? What exactly is sin? Well, the place to find out is in the Bible, God's handbook for human life. Here we trace the story of the very first sin and what happened afterwards.

Stepping out of line

The first man, Adam, lived in a beautiful garden where he could help himself to all sorts of food except one particular tree: the tree of knowledge, which was forbidden on pain of death. Adam, persuaded by his wife who had, in turn, been persuaded by the serpent, ate the forbidden fruit. As a result he and his wife were condemned to suffer and toil and die.

This action, breaking God's law is what the Bible calls 'sin'.. It is like setting us inside a circle drawn on the sand and saying, 'You must not cross over that line!' The line represents God's rules. He says, for example, we are at liberty to dig the ground and grow food, but if we steal someone else's food, that is wrong. As long as we stay inside the circle, that is fine. But when we cross over the line, we are sinners and we find ourselves condemned to death. The apostle Paul puts it neatly: "Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Missing the mark

Actually, there is more to sin than that. The Greek word translated “sin” in the Bible literally means ‘to miss the mark’. It is like an archer aiming at a target. He needs to hit the bull’s-eye, but misses it most of the time. That is how we all are. The target we should be aiming for is perfection. It is the kind of life lived by Jesus, who always did what his Father asked. He is our role model. But every night, when we go to bed, and reflect upon what has been done during the day, we realise that we have failed to live up to his example. We have crossed God’s line and we have failed to match up to the amazing grace and love of the Son of God.

So where does that leave us? If there was no way to escape from the condemnation of sin and death, we should be in a sorry state indeed. But God is merciful. He has prepared a way for our sins to be forgiven. And by a dramatic irony, the way to forgiveness and hope is through the death of His Son.

The Sinless One

How could this work? How can the crucifixion of Jesus set us free? The answer is logical, but awe-inspiring. Jesus never sinned. Not once in his 33 years on earth did he cross the line of God’s law. Every day he hit the bull’s-eye spot on.

He was the perfect example of obedience to God. So when he allowed evil men, consumed by envy and hatred, to have him executed, he was laid in a tomb which he did not deserve to be in, for he was not guilty of sin. He had volunteered to share death with us, so that he could deliver us from it. As the apostle puts it, “He tasted death for every man” (Heb 2).

If an innocent was laid in a grave which he did not deserve (and we mean innocent of all guilt, not just a single charge), then God could, in justice, bring him back to life again. That is exactly what He did, after three days. And if we have the humility to go down on our knees before God and admit that we are sinners, and ask to be forgiven, then, for the sake of His dear Son, He will count us ‘not guilty’. Our sins will be covered over with the goodness of Jesus, like the coat of skins God provided to cover the nakedness of sinful Adam.

Identification

The point at which the would-be Christian joins himself to Christ is at his baptism. Here, he or she confesses publicly the need to be forgiven and is symbolically buried with the Lord before arising the next moment to a new life, free from sin.

From this time on, the baptized believer aims to live in a way which is holy for God, keeping separate from the evil world and its ways and waiting in hope for the day God has promised when those who have died in faith will be raised, like Jesus, to a new and immortal life. That is what being saved truly means.

Questions to the brothers and sisters of Christ the world over:

- Shall we continue to miss the mark?
- To whom shall we go to if we step out of line?
- Can we remember our daily target such that we can reach the bull’s-eye?

Bro Jonathon Johnstone (Kilembe, Uganda)

What Is Man?

I have been reading 'Glad Tidings' number 1503, page 13 entitled 'Creation, Evolution, and Charles Darwin'. Yet yesterday, 23rd August on our daily readings, the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, "Do not deceive yourself. If anyone of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this world, he should become a 'fool' so that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight" (1 Cor 3:18,19). "Well, I am not," said the author of the article. Was he supporting the idea of evolution? No, the author was trying to make Darwin's theory to be baseless. Yes, I do agree with Brother Martin Hughes after he had made much research.

There is a marked biblical emphasis on the fact that man is fundamentally composed of mere dust: "We are the clay" (Isa 64:8). Man is of the earth, (1 Cor 15:47). Abraham admitted that he was but dust and ashes (Gen 18:27). "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanishes away" (James 4:14; 2 Sam 14:14; Ps 90:5,6). The true teaching of the Bible is that man was created, made out of, the dust (Gen 2:7).

The Bible does not support evolution. So if anyone does support evolution, it means that he/she will be choosing to believe a lie rather than the truth. The Lord God gave man a free will to obey or to disobey (Gen 2:16,17). Adam and Eve chose not to obey, but preferred to believe a lie rather than truth by obeying what the snake said, instead of believing their Creator.

Now the ball is in our court. Should we believe what Darwin said, or believe what God said. The record of Genesis was kept so that we can have a proper understanding of the word of God, and avoid the mistake which had taken place in Eden.

Bro Moses Dhlakama (Chipinge, Zimbabwe)

Freedom in the Lord God

Jacob had twelve sons and among the twelve came Joseph who later saved his family from starvation. Though he was hated by his own brothers, he saved them from starving in Canaan and took them to Egypt where there was plenty of food. Now in Egypt there was a Pharaoh who helped them, doing everything they wanted because Joseph occupied a high position in Egypt. Later, that Pharaoh died and was replaced by another who did not like the Israelites, in fact, he enslaved them.

After suffering a long period of mistreatment, God, heard their cry and responded by giving them a prophet. – Moses, who led them out of slavery.

Having narrated a little of the story, let us draw attention to the main subject of freedom, this means exemption or immunity from a duty, or unrestricted use of a facility. In another concept, freedom is the freedom that comes from Christ who set us free. Stand firm then and do not let ourselves be burdened again by the yoke of slavery (Gal 5:1). This is warning us to use our freedom for the things of the kingdom of God. "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, 'We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?' Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son

belongs to it for ever. So if the son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:32-36). What a shallow-minded generation who rejected the truth from God through His son Jesus Christ. If there are brothers and sisters who still think like the stiff-necked Jews, please search your hearts and surrender yourselves to God through His son. This people thought that Jesus was talking about freedom from wars, slavery and many other things, but he meant the slavery of sin. We still struggle with it every day of our lives.

The freedom that most of us have in our countries was obtained by many people, even sacrificing their lives. Let us take the example of Zambia which was colonised by Great Britain from 1926 to 1953. The Zambian people thought about the importance of being free and decided to form their own government. They needed to fight a war which led to much bloodshed and many people dying in this struggle for freedom.

But God has done much more for us by giving His only begotten son so that we can become free from our sinful nature. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life, God did not condemn the world, but saved the world through him whom he had sent (Jesus Christ)” (John 3:16,17).

Brothers and sisters, we all know that we naturally heirs of Adam and Eve’s sinful nature. That is why God gave Jesus, so that we can be free through his blood. The good Lord God has no boundaries for helping us when we give ourselves to Him. “In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and he answered by setting me free. The Lord is with me: I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The Lord is with me: he is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies” (Ps 118:5-7). We may wonder about our past circumstance and how we were before we learnt about the true gospel. It does not matter to God whether we were slaves or noble when we were called (1 Cor 7:21-24)

Now this freedom, brothers and sisters, should not be taken for granted. Let us look at what happened to Adam and Eve. The two were given freedom to eat from any tree in the garden, but they were told not to eat of the tree which was in the middle of the garden. But having freedom to choose, they ate from it even though they were told not to (Gen 3:1-6).

After disobeying the command of God, He punished them and they were banished from the Garden of Eden. The cheater, the serpent, was also cursed for telling lies which led to the ending of the freedom of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:23-24).

Finally, we sometimes tend to think that it only happened to those of old times, and it cannot happen to us. We deceive ourselves if we think like this. Remember, we can use our freedom to do wrong things, illicit things such as robbery and murder, so that we are arrested, thrown into prison or even killed. So let us avoid bad company or using our freedom unwisely. The only true and correct freedom we can have is from God through His son Jesus Christ. God can give us freedom, which no money can buy because all things that we may need are found in him. The challenge is to us to choose what we want to have (Deut 30:19,20).



Bro Stephen Siamabi

Bro Stephen Siamabi (Lusaka, Zambia)

The Penalty for Abandoning the Faith and Following Other Gods

There are no exceptions: God is just

The Lord God will destroy both Moabite and Israelite for disobedience (Amos 2:1-3)

Judah is punished for rejecting God's law, not keeping His decrees, being led astray by false gods.

How does this apply to us today? Who holds the truth? The prophet is telling us that we must follow the Lord God. Brethren and sisters, we have seen the example from God's Book. This is for us also. If we abandon the faith and follow false gods, we shall not be part of God's kingdom.

Pauls's words are helpful: "Farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind. Peace be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints salute you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen".

Bro Harris N Mulongesha (Ndola, Zambia)

Sight and Insight

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt 5:8). The world says: 'Seeing is believing'. The Word says: Believing is seeing. Sight and Insight: these are the marks contrasting the man of the world and the man of God. Think of it: to be cultured and capable and yet not to know Christ, nor to understand God's word.

The eye is not the only organ of sight to see the unseen is the difference between the mind of the spirit and the mind of the flesh. When we are hard pressed, we need to look up! Jesus still anoints men's eyes. Seeing is not looking on the outside of things: seeing is discerning the meaning of life and things. Christ came into the world that in him men might see God. This vision strengthens us in all our trials, comforts us in sorrow, and makes our life rich and full.

Faith is knowledge in a superior knowledge. The gospel is not against reason: it explains reason and reveals to us the purpose of God, His love and His grace. As Jesus said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Bro Andrew Lucas (Australia)

God Will Provide

All good things come from God, and the scriptures continually remind us that it is by asking, that we receive from Him. The difficulty seems to be that we often ask with secret reservations as to God's ability to meet our need. We ask, then laughingly say that God helps those who help themselves, and before God has time to act, we have sprung into action ourselves.

Swift action can be a contradiction of faith. When we want something urgently with all our heart and mind, first ask God for it then, having asked Him, wait for His will. This waiting for the divine will of God will mean that we spend time, sometimes a very long time, in the silence of God. God can, of course, grant our request immediately, for He has said “Ask and you shall receive”. Or He may have a special reason why there is a delay. This is a time during which we have to demonstrate our implicit trust in Him.

God works in many different ways, and it is our privilege to trust Him, not necessarily knowing the ways and methods He will use to answer our prayers. The glorious truth is that God does answer our prayers out of His divine abundance.

As we offer our prayers to the divine Father, it is always wise to ask Him for the wisdom to know when our prayers are answered. So often, He answers them in His own way, not our way. It is then very easy to miss the answer He gives. When you have asked, then thank Him for giving what is good for you. The spirit of thanksgiving is the key which unlocks the bounty of God.

Bro David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

The Blood of Jesus

In the New Testament that our justification and salvation is through the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:7). “Greater love has no-one that this, than that he lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). We must understand that it is a biblical principle that the life of every creature is its blood (Lev 17:14), in fact, the law required, that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and “without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness”. Without blood a body cannot live, it is therefore symbolic of life. “He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves, but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood having obtained eternal redemption” (Heb 9:12).

“Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you have no life in you” (John 6:53). Blood is a symbol of doctrine.

Bro Fred Mumba (Mufulira, Zambia)

Lot Goes to Sodom

Abraham, his nephew Lot and their respective families and servants had traveled together from Ur of the Chaldees into the land of Canaan, at God’s command. Finding grazing for their flocks and herds was not easy, so they decided to part. That brought Lot to a different environment.

Parting of the ways

The very name of Sodom has passed into the English language as a byword for immorality and human wickedness. How Lot came to dwell in this city teaches us how we should live our lives. We read of the strife between the herdsman of Lot and Abraham (Gen 13). Finding adequate pasture was creating unbearable tension, so Abraham graciously allowed Lot to make the

choice as to where his flocks should graze: “Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan that it was well-watered everywhere...Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other” (Gen 13:10,11).

Lot’s name means ‘a veil’. Some have described him as “the man with a veil over his face”. Notice the emphasis. It is a play upon his name. He lifted up his eyes and looked – but his spiritual perception was clouded. He saw only the immediate advantages from the well-watered plain of Jordan. He was not far-sighted enough to see the dangers of living in the vicinity of such ‘sinks of iniquity’ as Sodom and Gomorrah. At first we are told, he “pitched his tent even as far as Sodom” (Gen 13:12). But when the events preceding the destruction of the cities are recorded, we find that not only had Lot moved into Sodom, but he actually “sat in the gate” (Gen 19:1). That means he had become a judge or ruler in that city, for they were the people who sat in the gateway to hear and decide matters. And is this the time for us to decide matters or rule other people? Let us wait for the great Ruler Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bro Martin Barosa (Kitale, Kenya)

Why, Why, Why, Did They Reject Jesus?

The rebellion in the garden of Eden by Adam and his mate, Eve, brought sin into the world. The rebellion by Judas Iscariot finally led to the death of Jesus. Try to think of it: I feel touched when I think of the choice made by all people when asked to choose between Jesus and Barabbas. It was truly a wrong choice. Listen to this: “Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, since it was the custom of the time. The chief priests and the whole crowd concurred to have Barabbas released and Jesus crucified.

But this man did not deserve all the pain and suffering on our behalf, for our redemption, for our salvation.

Isaiah 53 says: v 2: He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

v 3: He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering.

v 4-6: Surely he took our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

v 10: Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days. It was due to God’s love for mankind that this had to happen. While we were still sinners Christ died for us

Bro Itai Tembo (Sanyati, Zimbabwe)

Time More Precious Than Gold and Silver

“Everything has a time to be born and a time to die, a time to gather and a time to scatter” (Ecc 3:1). We must plan our time and budget. Fasting needs time; prayer needs time and it comes from us how we budget our time. Proverbs 3:5 tells us to trust in the Lord and never lean on our

own understanding. So if we give enough time to the Lord not to ourselves. God will provide us with time to talk to him. We can pray and pray and pray but we may not get the answers; Why is it?

We need to be connected to God and our prayers will be answered. It is like having a set of musical instruments fixed together but as long as they are unconnected to electricity, no sound will come out.

The issue of time is very important, we cannot ignore it. If a woman is pregnant, she waits nine months to give birth to a mature baby. If we are not patient enough, we risk having a premature baby. Time is vital. You must not procrastinate because procrastination is the thief of time. Time is vital and must be appreciated, whether it is a second or a year:

In Christian life the importance of time must not be overlooked

Bro John Wilo Wise (Mazowe, Zimbabwe)

The Bible Verses Which Most Enthuse Me

I think we all agree that humankind inherited sin through Adam and Eve, the first human pair who rebelled against God. Their punishment brought us death, which we experience today. Had they not sinned, we would be experiencing eternal bliss. But we can still experience the good life, only after losing the physical life we possess today. The following are verses I use to direct my life. What about you, my fellow brother and sister?

Rom 3:23-24: All have sinned (you and me): "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

Rom 5:8: Christ died for us all: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

1 Cor 10:31: Everything we do should glorify God: "So whether you eat or drink in this life, do it all for the glory of God."

Deut 30:15-19: God-given free-will: "See, I set before you today, life and death, prosperity and destruction. For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws, then you will live and increase."

Heb 11:1: We all need faith to acknowledge God: "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see."

Heb 12:7-8: Suffering is spiritual training. "Endure hardship as discipline, God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father; (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons."

Rom 8:28,35,37: More than conquerors: "And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, and have been called according to his purpose ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ... No, in all things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

2 Tim 3:15-16: Doing what is right: "Do what is right; be valiant for the truth; teach it without compromise and all lovers of the truth will approve you."

Matt 6:25-33: Do not worry: “Therefore do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food or the body more important than clothes ... So do not worry, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear? For the pagans run after these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

In the day of account, all who faithfully have stayed by God’s statutes, precepts and commandments shall partake alike in the rewards and joys of the kingdom. With the eye of faith, we can see God watching with approval as we break surface and telling us ‘through the sacrifice of Jesus, I now forgive all your sins.’ And if you keep your promises, I will surely raise you from the dead when he comes again, whose right the Kingdom is – our Master and Saviour – Jesus who is the Christ.

Bro Itai Tembo (Sanyati, Zimbabwe)

Christ and the Church

In the mutual benefit of married life, there is a spiritual lesson for us. Christ and the church are portrayed before us like husband and wife. In a number of Jesus’ parables, we are able to draw similar lessons.

For instance, in the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus himself is portrayed as that husband and the five wise virgins as the wife.

A similar picture is: “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7).

Since we long for and desire the second advent of our dear Lord or husband, let us adorn ourselves with fine linen which symbolises righteousness before the eye of our prospective husband. Indeed that is when what we now see as a type, shall become a reality. “Even so, come Lord Jesus.”

Bro Sylvester Tembo (Mzuzu, Malawi)