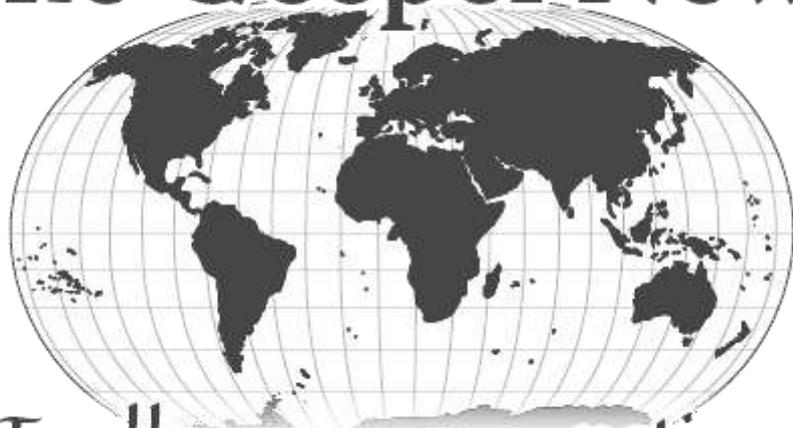


The Gospel News



“To all  nations”



EDITORIAL: The Poor

Our need to respond to "the poor" is one of the Bible's major themes. But our cash crazy society seems to have persuaded many of us that we fulfil Bible teaching about giving to the poor by giving them money. And if we're not wealthy--then all the talk about generosity to the poor is irrelevant to us, indeed, we may even be tempted to consider that our wealthier brethren have a duty to give us some cash. The early converts of Jesus were materially poor --and yet He told them in His opening manifesto in Matthew 5-7 of their need to give to the poor. There is the implication that it is the poor for whom the Gospel is intended, and it is they who will respond to it. And yet the teaching of Jesus was clearly that those who respond to the Gospel should give to "the poor". We must re-examine what He meant by "the poor".

Whilst He wasn't unmindful of the materially "poor", Jesus begins His explanation of the Kingdom life by defining the "poor" as "the poor in spirit" (Mt. 5:3). It's as if He began His ministry by defining who are "the poor" of whom He would have so much to say; He applied the term to the mentally broken, the spiritually needy. Luke. 4:18 parallels "the poor" with "the brokenhearted... the captives... the bruised". The whole mission of Jesus was to bring good news to the poor (Is. 61:1,2 cp. Lk. 4:18,21; Mt. 11:5). This doesn't mean that the materially rich are outside the scope of the Gospel. It means that we are all "the poor". You don't need money in your pocket to be generous to "the poor". Paul could say that although he was poor, he made many rich (2 Cor. 6:10). In saying this he clearly perceived his connection with his Lord, who although rich became poor for our sakes (2 Cor. 8:9). Seeing Jesus was never materially rich, we are to understand this as meaning that despite His spiritual riches, the Lord of glory identified with us in our spiritual poverty to the extent that He became as it were "poor", on the cross. He felt as a sinner, although He was not; He felt "forsaken" by God (Mt. 27:46), alluding to the many OT passages which speak of how God will forsake the sinner but never forsake the righteous. "Riches" are the spiritual blessings in Christ (Rom. 2:4; 9:23; 2 Cor. 8:9; Eph. 1:7,18; 2:4,7)- those without them are therefore the "poor" (Rev. 3:17,18). David during the time of his kingship could describe himself as "poor and needy [because] my heart is wounded within me" (Ps. 40:17; 70:5; 109:22).

The Greek word translated "poor" means literally "the crouchers"- those in desperate need. The common word for "the poor" is that also translated "beggar" (Lk. 16:22). People are in urgent need spiritually- crouched on their haunches, begging for it. Hence Prov. 19:17; 28:8 Heb. speaks of those who "bow down" to the poor [AV "pity the poor"]. We are to come down to their level in seeking to empathize with their position. Note how the opposite of having pity upon the poor is to despise them: "He that despises his neighbour sins; but happy is he that has pity upon the poor" (Prov.

14:21). If you don't crouch down to their level and identify with them, then you are despising them. And such spiritual elitism and snobbery is reprehensible to the Father and Son who have `come down' to us in our utter desperation. He humbles Himself to behold the things of Heaven and earth, and then goes further and lifts up the poor on this tiny planet (Ps. 113:6,7). The Psalms are full, as our own prayer life should be, of requests for God to "have pity" upon us; we are to respond to those who likewise beg us to "have pity", not ignoring them nor pretending we didn't notice. For God didn't act like that to us. Only insofar as we perceive our own desperation, and God's very real response to it, will we find strength to respond to "the poor".

Truly, the poor are always with us in this sense. People are living lives of quiet desperation, and are crouching down begging for our help. The Hebrew word translated "poor" means simply to

be in need- there isn't the idea that they are financially poor. The unfulfilled, childless woman is in need, the lonely businessman, the blind woman... And we are the ones who can come alongside and help. Their need is itself their call for help.

Practical Response to the Poor

One reason why we don't respond to the poor is because we realize that poverty is, in some cases, because people have themselves made bad decisions, and they may misuse our assistance. It's true that often, although not always, poverty is partly due to poor decisions and mismanagement, and any aid given is often poorly used. And it's true that the materially poor are partly poor [in many cases] exactly because of that. And yet the Bible teaches generosity to "the poor". There is no attempt in Bible teaching about "the poor" to subdivide them into the genuinely poor, and those who are poor because of their own fault or laziness, or who are asking for support when they don't actually need it. A person who comes to you claiming need is "the poor". Thus Israel were not to farm their land in the seventh year, "that the poor of your people may eat" (Ex. 23:11). This immediately raised the issue that all manner of people could eat the fruit which grew naturally on the land that year- but there was no legislation to try to limit who had access to it. Those who had food in their barns might eat what grew- but there was no mechanism within the law which controlled that. The point is, in our spiritual poverty we are just the same. We are in that position partly because of our human situation and other factors over which we have no control; but also partly and largely because we choose to be in it. We cry to God for the riches of His forgiveness- and we waste it, by doing the same sin over and over again. Our hold on spiritual things is weak, we don't respond with the grace and appreciation we ought to. We're spiritually lazy. We're no better than those who are materially poor through nothing but their own fault. Our generosity to them is a reflection of our recognition of this. If we stop our ears at the cry of the poor, then our cry to God will go unheard (Prov. 21:13); their cry to us and our cry to God are parallel. Even if a family blow their monthly pay cheque in two days and are totally without food for the rest of the month- they are "the poor". They are in need. And to argue that "I will not assist them because it's their own fault" is to have no compassion upon the poor. In spiritual terms, you do exactly the same. Every sin is your fault. It was avoidable. But you keep on and on sinning. You were the wounded man, saved by the Samaritan's grace. Those in need are "the poor"; the issue of the degree to which they are at fault for that need doesn't change their need, their poverty, and our required response.

Poverty in Deuteronomy

Dt. 15:7 foresaw that when confronted by the poor, there would be a tendency to "harden your heart and close your hand to your poor brother"; there was no mechanism suggested for determining his genuineness, but rather a command to respond. Indeed Israel were warned not to have "a thought in your wicked heart" and devise how not to be generous to the poor (Dt. 15:9); they were to "open your hand wide" to the poor who approached them (Dt. 15:11- applied to us in 1 Jn. 3:17). In Hebrew thought, "the hand" referred to power and ability. No matter how materially poor, we each have a "hand"- even if it's not a financial one. And we are to "open" it- the Hebrew word carrying the idea of unloosing, as in untying a sack. It's as if we're all tied and twisted up inside ourselves, and it's this which stops us responding.

The same word is used of how God opens unto us His hand, opens up "His good treasure, the heaven to give rain..." (Dt. 28:12). The cycles of the natural world aren't running on mindless clockwork; God sends His rain, and so many blessings. He is in this sense "open" and not selfish; His eyes are "open" in responding to our requests in prayer (1 Kings 8:58). He loves being

generous - and we too are to love showing mercy (Mic. 6:8). He delights in forgiveness- and the poorest person has people who need their forgiveness too. God not only loves being generous, but He also identifies Himself with the poor. Therefore "He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord" (Prov. 19:17); "He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who is gracious to the needy honours Him" (Prov. 14:31). The Lord taught the same: "To the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me" (Mt. 25:46). Considering that the poor are often poor partly through their own fault, this identity of God with "the poor" is a deep insight into His grace. Indeed, despite this, God appears to be on the side of the poor; His word warns insistently that the possession of wealth, whilst not sinful in itself, is likely to lead us away from salvation, whereas it is "the poor" who will comprise the majority of the redeemed (Mk. 4:19; 10:17-30; Lk. 12:21,33,34; 14:13,21).

If we are truly influenced by the fact that God came into our lives and sought to save us, working extensively through providence to bring us to His Son, our generosity will not simply be to those "poor" who come to our attention. Job could say that he was not only a father to the poor, but "the cause which I knew not I searched out" (Job 29:16). Further, Job wept and grieved for the poor (Job 30:25), seeking to attain real empathy with them. Each of us are to think how we might be generous to the poor- to take initiative. This is a step beyond putting coins in a beggar's hand. When was the last time you actively thought out how you might be generous to the poor, searching out the real need behind that begging hand, and what you could do about it? "The righteous consider the cause of the poor; but the wicked don't want to understand it" (Prov. 29:7). We are to try to understand "the poor", when our natural reaction is to walk away from those whom we consider to be in a hole partly because they dug it, or to quickly respond to their need with a few coins or words- without engaging with them. God's response to our need wasn't tokenistic- it was the very deep engagement with human need which climaxed in the death of His Son on the cross.

The Last Days

The parable of the great supper suggests that in our last days, it is largely "the poor", both economically and spiritually, who will be called to respond (Lk. 14:21). A latter day congregation of new converts will typically be "the poor"- the divorced, abused, asylum seekers, HIV positive, hopelessly indebted, smokers, illegal immigrants, one time whores and busted gamblers, those with aspergers, inhabitants of the night shelters, the irritating, the mixed up... the types no respectable Protestant church can really cope with. "The poor" are there, on the internet, on the street, in the ecclesias, in the workplace... and their very existence is to test whether we have really perceived our poverty and cried to God in it, and known His gracious, saving hand.

--Duncan Heaster

News from Africa

NEWS FROM CAMEROON



BAMENDA

Elections are being held in many African countries this year. All of them, be they presidential or parliamentary, bring the cacophony that characterizes election campaigns which is always

deafening. Men and women hope for a continuance or change of those in authority they all want peace, justice, job security, better lives and you name the rest.

`The People's Choice' was the phrase used by a ruler seeking re-election, who claimed to have achieved so much for his country. Yet, the opposition believe he has remained at the head of a government plagued with corruption, unemployment, injustice and tribalism.

God mocked the people's choice of a king when the elders of Israel brought the children of Israel to ask for their own king after the manner of the nations surrounding them. They should have called on the Lord, but, they asked for a King of their choice and their rejecting God, was a total disregard for the sovereignty of the Almighty as ruler in the kingdom of men. In 1 Sam. 8:10-18 God shows us the ways of the kings of men.

`Democracy' is a modern word for the rejection of God's choice of a king, and man's stubbornness in continuously thinking that he can better his plight by his own means. Christadelphians for nearly two hundred years have been daily searching the Scriptures and have, since then, considered themselves as strangers of the present world governments, and have never been part of its politics. They have remained a minority in every country where they are found and some have even suffered physical assaults for their belief.

In Luke 1:30-32 the birth of God's choice of a King is announced by one of his messengers. King Jesus was born, not according to worldly standards, did not spend his life in a royal palace, but embraced the cross for the redemption of his brethren and for the Kingdom from above.

Few believed him then when he was on earth; few believed his apostles after His resurrection, and still fewer believe his disciples today. As we are sure night will come today, then morning, so are we sure of his second coming, which is soon. May we all encourage one another to meditate on the daily readings in unity, as the day draws nearer. In the blessed hope of his glorious coming,

--Bro. Emmanuel Nanji.

DOUALA

Do you remember the handicapped brother I spoke to you about? Well, in answer to our prayers, I'm pleased to inform you that he has got a job working in quite a comfortable post that does not trouble him a lot. God is really great and takes care of His children and knows our needs. My father is reading `The Real Devil' and he is already beginning to fall out with the satan-angel idea he used to believe in, calling it paganism. We chatted some few days ago and I told him that once he would finish the book he would understand many things as I have.

I read about something that quite interested me about phylacteries. I have always wondered why God gave Israel this kind of command to tie up portions of the law on them, but when I read `The Real Devil' I understood the necessity of this command, especially as those pagan nations round about Israel used them for protection. Actually my ethnic group do such things. We have certain bangles or rings which some people wear on the fingers and wrists against enemies that might mystically want to attack them. My father himself used to have one that he usually wore on his wrist and after some years he would have to take it back to the witch doctor to kind of revitalise the ring or bangle. This aspect is very common here in Cameroon and I am only beginning to realise how old this practise is.

Our Ecclesia needs at least five Bibles

--Bro. Cyril Zang

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude for the NEV Bible you sent to me, and as I opened it in my office we had the opportunity to discuss a few verses from it. Most of them were embarrassed to know that the Lord Jesus is not God because of their belief in the trinity. One of them immediately went to John chapter 1 and we had a good talk on the first verses. They realised that Jesus only existed in God's plan at the beginning as I explained from the notes.

Another major problem of the gospel in Africa is letting the people understand that Satan is simply an adversary. This is because of their conception about Satan from the beginning was different and traditional. That is why it always takes us time to change the thoughts of new converts. If we have books like 'The Rear Devil' and others that treat of controversial topics, that will help us a lot in Cameroon. The commentary in the Bible is being already used to cast doubt away from the minds of the people.

I enclose a picture of the newly baptized Brothers in Douala Ecclesia. I am the recording brother giving a hand of fellowship to the new brothers.

--Bro Wambong Mathias



Receiving two Brother into fellowship at Douala ecclesia, Cameroon



Bonaberri ecclesia, Cameroon, after baptisms

NEWS FROM CONGO



I'm Bro.Kim .the Chairman of Kinshasa ecclesia. I'm daily very happy to receive the Bible messages from Gospel News , let God bless all brethren and sisters who read these.

I ask you if you can assist me by VCD or other documentations for English, because, I'd like to learn English myself at home and the pronunciation is important. This will be important for our Ecclesia where everybody speaks only French and we have a lot of books in English. I alone speak English with difficulty, but am not able to translate for them.

Bro Kim's Mukambilwa CBM-Kinshasa, D.R.Congo BP;9953

Can anyone help

him with learning English?

NEWS FROM KENYA



BUNGOMA

Thank you very much for sending me the NEV Bible. I'm 37 years and a teacher by profession. I intend to help found an ecclesia near my place (in Bungoma Town) and God willing establish something akin to a Christadelphian Resource Centre. It needs a little library and a few volunteer brothers and sisters, plus some little funds to keep us going. Readers who want to know more about Christadelphians could visit this centre. That is my dream.

--Bro. Nicodemus Wanjala

KOBUJOI

In Gospel News it is wonderful to hear from fellow brethren and sisters and indeed to share experiences together as we hold each other shoulder by shoulder Zionwards in great anticipation of the soon return of our Lord and Master.

Please remember to send me a few copies when the whole Bible is finally received from the printers. I have a few enthusiastic Bible students who I feel will benefit so much when they have a Bible of their own.

--Bro. Geoffrey Chirchir



Sisters Bible Class at Lurambi

LURAMBI

I agree that the signs of the times show that Christ's return is near. Our Ecclesia watches these and has had six mini Bible Schools to study the Bible and help others come into the Truth. We gave many contacts studying Bible Basics, and expect 21 of them to be baptised later this year.

--Bro. Martin Chemiati



Sis. Pilistar with two orphans, which to her are like granddaughters.

MALONDO

Time seems to be running very fast towards the imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ as the signs show in various parts of the world and, in particular, the Middle East events. Now I have no problem with doing any reading since you assisted me with several varieties of reading glasses with which I have also managed to assist some in the Ecclesia and outside.

I appreciate very much your work in the Lord by enabling people in the countries of the world to get access to the truth through the Gospel News. The Word of God should be spread in all ways possible to us in God's purpose.

I managed to meet Duncan and Cindy in Nairobi when they showed us the wonder of God's work through the pictures through the internet, and how some are suffering because of the Truth they had received through Gospel News, particularly those living in Muslim/Arab countries and Hindu areas.

Here in our country, Kenya, the weather has changed so much with heavy rain, and some areas are being submerged with many belongings being swept away but we are always assured from the times of Noah God will not again flood the earth.

Brother, I have been very much uplifted indeed through your encouraging letters accompanying your articles/books you usually send me and may the Lord God bless you and your efforts abundantly.

--Bro. John Muyala

MATUU

Thank you very much for the good and very important work you are doing. I am happy that you have sent more Bibles and Bible Basics. This is helping with the spread of the Gospel and strengthening the faith of brothers and sisters.

--Bro Lazarus Kingoo

MUHORONI

I thank you for the good work that you do in feeding the world with GOD'S word. God bless you.

--Bro. Sylvester Ariri

NAIROBI

I am full of joy to inform you that God was faithful to me and our family last year, which was full of challenges and trials and in the midst of all these I have gained victory and my health restored. I count it pure joy that by going through all kinds of challenges and trials this has contributed to my strong faith in the Almighty God and His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ (James 1:2-5).

Thank you for your persistence in making sure that the world receives the good and great news of the Word of God and also your continued supply of the Gospel News. I give God glory for helping to sustain me after losing my job. I have always put my trust in God when he speaks through his servant in Matthew, that I am more important than the birds in the air which get their food every day without worrying.

As His son I am allotted my portion every day; food, shelter and clothing is going to be provided, therefore I should not be worried about what I am going to eat or wear for the Lord knows clearly what I need.

I encourage my brothers and sisters never to be worried or troubled whenever they pass through or face trials of all kinds as they are there only to strengthen, and it is only in them that they get to know God and to understand that God is always faithful and will never forsake or leave us.

I congratulate all who have kept their faith during these troubled times, which have been difficult and really stressful, i.e. financial strains, inflation, wars, political instability and unemployment. I truly love God for all His faithfulness. Be blessed and continue being a blessing.

--Bro. Jared Kidiga

NAITIRI

All the books and informative letters you have sent are of great help to us as some of our friends borrow them and come up with questions concerning their different beliefs, for example, the worship of the image of Christ and the Cross. In most churches here in Naitiri they believe that when someone dies, he/she has already gone to heaven and it has been a great task to teach them the truth. We have managed to convince some of them, who have agreed with us on such like topics but others are now against us because of some little disagreement over the Bible. They say that once you are baptised, directly and automatically you receive eternal life, then

even if you die you will just continue living in spirit form. Some friends have agreed with us, and from proofs from the Bible are interested to get more information concerning the Kingdom of God.

As you know, I started learning much more about the true gospel recently, from about 2009. I have not gained all the knowledge required to defend the Holy Scriptures in terms of differences on some Bible basics. I hereby come into arguments after discussions and find myself weak in heart for lacking the ability to remember verses quickly.

--Bro. Nasong'o Haron

I am writing this with a lot of joy because I was baptised five months ago with the help of Brother Haron. He was teaching me, using the books you have been sending to him, "Bible Basics" and "The Real Christ". These books helped me a lot and I am still using them. I will be reading them again and studying them slowly because God is the perfect Father, (Matt.5:48).

I would like to inform you that one day we were at a school discussion group during break time. There were six of us in a religious education discussion and a friend, Dennis, raised a point about the trinity and I could see that most of the group believe that God, His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit are one being. Could you please send me some notes about the trinity so that I can read and understand more and be able to go and teach them the truth without any doubt.

--Bro. Revin Simiyu



Bro. Revin Simiyu

NAKURU

In our ecclesia we now need only four Bibles mainly for visitors. I was shocked to hear that some people in Latvia are also undergoing hardships like we are in Kenya. The Kenya shilling has weakened against the US dollar. A kilogram of sugar is sold at ksh.200 which is equivalent to £1.50p. Let us pray that Christ comes soon.

--Bro. Samuel Wango

NYANGE

We in Nyange Ecclesia are fine and pass warm greetings to you. Our members are saying that it is quite a long time since you last wrote to us, so we are not quite sure whether our courier services are hoarding our parcels or maybe you are busy doing other duties that absorb you fully, but we hope you will soon be able to send us more newsletters.

Here in Kenya we thank our Almighty God for the showers of rain we are receiving and we are trying as much as possible to grow food crops as early as possible to ensure that we fight hunger. Though we are living in tensions due to insecurity from our neighbouring republic of Somalia, we thank God for sustaining us alive since many members of the AL-SHABAAB have been found as close as Bungoma Town, which is next to us, and have been arrested by the County's armed forces.

Nyange Ecclesia is growing rapidly and all thanks return to God and also you for your material support. Currently we have candidates again who are preparing for baptism, including Daniel, Irene, Bridgit and Janet. We hope that our Lord shall one day fulfil our dreams of having a large ecclesia in our region that will enlighten people about the Truth, as in Habakkuk 2:2, which encourages us to wait for our dreams to be fulfilled at the end of it all.

--Bro. Adriano Wanjalo

SINDO

The purpose of the God of Israel is that all human beings should be saved but because of our deceitful hearts and minds we have all gone astray, all have sinned and come short of God's glory. We cannot save our own lives as our natures are corrupt. That is why through God's grace and truth revealed through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ of Nazareth died on the cross, and through his resurrection from the dead man has been given a hope of living beyond the grave.

We can only praise God and give thanks for providing a way of life after death. The God of Israel will show His love and mercy to us only by our being obedient to Him. Your communications to me from 1999-2011 have made my faith to be alive. You have given me the tools to do the work of God without any fear, but with love and patience. Finally I feel that if I remain a faithful servant I have the golden opportunity to be one of the brothers in the Kingdom of God, when our Saviour returns for the second time with great power and glory to rule on this earth for a thousand years.

--Bro. John Owalo Onani

TONGAREN

Someone once asked me why she should be like Jesus now, since she would become like him when he comes to rule the world. Great question! Actually there are several reasons why becoming like him is important. When we see Jesus and stand before him we will give an account as to whether or not we lived in ways that were consistent with his will, or, as Paul put

it, whether or not we have built on him as our foundation with "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, clay or straw". (1 Cor.3:12-13).

All that we should do to advance his Kingdom things like to contribute to the strength of his church, serve the poor and needy and promote righteousness and justice as he did - is like building with essential materials that will survive the fire of his judgement. On the contrary, building with things that reflect our fallen ways and advancing ourselves and our earthly desires and commodities, will turn into a pile of ashes before the consuming fire of his glory, (consuming fire means to return to the grave). I don't know about you, but I would rather love Jesus enough to live like him now, for the thought of standing before him, and having to return to the grave for ever is an unthinkable alternative. (1Cor.3:13).

--Bro. Isaac Kapa

NEWS FROM MALAWI



CHIMIMBE

May the Lord who is our Rock bless you and increase your knowledge and keep you in your path, so that your remembrance in Christ the Lord may continue to reach us here.

I have taken a long time to reply to your letter because I was in difficulty. In my home I had no food, which caused me to go to Mozambique for piece-work to support my family. So you will know it is not because of weakness, being lazy or tired of reading any Scripture you usually send me that has caused this lack of contact: I very much appreciate and am satisfied with all that you do for me.

We must use our skills and pray without ceasing, to encourage one another to defeat sin in the flesh through Jesus Christ, who is to come. In our desire to be spiritual, we must not let hunger or lack of

food entice us to sin. May we daily feed on the spiritual food that is in the Holy Bible: this will give us strength and increase our hope, beliefs and love.

Today there are plenty of spoilt, corrupted things, but in these end times we bless those who know that our God can work in the hearts of those who do His will.

--Sis. Mai Cook

JALI

I am sorry for the inconvenience caused by the changing of my postal address. This is so because I am experiencing a tough financial status this year and because of that I have failed to pay for the 2011 postal rent hence my postal address has been closed down, and I enclose a note of the current one I am using. Although this change might cause some difficulties I hope that all in all things will get better and I will be receiving normal articles.

--Bro. Lucky F. Mbalale

KASUNGU

Congratulations on being blessed with a grandson, Daniel who, through God's love, was born at home. I was so grateful to hear about Gwladys. It was a long time ago that she sent us a children's Bible which my children still use. It has pictures and words explaining what happened. Sister Gwladys was a very close partner to our ecclesia with Bror Jailos Khonje and I send her my warmest wishes.

Sister June Churchill wrote me a letter in reply to mine. She advised me to concentrate more on the farming scheme because of shortage of work places in our rural area. I have started school, not because of my will but members from our Bible sharing think about the problem of surviving with all the financial problems in the world and I understand that after obtaining a Malawi School Certificate of Education one can be trained as a teacher. After praying, I thought that this might be God's purpose in order that I may survive. .

--Sis. Bertha Khenje

MZUZU

It is very comforting to hear from you and thanks for the information regarding Duncan's family in Eastern Europe. Duncan having two children means he is no longer the young Duncan I used to know. Well Marcus, this is just a joke, I have seen him in Gospel News the time he came to visit our brethren alongside our Lake (Malawi).

Some of us really appreciate the efforts that CAT is doing in order to spread the Truth. We have witnessed recently the downfall of some presidents in some African countries who took their subjects for granted, and new authorities are being put in their places. Well all this reminds me of one thing, that "the Most High reigns in the kingdoms of men".

--Bro. Sylvester Tembo

The last Gospel News shows that you are still remembering and caring for us. Everything was quite excellent when I read and heard about it. I also support the compilation and new distribution of those Bibles.

Things here have now completely turned from better to worse. Fuel prices have resulted in shortages and higher prices for many things. There are many problems here and we just try to keep going and pray to the Almighty God to redeem us. I would like to encourage you to continue providing us with Gospel News. We are still working hand in hand like ants no matter that we are few, but strong in believing in God. I would like to announce the death of my father who died at the age of 87, born in 1922. This death of my father has made me speechless, hopeless and helpless in my life.

--Bro. Dutch Mphayah

NGABU

With me here in Malawi, God is caring for me in good condition and the work which I was given by the Almighty Lord is progressing day by day. I was one day reading your book called "Bible Basics" concerning the joy and peace of true Christianity and after reading the book I found your name and where you live. As a man of God spreading the Good News here in Malawi I have so many brothers and sisters but I am lacking more spiritual items like Bible Basics, magazines, booklets and Holy Bibles.

--Bro. I.W.F. Thabwa

SINYALA

Thank you so much for your continued interest sending us gospel support, books, literature and the Gospel News. The purpose is to direct our attention to the Scriptures and its unique message of hope in this troubled world, as well as to the essential principles of the Divine teaching, appealing to the Bible for demonstration of the Truth in all aspects. We require 10 Bibles in English for brothers and sisters, 5 in local language Chechewa and 2 for those awaiting baptism, 17 in all. Also required is literature concerning God's coming Kingdom, Christmas, Heaven, Hell and Baptism. I am 70 years old and my wife is 67 years old and we suffer from heart attack (HB) dislocation so we cannot work hard to cope with our cost of living. May God continue to bless you.

--Bro. Henderson M. Sosola

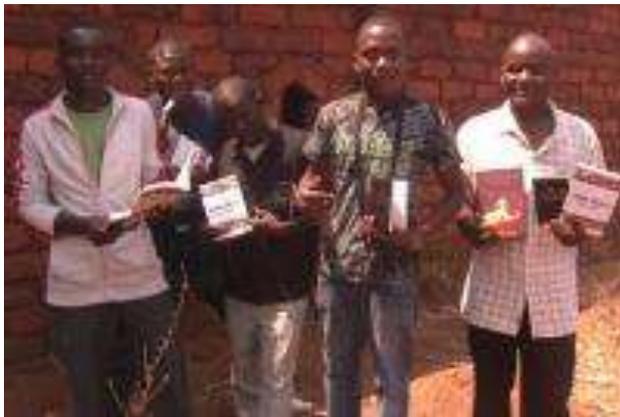
ZOMBA

Brother, I received your letter but I was sick in hospital after I went to Kasonga to see brethren and sisters. My sister was also sick in hospital.

--Bro. B.S. Kawonga

I am planning to spread the Gospel to some Secondary Schools which have Christian Clubs with members from different churches, so I hope to meet with them to share the True Gospel. I could therefore do with some extra literature for this project.

--Bro Samson Banda.



(l-r) Bre Emmanuel, Andrew, Symon, Hackwell and Samson with books recently sent them.



An historic picture of Bro David Rennison with Bro Charles Sanjama translating.

NEWS FROM MALI



BAMA KO

Here we are all alive and well, and nobody was hurt in the recent revolution and problem in the country. We are all struggling from lack of food caused by the high prices of food and water.

--Bro. Luc



Sister Astrid with Mali children

NEWS FROM MAURITIUS



PHOENIX

Health and blessing in the Name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who will return at the sound of the trumpet. Meanwhile we must fill our lamps with the oil of faith, and keep our garments white and clean.

Thank you for the copies of the estimable Gospel News, which we appreciate as food for thought. The recent copy which is colourful, is full of messages for everyone looking for the Truth. May God bless and reward the team richly: `Read yourself rich' is the thought of the day.

We herald the coming of the Son who will put an end to man's folly and restore a new order of things.

--Bro. Lilkan Ancharaz

NEWS FROM MOZAMBIQUE



TETE

I am not too bad here, except that I am having problems with the postal system. Thank you for the parcel of five Bible Basics in Portuguese, but the box and some letters' envelopes have been opened.

I was delayed receiving your letters as I have been in Zimbabwe for two years, with my family. I have telephoned Bro. John at Zomba, asking him to come here. I had the great privilege to see our brethren and sisters from the UK and to hear some words of exhortation from them.

I want to thank Sis. Susan Sanger for the weekly exhortation paper which I received regularly, as well as the `Hope of Israel.' Please continue to send me Gospel News and other material in English and Portuguese. I ask for your prayers for my family in Zimbabwe: I could not bring them home as I had not the relevant documents.

Here in Tete provincial capital city it is very hot the temperature is 40-45C. I would like to request Sunday School material, please, if possible. I enclose a `photo with students.

--Bro. Emmanuel Maugeite



Bro. Emmanuel Maugente with students

NEWS FROM NIGERIA



ENUGU

I wrote to Brother Igna at Cross River State and he replied by phone that he had got my letter and promised to talk to me again so I am planning to visit them. The road leading to the place is bad because it is a village and

because the transport fares are high. The people need visitors to warn and encourage them.

Nigeria is in big trouble because of the increase in the price of fuel. Businesses are closing down, even Banks; hunger has taken over and people are using the opportunity to block roads. Please send us Bible Reading Planners as many of us do not have one.

Sadly ,we lost a brother on 11.1.12. He had loved us dearly but had been sick for a long time. Due to trouble in Nigeria we managed to bury him on the same day that he died. Only a few of us attended the funeral service which I conducted. Please remember us in your prayers because people are killing others. Food items are very costly and also house rental because of the fuel price increase and subsidy removed.

--Bro. Godfrey Nwosu

IBADAN

Thank you so much for the kindness and love in sending some Christian literature. I am most grateful to you for supporting my faith, being just two years old within the Christadelphian family and being in a state of isolation.

I was baptised on 10th October 2010 by brothers affiliated with the Lagos Ecclesia and since then I have been supported with a little literature from the brothers, because of being away from them, since I am studying at the University of Ibadan . Being in isolation cuts me off from regular fellowship and corporate Bible study, weekly meetings and the memorial service, so I will really cherish your kind support and continued help for regular Bible-based literature, especially on the core doctrinal teachings of God's Word. I am facing family opposition to my faith at present so I feel the need to be well grounded and rooted in the understanding of God's eternal truths.

I am counting on your prayerful support as it is very hard to stand alone in isolation, facing opposition from one's family to my faith and being treated as a heretic for embracing the truths taught by the Christadelphians. Please kindly keep me in your prayers you will surely be in mine.

--Bro. Timothy Temilola

MBAISE

My Ecclesia needs Bibles for reading the Old and New Testaments. We are eight in number now but if I count for those moving into the township to look for work and those who are preparing for baptism, it will be more. Also we need more copies of Bible Basics to give to others.

--Bro. Blessing Nwigwe

OHAFIA

By God's grace we are alright today and trying our very best to spread the Truth to our people. Kindly remember me in your prayers and I do pray for you so that God will continue to give me more power to spread His Word. The people here have the zeal for God but not according to knowledge, holding a form of reverence toward God, but having denied the power of it.

I really need Gospel News and other books from you as they are like fellowshiping with other brothers and sisters. Our family ecclesia is in isolation here and that must not stop me from preaching the Truth to those in our community. We need to work, as we are in the last days, so please send me leaflets to reach out to people here.

I received the materials you sent to me, giving thanks to the Father who made us suitable to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

We need here in Ohafia four complete Bibles and my senior brother is now studying with us and by God's grace he may be preparing for baptism. Please send materials/books to me as they have been a great help to our family Ecclesia and for our house to house proclamation. We need 10 more copies of the New Testament to share with those we meet without a Bible

--Bro. Uka Egwu

NEWS FROM SIERRA LEONE



FREETOWN

I wish to write to request that you send `Gospel News' magazines and Bibles with the abridged version of `Bible Basics' for members and intended members please.

--Bro. Jolly D. Williams

NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA



CANDU



Creche and Visitors' Room, Candu.



Left: Sisters Zelpha, Eugenia, Vivian and Selmabi, who work in the Candu Creche.

SOWETO

We had another baptism on Sunday - someone who heard about the Christadelphians on the radio when Daniel and Obed did their thing.

Daniel gave him a NEV Bible and said he was the first in South Africa to receive one.

--Sis Leonie Verster



ARUSHA

We have five English speaking Brethren and so would like five English Bibles for them and if possible some for English speaking contacts on our missionary trips; we also need Bibles in French and Kiswahili. I was baptised in 1998 and was interviewed by Brother David Smith. I really like working for the CBM. travelling each year with visiting brethren to different areas and translating for them.

--Bro Thierry Kabangu,

KILOSA

I would like to draw your attention to my situation: I lost my sight in 1981 while I was employed by the ministry of Education, where I had worked since 1974. The cause of my blindness was chloroquine treatment when I suffered malaria. Subsequently, doctors felt that the treatment had destroyed my retinas, leaving a spot on both retinas. However, I was retrained and learned to read and write using Braille.

I retired in 1997, at that time I was very eager to learn the word of God, but knew of no-one who could assist me. I found, by God's grace, that the CBM already had a Christadelphian meeting at Kimamba, started by Bro. Samuel Malulu, who introduced me to the good news of the Truth; I was very impressed by this message and wanted to join the meeting.

In 2004 I met Bro Michael Owen, who told me about the work of helping the blind. Within a month, Bro Arthur and Sis Muriel East began to send me the forty lesson course, and the following year, 2005, I was baptised.

The following year, I preached the Truth to local people, and eight converts were baptised. Numbers of converts were increasing because I was preaching the Truth to them.

Since the death of Bro. Arthur East, and the floods which swept away my books, I have no books printed in Braille for my blind students, nor for my sighted students, using the forty-lesson. Braille course. So I am writing to ask if you will be able to assist me to get Braille books, and others for the sighted students. I am married with children, and hope you may be able to visit me one day.

--Bro. Hosea Ndaki

Sis. Muriel East has arranged for you

to have a Braille copy of the 40-lesson course. You also have two Christadelphian Braille magazines regularly from Bro. Peter Bullivant. Bro. Peter does a wonderful work in producing these regularly --MH

MOROGORO

I and my family are O.K. Thank you very much for sending me as many booklets as you do. In our ecclesia there are five Brothers who can read English, but they haven't English Bibles, so could you please send them copies

--Bro. Joseph Kaliyaya

MUSOMA

The NEV Bibles are wonderfully designed in a manner that a reader can understand the meanings of the chapters. I showed them to our members and finally Sis Rebecca took one as she did not have any English Bible. The attached reading planner is so very helpful and I know all in Faith must appreciate and enjoy the Bible together.

--Sis. Monica



Sis Monica with the Mutunga family from Kenya

NYARUGUSU REFUGEE CAMP

There are two Ecclesias in this extensive Refugee Camp of about 20 baptised members in each. We received an urgent email that their food allocation (Maize flour 190g, Beans 60 g, Oil 20g, Salt 10g, Soya 20g for each person every 14 days) had to be reduced by half for some weeks owing to WFP/ UNHCR food shortage.(This is the typical allocation in most refugee camps). Technically it is not easy to help in these situations, but the hand of providence enabled CAT to take immediate action and make up the supplies for the Brethren and Sisters.

We send a considerable amount of literature to various Refugee camps , which seem ideal places to spread the good news of the Kingdom, as many of them have time to think about God in there difficult and often horrible circumstances.

Nyarugusu

Our two ecclesias at the refugee camp will start a project soon. We have noted that most of our helpful

Publications are written in English. And those Brethren who do not know English do not always develop, or have a deep understanding of the Truth, as they are unable to expand their knowledge in the word of

God though they have been baptised long time ago, so we are going to run a learn English course to help them benefit more from the Truths literature.

Help brethren here to become a community of believers based on firm understanding of the Truth through reading our publications .

My heart revives to have the NEV Bible as it makes for a deeper significance to be discovered that makes the reading and the understanding of the Truth very exciting and enables students to find out the basic message and the power of God's love and the true happiness revealed in it so that we may no longer be like children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine devised by the trickery, craftiness and deceitful scheming of men.

--Bro Isidore Wibelega

NEWS FROM UGANDA



BUMOLI

Bumoli is doing well, and keeping strong in faith with all members fine. May the Lord of peace be with you till Christ's return.

We would like to request dictionary for easy interpretation of words; we love to preach but we have little education, so it is our plea that you could help us in this way to improve our preaching work.



The wages of sin is death,' and a brother who is baptised should not be involved in the six things which the Lord hates: see Proverbs 6:16-19. For anyone to inherit eternal life, he or she should not do such acts.

--Bro. Bwire Sepper

BUSIA

I would like to again request from you some books, like 'Where There is No Doctor,' (this book will help us to improve our standard of living and also to teach other people); We are very happy because we are enjoying the books you sent us, and they are improving our spiritual growth in Jesus Christ.

--Bro. Mangeni Rogers

LUMINO

Thank you so much for the book about the public debate- 'Are the Miraculous Gifts of Holy Spirit Possessed Today?' It is so helpful to us as it can help to guide our friends (students) who still believe this. So much work has been taking place here at Lumino, the construction of our new hall is finished and a lot of preaching work is going on since the hall is in a new place. We have had five baptisms recently which included my 66 year old mother.



--Bro. Godfrey Egessa.

JINJA

The two photos of our newly baptised Brother Paul and Sister Sheba of Bushenyi Ecclesia viewing the river Nile, and Bro Addidas enjoying an egg at the youth camp in Jinja.



Enjoying roasting meat at the camp

LUMINO

We were so grateful to receive your parcel of New Testament Bibles and we look forward to receiving another parcel of the complete

Bible, together with notes on each page, and an abridged version of Bible Basics.

--Bro. Godfrey Egessa



Lumino Ecclesia's new hall, now called Dakha Ecclesia as the hall is built in the Dakha community. Brothers, Sisters and some students and Sunday School children standing outside their new Hall after the Breaking of Bread service.



Dakha (Lumino) Ecclesia: Brothers, Sisters, Students and children at the Breaking of Bread Service.

KAMPALA

Since the end of February the Kampala Ecclesia do not have a place of meeting, so please do put us in your prayers as we look for another place. In the estate where we have been living for 20 years, whilst I was away the Government evicted us. I have temporary accommodation at present and to earn a living I repair shoes. I have nine children, and eight of them are in my family photo.

--Bro Stephen Ogenga

NEWS FROM ZAMBIA



CHINSALI

I am so happy that the Lord called me to hear the Truth. I obeyed it in baptism on August 20th 1998. I thank God for all brothers who shared the Truth with me. We are working locally, and out of our zone, to forward the work of the Truth while we wait for the coming of our Lord.

I am the secretary of, Chinsali. We need more Bibles and Bible Basics, as we now number 18 brethren.

My faith is not the way it was before I started reading Gospel News now I am bright in the Lord. 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, and continuing in prayer. (Acts 2:42).

--Bro. Edward Mutale



Left is Bro. Edward Mutale with members of the ecclesia.

It's a pleasure to let you know that we would like to have 10 copies of the whole Bible, for our members and students who are about to be baptized. I would also like to inform you that I am very much interested to receive the Gospel News; also a copy for Bro. Isaac Mphasa Sibale, who is also a member of the above-mentioned Ecclesia.

--Bro. Brighton Chiluba

KABOMPO

We are requesting 30 copies of the NEV Bible for Kabompo Ecclesia, for use in preaching and distributing to those who have no

Bibles, or Bible students to be baptized.

Recently Bro. Denis Kombe and Bro. Silas Chishimba came to Kabompo from Ndola and Kitwe respectively on a joint visit to baptize two Bible students, Srs. Patricia Makina and Jessy Kutoha. We expect to baptise five more Bible students soon.

Please pray for the Kabompo Ecclesia that we may be given strength to intensify preaching and resources to embark on the construction of an ecclesial hall this year. We have paid K600,000 for application forms, for plot interviews and have successfully been interviewed. We have been told to pay K10 million {Kwacha (£1,184)} in order for the council to allocate us with a plot number in Kabompo town. We are eager to mould bricks, burn and ferry them to the site, God willing, in May, June and July to start the actual construction of the Ecclesial hall.

The number of Bible students is rising as more people in Kabompo are understanding the truth, and leaving wrong doctrines. So we need your help this year in sending to us literature, especially information on the signs of the times, doctrinal information and other literature. Bro. Denis Kombe has sent us a standard building plan. We shall, God willing, bake 3,000 bricks and start construction by the end of this year.

We are sure that many people in Zambia like going to church halls and this will help us more in preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, although not at all forsaking door-to-door preaching and the preaching through our way of life towards the outsiders.

--Bro. Reuben Musole Kaambeu

KABWE

I will be happy to continue receiving Gospel News and also glad to receive other literature. It is true, brother, like soldiers going to the battle in war, who have first to prepare themselves, it is the same for us Christians we need to redouble our efforts to prepare ourselves for the return of our Master, Jesus Christ.

More people are returning to the Word of God, although some are not in the Truth; of course more have come to realize that the end of the world is near because of the things which are happening. These are amazing things and this is the time, as Christians we must seriously proclaim the Word of God to non-believers, by helping them urgently to turn to the Lord so that they can be saved from eternal death.

--Bro. Greenwell Kunda



Bro. Greenwell Kunda

KAFUE

I was so happy to receive the NEV Bibles, Gospel News, plus supplementary materials a few Notes on some events which clearly make us aware of the likeliness of the Master's return. It's good to reach out, and this is quite evident through your untiring work which we, too, endeavour to support by whatever little correspondence we send in for Gospel News. Let's all pray for new projects for His work, and I assure you there are indeed many things coming our way, which we should not ignore.

--Bro. Wilfred Chibomba

KAFUE

I could see the smiling faces of brethren and some Bible students when I was giving out the NEV Bibles. The comment I got was, "This is the one" a very helpful, well designed Bible. It is very good for our student, who has been asking so

many questions, who has now refrained and says, "my question has already been answered by the commentary they have put down there". It has been made possible for many brethren and sisters to have Bibles of their own, not only these, even some of our very committed Bible students will soon be buried in water, dying with our absent Lord and being raised to newness of life. Thus they have helped many to have knowledge of the coming Kingdom. We have eight committed Bible students at the moment, and nine brethren who are able to read the English language

--Bro. Kelly Simayumbula



Bro. Oscar Chikobela and Sis. Chipego Muchango at their wedding on 27.09.11. at Simutete Hall in Kalomo.



Bre., from left, Haggai, Coasta Kanembe and Oscar Chikobela packing mud bricks for the construction of their Ecclesial Hall at Daphan Ecclesia.



Kalomo Sunday School

KALOMO

I would like to share with others who have the wrong interpretation of the 'second coming of Christ,' because some, especially in Africa, believe that Christ is coming to get and take believers to live with him forever in heaven. The statement of the apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 must not confuse and make us ignorant of the Word. Paul was using a kind of figurative expression to comfort those who seek the Lord.

I was sharing a Bible talk one afternoon on a preaching 'outreach' topic on 'the second coming of Christ,' when I met with someone who said, 'It is a waste of time to worship if we're to remain on earth and not go into heaven.' The Bible clearly says believers 'shall reign on

the earth' (Rev.5:10) not in heaven. Another passage of Scripture which reveals that the dominion will be 'under heaven' is Daniel 7:27.

--Bro. Bargley Muleya



Bro. Muleya on a preaching outreach



Kalomo Sunday School: left to right Twine sister, Dorica and Dolice; Sigma; Sydney; Anner; Monde and Steve.

KAPIRI MPOSHI

All along I have been longing to receive the 'Gospel News,' but I had no proper address, until of late. Kindly put me on the list of those to receive the magazine. I joined the Christadelphian family in August 1999. I live in isolation, but meet with brothers and sisters once in a while when I am able to pay for transport. My wife, who is also a Sister, and I are 28 Kms away from Kapiri Mposhi Ecclesia. Could you possibly send me a copy of 'Wrested Scriptures,' as it will be a helpful book for us.

--Bro. Austen Mwaka

Thank you for the last parcel you sent to me for our Sunday School children. New Testaments which are very interesting and useful for the children to learn about and know the true God. The enclosed books and papers with Bible stories are also very helpful to us.

I have received the five Bibles which are very interesting, for the words are big to read, even for older people. In addition to these copies, could you please send seven more. It is very important to thank those well-wishers, those contributing to making it possible to print 'Gospel News' worldwide as it is this magazine that helps to encourage us and enable more people to come to learn the Truth and receive rewards from our Lord when he comes.

--Bro. Chisosa Ostine



Kapingimposhi Sunday School

KAZEMBE

I am very pleased to let you know that I received Gospel News for December 2011. I am presently the Ecclesial Secretary at Kasumpa, with eleven members as follows: Brothers John Kasanda, Harry Manda, Benson Mupini, Bernard Kabwe, James Kambobe, Bernard Musonda; Sisters Elizabeth Kasanda, Christine Musonda, Josephine Kambobe and Judith Kaniki. Some are able to read and write, but speech can be a drawback. They have expressed their wish to receive the new Bibles with an abridged version of Bible Basics.

--Bro. Vincent Moses Mwense

KITWE

I received the NEV Bible with both my hands and with one heart. I now say, thank you so much from the core of my heart. The edition is truly a masterpiece, a very handy insight for the labourer in the Master's vineyard in preaching and witnessing work. The inclusion of Bible Basics, the Bible Companion and of course the commentary, verify the excellence. Congratulations to Carelink Ministries.

--Bro. Elvin Muntamba

It is very encouraging, through Gospel News, to read about God's word from brothers and sisters around the world. Furthermore, I appeal to you to send me 5 copies of the NEV for 5 contacts who are interested in studying the Word of God.

--Bro. Robert Miwele Mpondo



From left to right: Bre. Katongo.. Simumba, Nkweto, Muntemba,
Bro. Kombe, Miwele, Changwe. Front: Bro. Simbao and a
Bro. from Chililabombare. (Robert Miwele, Zambia)

This letter is to inform you that I have moved from Kasaka Ecclesia, Kafue, and am now with Kitwe Ecclesia. Since leaving Kasaka all correspondence has been cut off. This calling is personal, and since it is, I have to advance spiritually on a personal basis: I can ask you to forge ahead with me spiritually, but if you don't want to, you remain, because salvation is personal. Preaching the Word of God is also personal, since it is a personal call. Some brethren travel long distances, risking their lives to preach the gospel to thirsty people, using their resources. But 'us' here, since it is a group calling, need to do preaching in a group as if afraid of the unknown, and we think that in a group we feel safe. But salvation is one by one not as a group. Yes, if maybe one is not matured enough spiritually, he needs someone to teach him how to go about it, as an eagle teaching its young to fly, and is then left on its own. So the materials that we receive, plus our daily Bible readings, strengthen us spiritually, and one can 'fight a good fight' to achieve the spiritual goal.

But Jesus commissioned us to go out and preach, not preach to our brothers and sisters on Sunday assemblies only I know and have seen that they are good speakers but to leave this and go out into the wilderness and search for the lost sheep and, if found, bring it joyfully in from the wilderness. But who can volunteer, using his resources and energy, that our God has given him? I personally am seriously in need of going out to preach, but lack 'material.' Since moving from Kasaka Ecclesia to Kitwe Ecclesia, I have been asking if the Ecclesia has any leaflets as aids for preaching the gospel, but to no avail. Therefore, brother, I request personally from you, if you can send to me 10 Bible Basis, leaflets in great number, Sunday School books and teaching aids, as well as 4 New Testament Bibles and a full Bible for my own use. I hope our God of Israel will bless this request.

--Bro. Phillip Chilambwe

LIVINGSTONE

The NEV Bible will go a long way in spreading the Word of God the world over. There are still some people who cannot afford to buy one, especially

here in Africa where poverty levels are very high. This will enable some to have a Bible of their own.

As secretary of the Livingstone ecclesia, I hereby request six Bibles, as we have six students who congregate with us regularly and who are able to read English very well.

--Bro. *Likando Ilishebo*

LUSAKA

We are happy to inform you that our ecclesia is growing; eight members, one brother and seven sisters were baptised in 2011 and four Bible students are enlisted for the 40 lesson Bible course, none of them has a Bible. We are also requesting 12 Bibles, eight for newly baptised members and three for the Bible students. We hope and pray to enlist more Bible students and we will be informing you accordingly should the need for a few more Bibles arise. We hope to hear from you soon.

--Bro. *Francis C. Mukabe*

MANDONA

I received your note in the 'Gospel News' sent to those who receive the magazine. Please do continue sending it to me as it gives me a lot of knowledge when I read and see pictures of brethren worldwide. I find the magazine to be very educative, so please don't stop.

The ecclesia at present has four members, with one student to receive baptism in April, God Willing, therefore I request five newly printed Bibles plus three for our ecclesial library and I live near a school, Lameck Basic School, which has two interested teachers and a school library, so if you can support this order, with God's blessings, I shall be very glad.

--Bro. *Charles Kangwa*

Please, we need about 10 copies of Bible Basics in Bemba, and we look forward to receiving these.

--Bro. *Isaiah Mumba*

MARAMBA

I much appreciate your kindness in sending me Gospel News and other material.

Please continue with this spirit of love and dedication for the work of the Lord Jesus.

In the Old Testament, oil is shown as a means of worship, purification and healing, and as a symbol of comfort, joy, peace and light. When Paul wrote to the Galatians of the fruit of the spirit, he showed them as 'love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law!' So oil is representative of the spirit of service to others, for it is only in relation to other people that these virtues make sense. They are Godlike virtues manifested in their perfection in the life of Jesus, and we have to be transformed into his image.

--Bro. *Caphes Sikanyika*



Sitting from the right is Breo. Alexses Mbwende, Ilishebo

Likando, Caphes Sikanyika, and Sister Gertrude's families.

MAZABUKA

The NEV is easy to read and more explanatory notes from the bible basics makes it extraordinary. I guess this will be a useful tool to all those serious students approaching baptism and for those among the brotherhood who can read English and don't have a Bible.

May God bless all those who contributed to the printing of the NEV. It's easy to read and includes a commentary to help the reader for further references.

As the acting Secretary of our small ecclesia, I think we would first request 20 copies of the NEV Bibles for our brothers and sisters who are without their own Bibles, and those serious contacts we have. Concerning contacts, I think it helps to loan them for a certain period of time, unless they prove to be diligent with their lessons. This is just my own suggestion, to keep these Bibles for future use, for example, in Bible studies.

It's worrying when we look around the world. The signs of Christ's return are all over the place. Although the U.K. for example seems alright at the moment, there are financial difficulties, especially with the problems in the European Union, as there are countries like Greece, which have no money. This is the time to 'lift up our heads' and look for our redemption with prayer and supplications.

It is for this reason, brother, that we must continue to commit our lives to God to the One who created everything, - and to model our lives on the men and women of the Bible, those 'of whom the world was not worthy' (Hebrews 11:38).

I was very thrilled when we read in Zechariah 12, that great prophet of the restoration, (v.3), "And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for the people." What a wonderful hope we have, for these things surely speak of the time of our hope of immortality and of righteousness filling this sad world: "Come, Lord Jesus."

--Bro. Gideon Hankomone

Brother Gideon and I are working together in field ministries and am very impressed with the people's response. This encourages me to make preaching and Bible teaching to be my life time-duty. I am therefore appealing to you for help in this work. I formed a group called 'Youths in Action' (YIA) with the aim of preaching in streets, schools and many other places. We will also

be visiting old people to help them with their household work. Therefore, we are asking for Gospel materials to assist this work old or new are all welcome.

--Bro. Chrivious Chimuka

MICHELO

I and the whole Ecclesia are fine. I am happy to announce that last year we baptized two new members, Bro. Liven Sikabuli and Sis Seviour Sikabuli now we have 22 baptized members here at Michelo Ecclesia.

We still wish to receive the Gospel News magazine: we are grateful to have received a parcel of interesting Scripture literature from you. It was good to read the magazine. We pray that God will be in the midst to bless everything, and so we hope to receive more copies soon. May God be with you all.

--Bro. Ackim Sikabuli



Bro. Ackim Sikabuli



Bro. Winnester Sikabuli

MUFULIRA



Bro. Dennis Kombe of Ndola Ecclesia, came and baptized three members for us, Bro Jackson Katwamba with the red shorts, then Bro Musonda

Chilufya with a white T-shirt, next to him Bro Stanley Mumba



Mufulira Ecclesia: Left to Right: Sis. Grace Chipata, Bro. Musanda

Mbewg, Sis. Loveness Chileshe, Sis. Catheline Daka, Sis. Silvial

Mumba, Sis. Jane Bwalya. Kneeling: Bro. Kasongo Lameck

We are looking and waiting for our Lord and pray that this is indeed the 'time of trouble' which will bring His return, and please God, our salvation.

--Bro. Fred Mumba

NCHELENGE

It is my privilege and humble time of writing to you now. I, my wife, my children and the rest of the ecclesia are all fine. I have been directed by our ecclesial committee to write to you saying that we require 4 English NEV Bibles. These will be given out to our four brothers baptized last year who do not have an

English Bible, they are eligible to use them.

--Bro. Evans Mwansa

NDOLA

Thank you very much for sending me the wonderful gift of the Holy Bible, just received. It is indeed very pleasing to note that at last the Christadelphians have come up with an in-house written Word of God with additional explanatory notes in line with our doctrinal beliefs. Ndola ecclesia requests 20 copies through our secretary, Bro. Jonathan Simumba, P.O. Box 72313, Ndola.

--Bro. Dennis C. Kombe

NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE



BULAWAYO

Greetings to you in the hope we share. Many thanks for the letters and the Gospel News.

Here in our country it's hot, the later rains are not to be found and the crops are in a bad condition.

It was good to know that the full Bible has just been printed. We thank our Heavenly Father for that. We look forward to having a glimpse of it.

--Bro. Ambrose Tanyepana

CHINHOYI

We are happy to have brothers who can encourage others to enjoy the word of God. I am happy to receive more literature from you, it makes me strong. Every day I read something from you and I am a happy man to be encouraged by all the information sent to us.

As a small ecclesia, I am requesting at least six full Bibles for members and students. The footnotes are very good and I am encouraged that many people can understand some verses very well after going through these.

'The thief comes only in order to steal, kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance.' (to the full, till it overflows) John 10:10. God is our real life, in Him we live and move and have our being. Learning to enjoy God will release us to enjoy every single

day of our life. Enjoy fellowship with Him. God is concerned about anything that concerns us, and the Bible says that God will perfect what concerns us. He is working in our life at all times, bringing us into His will more completely.

We should have fear of God, but don't be afraid of God in a wrong way. This means we should respect Him and know that He is all-powerful and means what He says. But we should never be afraid that God gets angry every time we fail to be perfect. God is merciful and slow to anger. He is longsuffering and He knows our frame and understands our weaknesses.

Most of us have many things in our life and personality that needs to be changed and God will change them. But the good news is you can enjoy God and enjoy your life while He is doing it. The life we have right now may not be the one we want to end up with, but it is the only one we have at the present time. So we need to start enjoying it find the good things in it. Learn to see the good in everything. Enjoy our family and friends. Don't pick them apart and stay busy trying to change them: pray for them and let God do the changing.

Enjoy your work, enjoy your home, and enjoy ordinary, everyday life. Keep your eyes on God, not on everything that is wrong with our life, your family and the world. God has a good plan for us and He is already starting to work it out. We can rejoice ahead of time, looking forward to the good things to come.

Most people live like they cannot enjoy life as long as they have any kind of problems, but that is wrong thinking. Don't dwell on the mistakes or regrets of the past. Continue to think about the great future you have through Jesus Christ.

I have learned to enjoy where I am, while I am in the way to where I am going, and I strongly urge you to do the same. There is much for God to do in our life, like babies must grow into adults, and Christians must also grow. It is a process that often takes longer than we want it to. We should admit our failures and ask for forgiveness for our sins, being willing to learn from them. If we will do this, God will do the rest. You have stepped out into a new way of living, and I believe you will never be sorry. Enjoy God, enjoy yourself and enjoy the future life Jesus died to give you.

--Sis Gift Lungu

Thank you for this very important notice and news: I am so happy that at last we are going to have a full Bible, written according to God's word, not human doctrines. Yes, we are not re-writing the Bible but simply adding some pages of Bible Basics to help us understand it better. I shall be so glad if you will include me, plus my two students among those to receive copies of the NEV. Bible. My students have completed the 40-lesson course and are awaiting baptism. We stay very far away from town, so are in isolation.

--Bro. Benjamin Makuti

CHIPINGE

We are growing maize in our field and we are looking at a good harvest: this does not mean all farmers will have the same harvest. This year we want to change our farming pattern, as we want to reintroduce piggery and expand our poultry production and backyard rabbits. We have also ventured into Cademia, at present we have 63 plants.

We are very much looking forward to the return of Christ, but we shouldn't forget our Scriptures which say, 'The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance' (2 Pet.3:9). For me, the delay means we must prepare ourselves to make sure that we are fuelling our lamps to keep them burning. This can be done through initiating preaching programmes to reach other people outside our fellowship, as well as introducing programmes at an Ecclesial level which will encourage brethren and sisters to grow spiritually and maintain a high standard of doctrine and practice.

Sis. Evelyn, my wife, was very ill and she was said to have ulcers: she was given treatment. So

I am the only one working at the farm, leaving me with very little time to do other things.

In December at our business meeting, we agreed that we should at least have four books written by Christadelphians, and we must read and exchange them with one another. These are:

1. Phanerosis and other writings by John Thomas
2. Come and See the Gospel of John, by David Nightingale

3. The Real Devil, by Duncan Heaster
4. The Law of Moses, by Robert Roberts.

--Bro. Moses Dhlakama

CHIVI

We are requesting a new Bible for Chivi Ecclesia. We also thank our Heavenly Father for the good work C.A.T is doing.

--Bro. Isaac Ngaro

During reading the book of Job, I have learnt that Job was a 'perfect' man whose moral integrity was recognized by God (Job 1:1). Yet he suffered greatly. The theological perspective of both Job and the friends seemed to lead them to feel that suffering was a direct response to sin, and blessing was therefore proportionate to righteousness. This was not understanding what God wants from us. The more we come near God, the more God tests our faith.

Approach your Bible reading session in a prayerful and focused frame of mind. Value what you learn. Set attainable goals for yourself. Look for new ways to study the Scriptures. Visualize Bible accounts. Devote time to difficult Scriptures and the explanations of them, so that you understand them clearly. Avoid rushing through the material. Develop a greater longing for God's Word. Finally, meditate on Scriptural passages.

--Bro. Dzingai Sumburera

GURUVE

We do have eleven students on the U.K. course, and nine on oral lessons, none of these do not have Bibles. We would also require another five Bibles for visitors who might attend our services. After the service they would leave the Bibles at the ecclesial hall..

Cell-phones are now being used' as the Network machine was opened on 15 January 2012. To those with phones communication has become much easier. It was very hard for us, the Guruve C.B.M. brothers and sisters, to communicate with other C.B.M. members in Zimbabwe, but right now I can borrow a phone from anyone, providing I pay him US\$1.00 for air-time, as I do not have my own cell-phone.

--Bro. Nice Yotamu

HARARE

Everyone in our ecclesia is appreciating the good work of spreading the good news worldwide. We also pray for you. Let us look at Acts 28:31 and Ephesians 6:19. You have instilled knowledge in us also. Let us look at Proverbs 24:3-5.

I have shown the Bible to our ecclesial members and those on the 40 lesson course and so many liked it. So far 20 of them have requested them and also if possible add some more so that when visitors come they will have Bibles to read, rather than sharing.

--Bro. Johannes John

I have moved from Belvedere to Milton Park because of conditions of work.

I thank God for what He is doing in my life. I also thank God for CAT, because through reading the material you send me I learnt to understand the Word, and now I can more practically do what it tells me. And it increases my faith when I am doing this.

I have experienced many achievements since the time I started this. Now I'm looking toward running my own business or let me say, I've already started it. As the Word of God says, 'all things are possible.'

--Bro. Calvin Chitano

KARIBA

Thank you so much for sending us a sample copy of the whole Bible. May the Lord our God bless this wonderful work. We have three new contacts who have just started doing lessons, and are attending our Sunday services regularly, but our ecclesia no longer has extra Bibles to give. It would be helpful if you could send us three copies. I am convinced that sooner or later these contacts will be added to our number.

On the Gospel News magazines, oh yes, I would like to continue receiving them. I won't allow myself to miss the good and wonderful news from brethren and sisters all over the world.

--Bro. Witness Majeche

KAROI

I am a regular Gospel News reader, but the magazine has ceased to reach me. Would you please send, or resume sending it to me as before. The magazine is important to me as it keeps me in touch with the whole Christadelphian community.

I am in isolation and sometimes I ask whether I am still in Christ, but I am revived by reading what others think and do in isolation. Read and pray to the Lord our God thanks be given to the Almighty for keeping us informed and educated about the coming of Jesus.

Let's thank God for calling us into His splendid house, for in darkness we have been, when we knew not the true God. Say 'hello' to the given light. Fight tirelessly the darkness that surrounds us, seeking to devour our given light. Pray God to strengthen you all.

The days we live in are full of temptation. Many of the sheep of the fold have fallen out and turned to the hyenas in sheeps' clothes, with their sweet tongues and alms to fill their bellies. The lustful hearts of individual members in the Christian family have destroyed the once worked-for faith. Remember to work only for faith that will remain at the end of the day.

--Bro. Steven Tedza

MAGUNJE

I was very glad and I thank you so much for sending me the NEV Bible, with commentary on each page. It is so nice to look at, open and easy to read every chapter with understanding. My prayer is for the Lord to continue blessing this work.

I am very strong in my preaching effort and there is no-one here to contend with my doctrine experience, as I am doing the work boldly, without fear. The work is very great in this corner of the vineyard. I have more people coming to hear the gospel whom I am helping to know 'Bible Basics' and difficult passages of the Bible.

This year, 2012, I am gathering some people who have been taught error by other sects, and am teaching them true Bible doctrine, as many here are based on the Old Testament. Some students don't understand English well: six do, understand English, but they don't have their own Bibles.

Criticism and jealousy are always against our good work I have experienced this for a long, long time. But God is for us, so we do go forward in every situation in the Name of Jesus our Lord.

My eyes are becoming sick to read some very small print without the help of reading spectacles is difficult. I am sending you a doctor's prescription for reading glasses, as my old ones have broken.

I am so happy seeing God's providence every day in my environment. In this last hour I am praying for all brothers and sisters to stand firm in the Word, as many are becoming faint or lost. I am enjoying reading Gospel News to all nations.

--*Stanford Kuuzha*

MATABISHA

I received the new Bibles that will give me power for preaching the Word of God. Romans 15:1-3 says `those who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbour for his good, building him up.' Even Jesus did not please himself.

Would you please give us six Bibles that is our request please.

--*Bro. David Ngwenya*

TONGOGARA

We are happy to receive the parcel of Gospel News and books which we like as they contain good building up messages of encouragement from our different brothers and sisters around the world. We also need other doctrinal literature. God has blessed His work here in the refugee camp as we have now grown to the total number of 15 Brethren and Sisters and some others still on lessons, so Bibles are needed especially for those that have not. We also need your prayers so that people around may continue to be thirsty for the truth so that they may learn to escape eternal death.

--*Bro Pascal Nyongolo.*



Togogara Refugee Ecclesia

TRIANGLE

I was very glad to receive some New Testaments and Bible Basics from you. Your supply has made our studies a bit easier now. All the ecclesia members have their own Bibles, except students. We are asking if you could please possibly supply 10 English Bibles and 10 Shona Bibles, as this will make our studies much easier.

As I am dealing with students from different places, it would be easier for me to visit them if I have a bike. Some are school pupils, and some are elders in different villages.

--*Bro. Tavaremba Mugova*

I would like to express my thoughts about the Christadelphian church: it is the church of Truth, because of the verses of the Bibles which we study every day and every Sunday. I would like to thank the brothers and sisters of Triangle ecclesia for coming to church every Sunday, and I would like to say I wish to receive my own Gospel News magazine in my name.

I am sorry that Bro. Kuvarega Mavuvo is not now in Triangle ecclesia, but in South Africa.

--*Bro. Clyford Chingwara*

I received a pack of Bibles you have sent and I was very pleased to have them. I will try my best to distribute the Bibles to other brothers and sisters of Triangle Ecclesia. Some of them have their own Bibles already, so I will give to those without English Bibles, and the remaining ones will be used for Bible study at our local secondary school. As I have already mentioned about school pupils willing to commence the 40-lesson course, it's now my duty to contact them regularly at school.

If God blesses me for my ambition, I want to raise a big gathering here at Nyikavanhu, as it seems more and more people are willing to join us.

--*Bro. Tavaremba Mugova*

ZAKA

God willing, will you please send us five complete Bibles for members in Zaka. This will help us to uplift ourselves and others in our area, especially with the help of the Bible footnotes.

In Zimbabwe rain is moderate, but we are only managing to get `D' fertilizers, as `A.N.' is being hidden. Whenever we manage to come across `A.N.' it is too expensive. You buy it at US\$40, not including transport. Crops now need topping if not, this year we shall face hunger again. Please pray for us, for God to pour on us His grace. This reminds me of Matt.10:21-26, 28-33.

Brethren and sisters, think of the signs of the times. The Lord Jesus is almost here. As we are baptised into Jesus' death and resurrection to a new life in him, do you know that we are married to God's

Son? God would never like to divorce us, but we are, in effect, divorcing ourselves from Jesus in deeds and works if we sin. Isaiah 54:6; 1 Cor. 7:10: The command we are given, "A wife must not separate from her husband." If we separate ourselves from God or Jesus, where will we be when Jesus comes to establish his Kingdom here on earth? Will we be in everlasting life, or everlasting death? Let us select the good.

--Bro. Svuure Faustino

ZVISHAVANE

I thank the Almighty God for yet another milestone you have embarked on after the publication of 'Gospel News', the New Testament Bible and now the complete Bible, all in all for one purpose of spreading the gospel unto the uttermost parts of the world. It gives me great joy to know that out there are brethren who think of others before themselves. Most of us the world over are living under very pathetic conditions and as one family we can contribute

A FLORIDA COURT SETS ATHEIST HOLY DAY

In Florida, an atheist created a case against Easter and Passover Holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days.

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood and objecting to the ruling saying, "Your honor, How can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays..."

The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, counselor, is woefully ignorant." The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists." The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fool's Day. Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.'

Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned..."

You gotta love a Judge that knows his scripture to this work through prayers. The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few, but it is only God who provides upon our request.

My brothers you are not alone in the field, let us keep on journeying together. From time immemorial God is calling for mankind to repent. As we wait for the return of our Master we must be doing his job, resources may limit but it is not a barrier. We need to study the Word of God so much that we may not be destroyed for lack of knowledge.

I am the secretary for this ecclesia and I request you to send me five Bibles for our students on the 40 lesson Bible course. I have gone through some chapters of the NEV Bible and its English is simple to read and understand. It is my prayer, if our Lord delays his return, that we may request the same Bible to be printed in our own languages for the benefit of our folk who are unable to read English.

--Bro. Sibangani Maka

The Gospel News

News from Europe / Eurasia

NEWS FROM BELARUS



VITEBSK ObL.

I do not like complaining but truly our situation here is very bad, as our Belarusian Ruble is now so devalued, anything imported costs so much. Thank God I have enough strength to still farm my land and so we have some food at least, but anything else, literally anything, is too expensive to buy. Truly we are praying for the Kingdom of God to come.

--Sis. Nina

NEWS FROM BELGIUM



We're delighted to report the baptisms of brothers ALI and MUSTAFA . May God bless them in their journey to His Kingdom.



Brother Mustafa carefully comparing "Bible Basics" with the Bible.

ANTWERP

Please pray for brother Daryosh whose asylum application has been refused and who may face deportation. More people here are getting interested in the Gospel.

--Bro. Mehran

NEWS FROM CROATIA



I am very happy with the consignment of the NEV Bible. Thank you! Excellent! With good comments, which help in learning Biblical teaching. If we can follow the audio text, it would help us in learning the English language. Every day we read the Bible and we try to follow the daily reading in English. We try to gather some people as home Bible investigators, we work with Introducing Bible Basics for a beginning. We want to establish a Christadelphian Ecclesia here. Let it be God's will. We pray for God's blessing in learning and work, and to be ready when Christ comes again .

--Brother Darko

NEWS FROM GERMANY



We're delighted to report the baptisms of CYRIACUS. May God bless him in his journey to His Kingdom.



Brother Cyriacus with his NEV Bible, which he loves using.

NEWS FROM ISRAEL



I am happy to tell you that I remain in Israel, and have a baby boy now. May the God of Israel bless you all who love Him.

--Bro. Samuel

NEWS FROM ITALY



I am working on more people here towards baptism, but they are still studying the Bible Basics. When they are through I will inform you.

--Bro. Festus

NEWS FROM KAZAKHSTAN



I always read with interest the reports on the Bible Schools, wishing I could be there. Thank you for sending the photos of them. God be with you all.

--Sis. Galina

Thank you again for the package you sent me, I feel your love and care for us through it. Hopefully Winter will end soon. And above all, Christ will return. That is our hope.

--Sis. Balpysh

NEWS FROM KYRGYZSTAN



BISHKEK

Please pray for some of our weak and elderly ones here. Brother Yuri, despite being an Afghan war veteran, is quite ill but is having to work and even begs by the road for help. Sister Tanya is also still working, as a cleaner. The Russian population here are disillusioned with churches, so I manage to have some good conversations with them about the Truth.

--Bro. Anvar

NEWS FROM LATVIA



We're delighted to report the baptisms of Brothers MISHA, VASYA, VIKTOR, NAURIS, MARIS, VALDIS and VALERIJ, and ; Sisters ALLA, LUDMIL A, ELENA, ELLA, LUDMILA and NATALYA. May God bless them in their journey to His Kingdom.

AIZKRAUKLE

I continue to be very touched by the Winter welfare parcels I am sent. Thank you so much. And also for the effort you make producing magazines and literature for those like me, so we feel connected with the rest of the body.

--Sis. Irena

LIEPAJA



Bro. Vladimir with his wife, son and daughter. They are all baptized and are all deaf. Note the bear skin on the wall.

After moving here I am pleased to say I found work, although it is shift work in a factory, and I have to travel at inconvenient hours there and back. But it is work and I can support the family. Our pipes froze and broke and we are still struggling with lack of water and needing to use a well. We so miss attending the meetings.

--Bro. Vladimir

PILTENE

Words are inadequate to express the joy I derive from going through the 'Gospel News' magazine. May the God of peace and love guard and guide you so the Word of God might be preached to reach the farthest corner of the planet, across the seas to me in Latvia.

All of us have struggles. They may be related to age and other difficulties. There is burning pain in my ankle. The wound does not heal up; but I must be patient. Patience is a virtue that has to be learned. Sorrow works patience. God in His wisdom allows trouble to come our way to teach patience.

Heaven's choir came down to sing when Heaven's King was born to save. As the stars shone brightly on a quiet night long ago, love blanketed the world in the form of a tiny baby. Friends are flowers in the garden of life: this I send in loving friendship.

--Sis. Olga Goldmane

NEWS FROM RUSSIA



We're delighted to report the baptisms of YEVGENIJ. May God bless him in his journey to His Kingdom. Our brother is in extreme isolation in a small town north of Vladivostok in the far East of Russia.



Our new brother at his nearest airstrip- one of our most isolated brethren.

KAZAN

I feel ashamed when I read some of the articles in the magazine, because it all seems so obvious and clear once I read the explanation, but when I read for myself it seems I often finish a chapter not having really understood it. I read each day and by God's grace am keeping well for my age.

--Sis. Lidija

OMSK Obl.

I continue to try to sell my apartment and move into the countryside and farm some land, it is the only way to survive now, with heating bills so high. But there seem no buyers. So please pray for me about this.

--Sis. Svetlana

ST. PETERBURG

I realize I am getting older as I now need stronger glasses to read your letters and to write to you. Truly as the snow melts and Spring comes upon us here, I realize within me the need for Christ's return and the Kingdom to come on earth. I am so grateful you shared this hope with me.

--Bro. Valerij

TAMBOV

I have written more poems, it is my way of expressing myself and I do it more, it seems, as I grow older. All around is a collapsing world where a few people are getting richer and forgetting the rest of us. It is a relief each day to read God's word and find connection with the truth about life and our destiny.

--Bro. Vadim

NEWS FROM SERBIA



BELGRADE

I was in hospital for some time with my kidney problems. For one week I shared a room with a Jehovah's Witness. I am sure God put me there with him in order to witness to him about what God is really like. It was a witness, at least. My prayers are with the ecclesia in Riga. The growth of the Truth there is wonderful to read about.

--Bro. Vladislav

NEWS FROM UKRAINE



We're delighted to report the baptisms of Brothers ILYA and SERGEJ. May God bless them in their journey to His Kingdom.

KAKHKOVKA

It is hard to find words to express my thanks for those who contributed toward my operation. May God richly bless you. May I survive in order to serve Him more for more years, or until Christ returns.

--Sis. Nana

ODESSA Obl.

Since my baptism I have been telling many people about the Truth. I am eager to try to get to visit some of the people I have been talking with on the internet. Some have already rejected the Trinity and the personality of Satan. I hope to use my Summer holiday for this work.

--Bro. Sergej

News from the Americas

NEWS FROM BRAZIL



I am sorry to tell you that brother Onaldo remains in a coma. Please pray for us all here.

--Bro Derich

Our prayer and concern is for brother Onaldo. He was for us as a great spiritual father.

--Bro. Djalma & Sis. Eliana

NEWS FROM CHILE



SANTIAGO

I am translating parts of the Gospel News messages from English to Spanish in order to share with other isolated Spanish-speaking Sisters. I hope this will be useful for all the women, who

like me, are in isolation without real help or books that can be used as inspiration. I am planning to translate one message per month. Thanks for all your love, concern and support.

--Sis. Gisella

NEWS FROM GUYANA



What's Happening in Guyana

The brethren and sisters in Guyana have decided to produce an interesting newsletter about what is happening there and I am sure it will be not only stimulating and unifying, but encourage even more interest in the Truth in Guyana, it could be an example followed in other areas with considerable benefits.

Planned Activities

Preaching Committee The three Demerara Ecclesias got together and formed a preaching committee with the intention of elevating the level of preaching activity in Guyana. We met regularly at the Eccles Hall. At the end we were blessed with the presence of Sis Worrell (visiting from Canada) who made very significant contributions to the deliberations. We considered a number of activities, including the following media: Open Air meetings, radio talks, newspaper advertisements, correspondence courses, first principle classes, special lectures, and even face-fook. Each area was assigned to a particular Brother/Sister who would be responsible for initiating/supervising the activity.

Newsletter Plans were also discussed for the commencement of a newsletter - the first of such an effort in recent times - with effect from April, the purposes of which are: a) Keeping local as well as overseas brethren abreast of various important plans and activities being undertaken; b) Serving as a device for developing our literary skills in publishing important events; c) Keeping our interest alive in the affairs of sister ecclesias; d) Enhancing the communication channel between ecclesias; e) Including a news-sheet by each Youth Circle, summarizing points of interest to them.

NEWS FROM JAMAICA



ST. MARY

The day of the Lord is my strength. Give thanks unto His Name for He is worthy to be praised. I am strong in my faith and no one can take that from me. `Gospel News' helps me and encourages me a lot. I was very excited when I saw how many ecclesias from different countries there are and how many are being immersed into the saving Name of Jesus Christ. Sadly, the ecclesia I belong to has been torn apart and some have gone astray. I am the only young girl that is a member. I wish we could get someone to come and hold an open air meeting in the community. I hope and pray for Jesus to return to his earthly throne.

--Sis. Alisssa Fisher

NEWS FROM TRINIDAD



I have been keeping OK: at present my days are occupied mostly with a drug rehab course.

I am one of four lifers chosen to be taught how to help guys with addiction problems. The four of us are going through the program together with thirty inmates who have addiction problems. It's a three-month course, Monday to Friday, mornings and afternoons, and it began in September.

I am also teaching and managing the school's store-room, so my days are pretty busy. That brings to mind your comment that they will find me so useful, they'll want to keep me inside!

Four students from my last English class sat the national exam, three passed; one got a distinction, one got grade 2 and one grade 3. My present English class began with twenty-two in August, but it's now down to 12 students.

--Bro. George Constantine

NEWS FROM USA



We're delighted to announce the baptism of SCOTT, a further result of our internet outreach in North America and the wide distribution of Bible Basics material by the Klennert family

News from Asia

NEWS FROM CHINA



We're delighted to report the baptisms of brothers WANG and WANGJUN. May God bless them in their journey to His Kingdom.

Sister Rita and I are very much anticipating coming to the Carelinks Missionary Training Program in Latvia. Just all is so complicated arranging visas. Thank you for all you are doing for us.

--Bro. Donald

NEWS FROM MYANMAR



Our ministry in Myanmar is going forward. We are seriously seeking God's favour, and extend our prayer to God to have some more unbelievers to convert and to have one place in the centre of Yangon where we can meet, so that people can come. I think we will baptize people this year

--Bro. Suumpi.



I would like to request you to please kindly send me a copy of the NEV Bible. I hope you can process my request. Thank you, and may the Lord bless you all.

--Bro. Angelito V. Corpuz

I was baptised into Christ last 24 March 2012. Brothers Richard and Ruben visited me from Cagayan de Oro that day and conducted my baptism after 3 hours more or less, of Bible discussion. Though this was just the start of my true "In-Christ" spiritual growth, I am feeling slowly and continuously relieved of spiritual baggages from my former self's confused spirituality. I know God is my guide through all this that I shall continue steadfastly, with the help of the Cagayan de Oro brethren. I am glad to tell you this. And to thank you and Robin for the opportunity you both afforded me [through the Bible Basics and literature sent].

--Bro George Ferraren

Moderation

"Let your moderation be known unto all men" (Philippians 4:5). These words of exhortation were from our brother, the apostle Paul many years ago, but they still mean the same to this day. Because of our belief, teaching and faith, we ought to be well- behaved, disciplined at home, work-places and neighbourhood, as well as at our gatherings.

Unfortunately, it is not always so, as we have noticed; we tend to have double standards (2 Cor 10:1; Gal 5:22). As Christians we should avoid those old ways of this wicked and corrupt world of which we used to be part. Most brethren and sisters have failed at times to make their moderate and reasonable lives a testimony to the gospel which they believe and teach. They pretend to be hard workers in their Master's field, but serve him with a hidden agenda, such as popularity. The shepherds seem not always to be interested in the care of their flocks. Preaching is not taken as a command from Jesus

(Mark 16:16). Our time is spent on petty issues that do not build up the growth of our ecclesias.

How can the people know the word if the word is not preached? We must display Christ-like qualities in our lives. We know the truth, so let truth and love be examples to those outside in the world (Phil 2:15).

Bro Ambrose Tanyepana (Bulawayo, Zimbabwe)

Prayer

When we pray, we acknowledge three things:

- Our responsibility
- Our dependency

· God's sufficiency

Firstly, our responsibility: When we pray we are acknowledging that we must pray. God is gracious to us. He loves us and wants to bless us, but we need to ask for His blessings and guidance on ourselves and for others. God could bless us without our involvement, but He has ordained things so that He expects us to pray for His blessings. God can be relied upon to play His part. We must also accept our part too, which is to pray regularly, specifically, earnestly. When Jesus taught His disciples to pray He said "When you pray" not "If you pray". Jesus expects us to pray. That is our responsibility. Samuel the prophet says: "As for me, far be it for me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you" (Samuel 12:23). When we pray, acknowledge our responsibility.

Secondly, our dependency:

Our responsibility and our dependency are closely related. Perhaps an illustration can help us to understand this. A farmer ploughs his fields, sows the seeds and cultivates the soil. But all the time he realizes that the hoped-for harvest is outside his control. He knows that he cannot make the seed grow, or make the sun to shine. Yet the farmer also knows that unless he diligently ploughs the field, sows the seed and cultivates the soil he cannot expect a good harvest. It is only when he fulfils his responsibilities can he reap the rewards. The farmer cannot do what God must do and God will not do what the farmer should do. And it is the same principle in our spiritual lives. We have the responsibility and also the privilege of being co-workers with God. He is gracious enough to want us to be involved in His eternal work. We must pray, but when we pray we are dependent on God to answer our prayers and fulfil His will.

Finally, when we pray we acknowledge God's sufficiency: We need to be reminded that there is nothing, ultimately, that can frustrate God's plan and purpose. For the non-Christian, they cannot fight God and win, and for us as Christians, it is our privilege to cooperate with God's purposes or He simply gets someone else who will, and we lose out on the blessings which could have been ours. God is infinite in His wisdom, perfect in His love, and Almighty Sovereign in His power. There is nothing which is greater than God. Not evil, not wickedness, not anything at all. And God is working out His sovereign will through the means of our prayers. Our prayers, when they are in accord with God's will, can change things. Our prayers make a difference, our prayers can and do count. That is why we pray.

David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

Do You Really Delight In God's Word?

What do you feel when you are reading the Bible? When I began reading the Bible regularly, I found it to be more of a chore than a delight. It was hard to understand, so I often found myself daydreaming while I read. Most of us start off reading the Bible without enjoying it, yet we persevere because we know that reading the holy scriptures is the right thing to do. What can we do to cultivate greater appreciation for God's written word? How can we enjoy reading it? Consider the following suggestions.

Approach your Bible reading session in a prayerful and focused frame of mind. Ask God to help you develop an eagerness to study His word. Petition Him to open your mind and heart to grasp

His wisdom more fully (Psalm 119:34). Without this kind of approach, Bible study can quickly become mechanical, and you may lose the desire to continue. I sometimes read too fast and completely miss side points, and I do not even fully grasp the main ideas.

Value what you learn. Remember that understanding and apply Bible truths in your life. Therefore make a conscientious effort to find practical points and apply them. We must look for the things that help us to identify wrong attitudes and motives in ourselves. Set attainable goals for yourself. Try to search out something new about Bible characters. You can find fascinating facts about many of them by consulting insights on the scriptures, eg by Christadelphian publications. If you take men and women of the Bible as real people with personalities and feelings, they will come alive in your mind.

Look for new ways to reason about the scriptures (Acts 17:2,3). Study with that in mind. Visualise Bible accounts: "The word of God is alive" (Heb 4:12). As we read the scriptures, God's message lives in our minds by imagining what the Bible characters were seeing. Try to hear what they were hearing, and feel what they were feeling. Associate their experiences with specific circumstances in your life. Learn from the way they handled situations. This will enhance your understanding and retention of Bible accounts. Devote time to difficult scriptures and to explanations of them, so that you understand them clearly. Allow yourself plenty of time for each study session. You may well come across very interesting questions that require extra research. Look up unfamiliar words, consider footnotes, and check cross references in the Bible. The more you understand and apply what you read, the more you will find delight in God's written word. You have to say what the Psalmist says (Ps 119:111). Develop a greater longing for God's word. The apostle Peter said, "As newborn infants form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may grow to salvation" (1 Peter 2:2). Babies do not have to cultivate a longing for milk. The feeling comes naturally. But the scriptures acknowledge that we do have to form a longing for God's word. If you read just one page of the Bible every day, that longing will soon come. What may at first have seemed difficult, will soon become pleasurable.

Meditate on scriptural passages. Great benefit also comes from meditating on what you read. This will help you to link together spiritual topics that you have investigated. Soon you will acquire a string of spiritual pearls of wisdom (Ps 19:14; Prov 3:3). Time well spent, sticking with good study habits, takes effort but the blessings are immeasurable. Your spiritual comprehension will then improve (Heb 5:12-14). The degree of wisdom you acquire from the inspired scriptures bring happiness, and peace. Wisdom is found in God's word (Pro 3:13-18). With your decision to be guided by what you read in the Bible, you will experience the refreshing and stabilizing influence of God's word (Matt 24:45) and will be more positive, optimistic and spiritually orientated.



For me these pictures of Cape Coast, Ghana, brought back nostalgic memories of about 30 years ago when I attended the baptism of Bro Agyeman, severely disabled by Polio (squatting in the pictures). He was a cobbler and mended my sandals--the only shoes I had at the time--and later it was possible to provide him with some hand pads to save the wear and tear on his hands as he endeavoured to crawl about. MH



Bro Dzingai Sumbaerera (Chivi, Zimbabwe)

The Earth & The Works Therein Shall Be Burned Up (2 Pet.3:10)

This terrifying prophecy may well cause us to wonder when this will happen; will it be in my lifetime? A literal understanding of these words has its problem. With its mighty oceans the surface of the earth consists of more water than dry land. At the north and south poles and within the arctic circles there are vast areas of ice and snow. From a physical point of view it would be necessary for the earth to gravitate into the sun to fulfil that prophecy by Peter.

In other parts of scripture we find clear statements inferring the permanence of the earth. For instance in Psalm 115:16, "The heavens, even the heavens are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men". And again in Ps.37, "The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein for ever." (v.29). The word `land' here is a translation of the Hebrew word `erets' which is most often translated `earth'... This teaching in the Psalms is confirmed by the Lord Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount. "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt.5:5).

To get a better understanding of Peter's statement we ought to read the whole verse as follows: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with the fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up".

You will notice that here, Peter includes `the heavens' which shall also pass away in a fiery destruction. This inclusion of `the heavens' could alert us to the probability that Peter's words should be understood more figuratively than we at first thought. This suggestion is confirmed when in reading the earlier part of this chapter we find Peter is referring in similar language to the flood. Peter was combating the notion of scoffers that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation". He points out that the flood is an illustration when all things do NOT continue as before.

Peter says the flood came by the `Word of God': that is to say by his authority and power. His wording is "Whereby (by his power) the world that then was, being overflowed with water perished". He then adds, "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are

kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men." (v.7).

These verses teach that whereas the world of Noah's day was 'subjected to a day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men' by water, another one is reserved 'for the future' but this time by the use of fire.

Significantly,

Peter uses this phrase to mean the world of the present which is kept and reserved for the fiery judgement which is yet to be executed when the 'day of the Lord' has arrived.

You may have noticed that in writing of the constitution of things in Noah's day he uses the word 'world' (Gr. Kosmos). The wording was, "Whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished". Peter then goes on to write, "But the heavens and the earth which are now are reserved for judgement and perdition of ungodly men". One can understand from this sequence of thought that the phrase 'heaven and earth' (which are now) is equivalent to the term 'world' used in the first case. This being so we can understand how that the phrase 'heavens and earth' should be understood in a figurative sense, referring to the rulers of this world; kings, presidents and governments; and the earth, the common people those who are ruled. This fiery judgement which will surely come: will then come upon both rulers and ruled.

What Peter has foretold in general terms is detailed in other parts of scripture. In Obadiah, for example, we are informed about the plotting against Israel by several of their enemies and the consequences of their intrigues. We read, "But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they (Israel) shall kindle in them, (a fire) and devour; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it" (v.17-18).

Similar language is used about the defenders of Jerusalem when the Arab nations mount a siege against this city in the near future. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, "The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem...and it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem" (v.5,6,9).

Other nations which are tolerant of

Christian principles and who resist the commands of the King of Kings will suffer a destruction in a similar way until their remnants are subdued.

God's fiery judgments will not be confined to the political heavens and earth, they are reserved also for the religious world as well. This is clear from the Book of Revelation which describes the historical development of the apostate Christian Church. The symbolic whore is said to be seated on a great red dragon having 10 horns which represent the European Union. In the seventeenth chapter these 10 horns we are told shall make war with the Lamb (literally the Lord Jesus Christ recently returned from heaven). This is because these horns, being guided by the whore, the Roman Catholic Church, will suppose this is the right thing to do. However, they will eventually become disillusioned and hate the whore for her deceitful ways. Rev.17 verse 16 reads, 'And the 10 horns which thou sawest upon the beast these shall hate the whore and

shall make her desolate and naked and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will and to agree and give their power unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

The fiery judgments reserved for the whore are repeated with emphasis in Rev.18:8, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judges her."

These judgments which will destroy the wicked will be succeeded by a new order of things called by Peter, 'A new heavens and a new earth' wherein dwelleth righteousness. It will be the Kingdom of God ruled over by Jesus and the Saints who will be made kings and priests in the future age. They will be the New Heavens. The new earth will consist of the nations who have been subdued by the judgments some of which have been described in this article. The purpose of God revealed and promised when Jesus was born will eventually be fulfilled, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill among men". (Luke 2:14)

Bro. Ralph Green (Torquay. UK)

Response to Circumstances

It is one thing to reflect a submissive attitude towards God when we bring troubles on ourselves, but it is a different matter when unexpected trials come our way in life, such as trouble and trials which are not of our own making. A drunk driver veers across the white line: a grim-faced doctor diagnoses some strange cancer: a light-fingered thief lifts up your wallet or purse: some clumsy defender breaks your son's leg in a football match. Such things are allowed by God, over which we have no control and they are the hardest to deal with.

But let us look for a moment at the apostle Paul. Paul talks about being bombarded with problems for which he had no responsibility. Of course, he did not bring the shipwrecks on himself. It was not his idea to generate a death threat in Damascus and face the humiliation of leaving the city in a basket over the wall. It was not in his mind to orchestrate a mob scene in Lystra, leaving him smashed by stones and left almost dead. Was it his choice to enlist a shrill-voiced girl to follow him around, causing a rumpus that gave him a bad name? And if he answered people's questions, could he help it if they were outraged by the truth? No, Paul may not have been responsible for his circumstances. He was responsible in the way he responded to them. Instead he said, "For Christ's sake I delight in weakness ... for when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:10). He also said, "I endure all things, for the sake of the elect, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus our Lord, with eternal glory" (2 Tim 2:10). These words, brothers and sisters, can help us much in our daily lives on how we can respond to circumstances: "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us that we may give thanks to your holy name, and glory in your praise" (Psalms 106:47).

Paul and Silas responded to their circumstances in a positive way. It was a testimony to the jailer and an encouragement to countless generations of oppressed believers who have read that account in the Bible, and found fresh courage to deal and overcome their circumstances. If we are faced with challenges in our daily lives, we can find praise and help in the apostle's teaching. Paul and Silas responded positively to their circumstances, trusted in Jesus, and

believed in God that whatever happened, God was in control, for God said: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb 13:5,6).

Paul learned the secret of happiness when he said, "I have learned the secret of being content in each and every situation, whether in plenty or need; I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil 4:12). As we journey towards the Kingdom, our hymn encourages us.

"While we journey homeward, Let us help each other on the road! Foes on every side beset us, Snares through all the way are strewn. It behoves us, it behoves us each to help bear a brother's load. Then let each esteem his brother Better than himself to be. And each prefer another, Full of love, from envy free. Happy are we, happy are we, When in this we all agree.

May Christ's return be soon because it will bring about God's kingdom. I pray that through God's mercies we will find a place in His kingdom, so let us remain faithful to His words in the Bible with love up to the end. As Jesus himself says: "Behold I am standing at the door and knock" (Rev 3:20). May he find us ready for his return like sheep without blemish.

Bro Gideon Hankomone (Mazabuka, Zambia)

God Has Mercy on Whom He Wills

When I was doing our daily bible reading, I came to understand that religious concepts are like soups some are thick and some are clear. There are indeed 'thick' concepts in the Bible, mysteries, subtleties and complexities that challenge even the most accomplished mind. For example, "God has mercy on one whom he wills and whom he wills he hardens" (Romans 9:18). Yet, in the same volume, there appears the simplicity of the clear affirmation, "God is love" (1 John 4:6).

My suggestion is that "in the same meadow, the ox may lick up grass, the bird may pick up seeds, and a man finds a pearl". So in one and the same scripture are varieties to be found for all sorts of conditions in them: "the lamb may wade, and the elephant swim, the children may be fed with milk, and meat may be had for stronger men".

All the treasures of wisdom are found in God's book 'THE BIBLE'. Ocean depths that can stir the most sophisticated mind, and shallow areas that can be negotiated by any simple, honest soul. Why hesitate? "All scripture is profitable" (2 Timothy 3:16). Jump in!

Bro Isaac Kapa (Tongaren, Kenya)

See You Later (1 Thes 4:13)

My grandfather refused to say 'Good bye'. He felt the word was too final. So when we travelled away after family visits, his farewell ritual was always the same: standing in front of his house, he would wave and call out 'So long'.

As believers, many never say 'Good bye' to the ones we love, as long as we all retain our trust in Jesus as our Saviour. The Bible promises that we will see them again. The apostle Paul said that

we should not "sorrow as others who have no hope" because when Jesus returns believers who have died will rise from their graves to gather with the believers who are still alive to meet the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17). We have confidence that one day on earth there will be no more death, no sorrow not crying (Revelation 21:4).

It is in that wonderful place that "we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Christadelphians have the hope of an eternal reunion with Christ and their loved ones who have passed away. That is why Paul exhorted us to "comfort one another with these words". Today encourage someone with the hope that allows us to say `So long' instead of `Good bye'.

At death, God's people don't say `Good bye' but `We'll see you later'.

Bro Isaac Kapa (Tongaren, Kenya)

Our Vocation and Responsibility

Today there is much energy, time, talent and even lives being given for many different causes. Many individuals and groups have dedicated their lives to the preservation of nature and wild life. Feeding the hungry masses has become the life-long work of humanitarian groups. For the sake of many of the advances in technology that we observe and enjoy, great sacrifices have been made, even to the point of loss of life. The list could go on and on into varied fields that modern man is interested in promoting. While many of these causes are worthwhile, most of them are void of the Truth. Jesus Christ and his kingdom are cast aside as something to be discussed or observed on Sundays, or maybe at special times of the year or, in many cases, not at all.

Brothers, sisters and friends, what causes are we promoting today? Is it our businesses or farms, our families, our hobbies or are we may be busy just trying to make ourselves a little more well thought of, or comfortable? We are responsible people, and have been called from darkness to light. We have been saved!

Let us look at the writings of the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. While on a mission of persecuting Christian people, he saw the light. Within a few days he was promoting Christ and his kingdom as zealously as he had been persecuting the church. His talents or abilities had not changed, as he was a man of determination, vision and the new life, he was determined to share the good news.

Today we are faced with the challenge of sharing our experiences of salvation. As we make genuine experiences with the Lord, there is humility in our hearts. It is then that we realize how much the Lord has done for us and how little we can do for him. Today there is a real need in the ecclesia to be a consecrated, self-denying people. There is no excuse. God gives all His children a place to fill. All have access to the throne of grace and divine guidance through the spirit. A humble spirit is of utmost importance. While God has called all His children to fill their own particular places, not everyone is called to fill noticeable positions. Some are called to a

work of more responsibility than others. The scriptures do not emphasize the importance of our own particular calling, but rather encourage each one to faithful service in the kingdom.

When there is discord or a lack of unity and love amongst an ecclesia, it is difficult to reach out to the needy around us. We need to be strong in the Lord and the power of His might, not fussing and fretting amongst ourselves which could give rise to ill feelings and offences.

We are to serve in the army of the Lord and should expect to suffer a little affliction, misunderstanding, or criticism. We need to find our places in the work of the kingdom. It is only reasonable that we give of our time and talents to the glory of God. The Truth must be preserved and the gospel of Jesus Christ be spread. Surely this is the highest, most worthwhile vocation that any man, woman or child could be called to. We who have accepted this call, who have been released from the bondage of sin and set free, know the way, the truth and the light.

Are we walking worthy of our calling?



Bro David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

CUBA

We're pleased to report the first baptisms by our community in Cuba- a family of three, the father `A', wife `M' and 17 year old son `G'. Communication is a major problem- internet is only allowed in the higher range tourist hotels and most Cubans aren't online. Cell phones are available only for certain people and most Cubans don't have one. So all communication with our brethren has to be by snail mail, which is very slow, about a month each way- if it ever gets through [sometimes it doesn't at all].

`A' is an energetic man with a real heart for God. Having committed himself to Christ, he began reading the Bible, and has a great familiarity with the text. They have six books in their humble home- three of which are Bibles and the others Bible Basics and Introducing Bible Basics. As he read the Bible, `A' realized he must be baptized, but the churches in Cuba seem to treat baptism as an entry rite into their denomination. They demanded he tithe to them if he were baptized, which `A' declined to do as he felt it wasn't required by the Bible. They demanded he accept all their doctrines, which `A' couldn't do- as he found the Trinity to be lacking in Biblical support. `A' heard of a man in another church who had baptized himself and then his family. `A' located him in the hope he would baptize him- but the man had been disfellowshipped from the church for doing this, and had now repented of baptizing people [!!] and returned to the church, promising never to baptize anyone again. `A' asked God to lead him to someone to baptize him and to explain the Gospel more fully.



`A' had a brief opportunity to get online and figure out how to use the internet- and he used it for 30 minutes. Bear in mind there's a five year jail term for illegal access to the internet. He valued every minute of it, and spent those valuable minutes surfing the net looking for information about the Trinity and Biblical alternatives to it. By grace he was led to Carelinks.net and then biblebasicsonline.com and filled out the form requesting the literature. We get hundreds of requests each day and send a standard email to all enquirers asking them to confirm their interest. Those who don't insert email addresses don't get anything sent to them. But having a request from Cuba caught our eye in the inbox. We decided to send this person a Bible Basics anyway. Our mission is to spread the Gospel to new areas where the Truth hasn't been widely distributed, and so we thought that in any case it would be good to send a book there.

`A' received the book and devoured it, covering it with notes, and returned the answers by snail mail, asking to be baptized. And so began a lengthy period of snail mail correspondence. Satisfied that this man appeared to have a good grasp of the Truth, we arranged to visit him. But

then he went dead- no response to our letters. Was it worth such a huge journey when the man may be dead, have lost interest, moved away? Re-reading his answers and his previous letters, he seemed so sincere. God put on our heart to make this trip, and we sent letters asking him to meet us off our flight at the airport in Havana. A lot of prayers were offered by the Carelinks team about this trip. Duncan arrived in Havana- but nobody was waiting as requested. He got a taxi to take him to A's address, about 100 miles from Havana. It was only his postal address, he didn't live there, but a boy was dispatched by bicycle to find `A'. `A' had received no letters from us for a long time. He thought we'd given up with him, another church who didn't really care about the individual. It was an emotional and prayerful meeting on the veranda of a very old Spanish colonial period home in a small Cuban town. He couldn't believe that we valued one person enough to do this.

Ordinary Cubans aren't allowed to have foreigners staying in their homes even for one night, and there was no hotel in the small town, which meant more taxi journeys to another city to find a hotel. A took the next day off work and we spent the day in careful discussion of the Bible. This is really a Bible loving family, and they really were 101% in agreement with our understanding of the Gospel. They had no bath tub and so we chartered another taxi- a huge 1956 Ford [Cuba has the oldest preserved American cars in active use anywhere in the world]. The bemused driver took us to a river some distance away, and watched as this small family was baptized.

A has a group of about 15 young people who attend his home weekly for Bible study, sitting on the floor as he teaches them from Bible Basics. We really have the nucleus of an ecclesia here. Who is going to come forward to go and pastor this group and assist with baptizing them? We invite the CBMA and all who love the Truth to come forward in assisting with fellowshipping our new brothers and sister and in helping with the work in Cuba. It's a lovely and unusual place, not without its challenges, but with plenty of resort areas if that's interesting for anyone. A speaks excellent English but of course it's generally a Spanish speaking area. But knowing English only is fine.



So we really thank God for His faithfulness in answering prayer, and the demonstration once again of His eager willingness to work with any sincere effort to bring individuals towards His Kingdom.



BELGIUM

We're delighted to report a number of baptisms of Iranians in Belgium over the last year. The baptism of Mustafa was a deeply spiritual occasion, with him recounting a wonderful testimony of God's calling Him to the Truth. Our brother began reading the Bible from curiosity in Iran, many years ago. He then moved to Belgium, where he has been living many years. He got involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses, but came to see many errors in their approach as he's a very careful Bible student with a good knowledge of the text of Scripture. He wanted to be baptized into Christ, but not into their organization.

Our brother works in a shop selling Iranian and Middle Eastern food. After one of the first Iranian baptisms we performed in Belgium, Duncan entered the store along with brother X, because X wanted to buy some Iranian food for a small baptismal celebration. Mustafa asked him: "What are you celebrating?" and X answered, "My baptism into Christ". This was a brave thing for an Iranian to say to another Iranian given their generally Moslem culture. Mustafa explained his connection with the JWs and dissatisfaction with them, and from then onwards studied the copy of Bible Basics which X gave him, and the ways of providence came to a happy point when Mustafa was baptized. At the baptism we had a lot to be thankful for and stood in awe of the Lord's ways and the grace of His calling:

There is a tendency with many of us these days to read books or articles about the Bible more than the Bible text itself. Mustafa sets us all a good example in this. He's a great Bible reader and fan of writing notes in his Bible. During the baptismal discussions there was a point he needed to clarify, and we referred him to the relevant section in his Farsi Bible Basics. Our concern is at times that people can read this instruction manual more than the Bible itself, and Mustafa really showed a great example by re-reading the relevant section of the book and comparing it closely with the Bible itself, and only then adding some more notes to his Bible. The photos show a significant sequence:





Brother Viktor, Sister Natalya

Brother Viktor was a typical inhabitant of the Riga night shelters. He came to the Truth and gave himself fully to the Lord, but was then felled with a massive stroke which nearly killed him. If it hadn't been for the kind financial support of Western brethren and pressure from local brothers and sisters on the health care services, then our brother would likely be dead by now. The staff wouldn't even turn him over from one side to another without demanding 2 Lats for doing so. Of course, God was ultimately Viktor's Saviour, but He worked through the outreach of brethren and sisters here on earth. We got our brother into a care facility within Riga and arranged for him to receive therapy and treatment, which, under God's hand, has resulted in him being able to walk with a frame, being able to talk, although very quietly, and even being able to read out loud. We fetch our brother to the meetings at the Bible Centre, and he has distributed our literature within the care facility. We have been occasionally bringing with him a woman called NATALYA who lives in another wing of the same facility. Having studied Bible Basics she was convinced not only of the Truth but felt we were truly her spiritual `home' and family. We baptized her this week, and Viktor quietly read Romans 6 at the baptism and assisted our sister out of the water as best he could. It is all really a triumph for God's grace and the outreach of that love, grace and care into this world. Humanly speaking, Viktor would've been left to die in the snow or in a very grime, dimly lit hospital ward assigned to the `bomzh' as they are known here, those without insurance and state support.



We're really so appreciative of all your assistance towards so many like Viktor and Natalya. All Viktor's clothes which he's wearing, e.g., were provided by us or the women from Cindy's mum's group, as the care facility only provides night clothes.



Viktor and Natasha outside the care facility; Viktor reading Romans 6 and assisting sister Natalya at the baptism.

Feeding Scheme In Riga, Latvia

This week's Carelink is coming to you from the back seat of a car! Bro Michael Boler is currently driving myself (Rachel Harrington) and Duncan to the back of beyond... Duncan has been grabbing 40 winks as he had only a few hours earlier returned from Belgium. Sis Vanessa Boler is back at base camp (Riga ecclesial hall) and finding many useful things to do! (clearing and sorting). We are going to a funeral service in a small town in Eastern Latvia for a Sister called Nina who died earlier this week. It was one of her last requests that Duncan should bury her [made only a few weeks ago, when Bro Charles Abel and the Bartons visited her- as if she had a strange premonition that her instant death from a heart attack was imminent]. By all accounts her faith was strong and she was very contented with her lot even though she had a hard life as a subsistence farmer in this cruelly cold climate [she was featured on Carelinks reports several times, and the Bartons recently gave her much help and encouragement].





Laying our beloved Sister Nina to rest.

However, this is our 8th day here so I need to back track a week and tell you what we have been up to! Duncan met us from Riga Airport and so began our learning curve to a completely different way of life. Our first task was to get firewood for a particularly needy group of four (2 brothers, one sister and a very interested friend). We were later taken to the hall, which was to be our home for the next 10 days. It has been warm and comfortable and provided us with all our needs. Outside the weather is -25 or below. Saturday was a day of happenings: we delivered the wood as previously mentioned to a small apartment, and took some emergency provisions to a young married brother and sister living temporarily with a friend. This couple are in dire need, suffering from HIV and the brother from full blown AIDS. We also had to do much supermarket shopping, and to make life more complicated the car key decided it would snap off in the ignition. The day was interspersed with many prayers and this in itself was comforting.



Mike, Rachel and Vanessa delivering food and firewood in the brutally low temperatures

Sunday was a busy day. All brothers and sisters and interested friends arrive at 11 for coffee and chess. At 12 it is Bible class based on the first two readings, with Duncan explaining or expounding verse by verse, with a bit of English thrown in for us. Another break for coffee, and then on to the Breaking of bread using the New Testament reading. At about 2.30 a hot stew is served. The hall is full of about 80- 100 people and all the food goes quickly with any seconds being eagerly received. A similar procedure is followed on a Monday except it is about 5.30 the meal is served. Many members travel huge distances often on foot to receive both the spiritual and physical sustenance.

The 3 of us were shown by Bro Vlad what to cook and how to cook it...and because of having more `boots on the ground' Duncan thought he would roll out the feeding programme to cover Tues-Friday as well! It was difficult to know how many would come but it ended up being about 60ish every day. The queue for the food contained many hungry looking faces with different sets of experiences... we definitely felt we were casting our net wide and God was giving an increase. Much of our week was taken up with the provision of physical food, buying, cooking, clearing up, washing-up but not ALL!



The team cooking and feeding; the special treat was pancakes with jam, and there was nearly another

`Russian Revolution' when they were distributed!

We had two baptisms at the hall this week! The first was a young man called NAURIS who had initially come across one of Duncan's articles on the internet about Satan, he had been reading his Bible in earnest for the last 4 years and travelling around the world searching for `the truth'. Once he started reading the article on the Devil, he couldn't stop! All he read in the various books and courses made sense or fitted in with his own understanding of Bible truth and he had a desire to be baptised; he prayed to God and asked that if it was His will to be baptised that He would lead him in the right direction; within a few days he found himself travelling back from India and arranging a meeting with Duncan. The amazing thing is that Nauris is Latvian! Another great timing was that we all conversed in English as his language skills were excellent, and that his baptism was on the Wednesday morning when Cindy holds her mother and toddler group. One of Cindy's ladies is herself expressing an interest and it was a great witness for the mothers and toddlers to gather round his confession of faith and watch as he died to his old life and rose to his new. Later Vanessa, Michael and myself held a breaking of bread with our new brother in Christ.



Mums and toddlers who came in off the street observing the baptism



The next afternoon we witnessed the baptism of a friend of another brother and sister called Sandra and Andrej. The young man's name was MARIS. The three of them are living in make-shift accommodation (someone's garage). It was very moving to watch other brethren and sisters adding words of encouragement and personal testament to the baptismal address which, even though we didn't understand, was either interpreted or conveyed by body and sign language.

I'm nearing the end, but would like to go over our role here...we all felt the 'feeding project' had gone better than expected and was an excellent way of mixing the spread of Bible truth with real practical need. Those of you who know me know I'm not a cook so don't be scared to volunteer some of your time, a week or so would be great. If you are restricted with your time, money would be greatly appreciated; there are so many small but life-changing requirements that can be met. For some of the brethren and sisters here they are already too sick to have much life left, but donations can at least mean that their last days have some relief; they can hold fast to the end and be brought to God's kingdom with dignity.

Yours in Christ,

Sis Rachel Harrington, Sis Vanessa & Bro Michael Boler.

If you'd like to participate in next Winter's feeding scheme, please contact:

Sis Vanessa Boler Folkestone ecclesia, UK vanessaboler@yahoo.co.uk

Sis. Rachel Harrington (Folkestone, UK)

JAMAICA 1957: THE YEAR OF MIRACLES

I am in my ninety-ninth year, with my faculties unimpaired and my spirit soaring with joy every day. I was baptised on November 25 1957 and, yes, there were forty-two other baptisms besides mine in the two Jamaican ecclesias of Kingston and Old Hope (now Broughton) in that one year, 1957. I would like to share with you all a few serious and salutary lessons before I fall asleep until my wonderful Lord comes and bestows on me a new and glorious body.

Now, 54 years later, it can be said of those forty-three of us: four of us are still alive and are active members in Jamaica; three are alive and are active members in the U.S.A.; four migrated to the U.K. and died in the Faith there; and thirty-two fell asleep in the Lord after years of faithful service to our Jamaican ecclesias. And none ever abandoned the faith.

By what means did God call us? One saw a poster on a bus. The husband of another picked up a leaflet from the gutter and gave it to his wife. Two witnessed a previous baptism and became curious. One was an itinerant Bible salesman who decided it was time he knew more about the product he was selling. Ten attended a Bible class or seminar. And twenty-eight of us saw the dramatically changed life of a friend or relative and were inspired to follow them in the Way and 'buy' the pearl of great price.

Astonishingly, no less than sixteen of us learned of the Faith while in hospital: fourteen patients and two nurses, of whom I was one. We forty-three were from all walks of life, all faiths or none. One was the brother of the ruler of the Sephardic Jewish synagogue in Kingston, and was the first from his family in at least seventeen generations to be baptised as a Christian. Another, the owner of a bakery, was a convert from Buddhism, the first in his Chinese-Jamaican family ever. There were students, farmers, fisherfolk, dressmakers, salesmen, a former church pastor, nurses, a half-blinded cane cutter, a bus conductress, a plantation overseer, a few who were unemployed, and one beggar. We became one in Christ.

What we went on to be after our baptism was much more important than where we came from. Of the forty-three of us, twenty-two were brothers and twenty-one were sisters. Four later served as 'recording brethren' of various ecclesias; one is still serving as such in New York! One from Old Hope became treasurer of the Bible Mission Jamaica in the year following his baptism and for eighteen years thereafter, to be succeeded by one from Kingston for the next twenty-three years. Nine of the twenty-two matured into competent exhorting and 'lecturing' brethren. Fifteen of us were used by the Lord directly and personally to bring others to the Faith: twenty-five in the case of one brother who was deaf, twenty-plus by one sister, and ten by another sister. They just let the Lord work through them! One young sister converted two on her deathbed at the age of twenty-three and both parents at her funeral. They became pillars of the Kingston ecclesia: her father, the ecclesial treasurer, died after being robbed at the meeting hall of the ecclesial collection, while her mother fell asleep in Christ after decades of service as table sister. Many, perhaps a few hundred, of your Gospel News readers will be able to put names to all those whom I have mentioned.

All forty-three of us can show what the true Christian faith can do for people. We were transformed by the power of the gospel. Light came into our lives, banishing the darkness and the ignorance. It gave us astonishing courage and a radiant confidence that the Almighty God, the God of Israel, Maker of the heaven and the earth, is greater than anything or anybody else in the world, however powerful they may seem to be. Many of us have lived under the temporal rule of capitalist 'democrats,' ruthless outlaw warlords, and communist zealots. But we have

been delivered from the bondage of spine-chilling fear fear of death and of the dead, fear of darkness and all its supposed powers, fear of gunmen and terrorists. We were and are truly free. It doesn't matter what man can do unto us (Psalm 27:1-8). Our hearts are "fixed" or "steadfast" (Psalm 57:7). That is why I am so joyful at nearly ninety-nine.

So what is the secret of the miracle year of 1957?

To a devoted follower of Christ, there is only one answer: "The Lord has done this, and it is marvellous in our eyes" (Psalm 118:23; Mark 12:11). Nevertheless, behind and below that blessing, there is much to learn. When the Apostle Paul planned his Bible campaign in Corinth, his strategy was clear and deliberate: "I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" -(1 Corinthians 2:1-2)

It was the same in Kingston in 1957. We were making disciples of the Lord Jesus, not devotees of a sect. We had virtually no Christadelphian literature we could not afford any and we all went out with Bible alone in hand. We claimed that our `Christadelphian' brotherhood was based on the Bible, and the seed of the Word was almost all we had to prove it. We shunned `courses' and multiple choice quizzes and any kind of indoctrination. And it worked. Just one booklet was a big help in our witness, Preaching the Truth by William Brown. It was marvellous because it presented opposing views without ridicule and let you decide. It did not bully you into believing like so many `know-all' sects did.

Then, the Kingston and Old Hope ecclesias did not leave those forty-three of us spiritually naked from our baptismal bath. Within six months, all forty-three of us, even the illiterate ones, could handle our Bibles like apostles. And we did! As an educated lady myself, I was amazed that some of my unschooled Christadelphian patients could demolish errors of college trained clergymen.

Then, crucially, there was unity. In those days, most Christadelphians who visited us in the Caribbean, including the emissaries of the Bible Mission, did not waste their time, energy and money on eliminating perceived rivals or stirring the witches' cauldron of one hundred year old controversies and divisions (1 Corinthians 3-7). Everyone seemed to know what was important. After all, who will deliberately drink a poisoned chalice?

Best of all, there was abundant love. That is really what kept all forty-three of us on course, enduring to the end. I know that those who have survived like me will testify that our Jamaican brotherhood's greatest advertisement was our agape, our fervent love for God, for the brethren, and for our neighbour (as Jesus defined it!)

In 2010 Kingston and Broughton were listed as Bible Mission supported ecclesias of the Christadelphian brotherhood. But there were no baptisms at all. None. The same hunger for truth is out there, and all around. That is not the problem at all. Instead we must ask with the Apostle Paul: "Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? So it is with you" (1 Corinthians 14:7-8).

Finally, when I was "born again," I joined others of like faith in (at most) seventeen other countries and colonies worldwide. Now I thank God in amazement to see lightstands listed for one hundred and thirty-six countries across the globe in The Gospel News, The Bible Missionary

magazine and the 2011 Directory. My earnest message to you all must be: We are only ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20); give all the glory to God alone!



Kinshasa Ecclesia, Congo - Send greetings to all in Christ, our ecclesial photos show us being exhorted and breaking bread followed by an Ecclesial meal prepared by our Sisters. We long to be together with you all in the Kingdom. Bro Kim's





before she fell asleep in Christ.

Grace in Latvia

I would like to thank you for all the good work you have enabled in Latvia and in my own life. I understand you want me to tell you something about myself and my experience of grace.

I am a Latvian but was born in Russia. I was the daughter of a Red army officer, who was repressed during the time of Stalin (when many Latvians - and not only Latvians-suffered the same fate). He was rehabilitated after he volunteered to go and fight fascism. After the war we came to Latvia and I went to a Latvian school, but then I went to study English at the Moscow Institute of Foreign Languages. My husband was Russian-speaking, my daughter married a Russian and I live with them now. So I am bilingual in Russian and Latvian (but in Soviet times most Latvians were bilingual). I am, as it were, caught between the two worlds, Russian and Latvian.

Like everyone in the Soviet Union I was raised under the dogmas of Marxism, of atheism and materialism. I wasn't a religious person. I had accepted communism as a system in which there is no private property and goods are held in common and available to all as needed and I had heard people say, and it seemed to be common knowledge, that the moral code of the Communist party was practically based on the Bible. But I have to say I didn't think deeply about it. I was busy with life, raising my daughter, and working at the University in Riga teaching English. I noticed there were students who were marked by the authorities as 'Believers', the subtext being you have to be stricter with them and I could not understand it, still believing that we had freedom of conscience as it was stated in the constitution of the Soviet Union. I wondered about it, but I don't think there was any discrimination in our faculty. But again, I didn't think so deeply.

As you probably know, in 1991 Latvia broke away from the Soviet Union and Soviet power in Latvia came to an end. There was a freedom of religion and freedom of travel and I bought my first Bible in English on a tour in France. Bibles were not freely available in the SU, but I had always wanted to have one. Then I saw an advertisement in a Russian newspaper for 'Bible Basics', and I wrote off to Duncan for a copy of this literature, which I actually received. I studied the lessons. It all made sense, and I suppose I started to join the dots, and see that yes, God exists, and His existence answered the questions I had had without fully realising it. I was invited by Duncan to attend a seminar about the Bible. At the time I had the impression that church was for old ladies, and some 10 years ago I didn't feel it was quite for me. "The tragedy of old age is that you still feel young", Somerset Maugham has said. But I did attend, and was amazed that there were young people there and a very active and enthusiastic spirit for the things of God. I completed all the lessons of the Bible course and then Duncan suggested I should be baptized. I knew I had to make a decision to enter relationship with God and Jesus and other believers, and so I was baptized, and never looked back.

Now you have asked me to write about grace, God's undeserved kindness in giving us salvation if we believe, independent of our works, or according to the New Penguin dictionary: 'unmerited divine assistance to human beings for their regeneration and sanctification'. In Russian and Latvian dictionaries issued in Soviet times this meaning of the word is not even recorded there, for God's existence was just hushed up - why speak of something that doesn't exist? But the idea of getting something for free, as it were, is foreign to most people. Of course people can be kind, can be nice; but grace; but grace as it is understood in the Bible is unknown to them, I suppose that is true of all societies in the world. But I think this understanding of grace was especially foreign to people from the Soviet Union. There was very much the mentality that by hard work there would be progress and personal advancement. There was a distrust of anything 'free', the common saying being "For free is cheese in the mouse-trap." The motto on every street corner was: 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his work'. Kindness and generosity are one thing; but God's grace is another thing. Especially that we are sinners. I like most people have a conscience, but there is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within society: but the idea of sinning against a personal God, and that He can forgive you and give you eternal life in His Kingdom, well, these ideas were quite foreign to people living under atheism and a materialist mindset.

I suppose that forgiveness is one key to understanding grace. Soviet regime made people very focused upon themselves, wary of keeping out of trouble, of keeping their thoughts to themselves, and not forgiving. I translated the talks given by Brother Steve Gretton about forgiveness, and I found the ideas very helpful in understanding grace. Those talks were a step

upwards on the ladder for me. Also helpful to me was translating an article by Duncan about the good Samaritan. We are the injured man, we are to accept that we are the injured man and to accept the help from Jesus, who is the good Samaritan in the story. I also found very helpful the idea that we are to take full responsibility for our own sins. Without this, perhaps, grace can't be understood. I think most people, and former Soviet people among them, consider themselves basically good, the fault is always with the others. That God could come into your life and forgive you and save you, as He saved me, it seems, when I was swimming as a teenager; this was very hard to take on board. It is still difficult, I think, for many people in the former Soviet Union, probably it is hard for all people wherever they are on earth.

It is hard to forgive people without their repentance, or saying sorry. To let go of others' sins as God has let go of ours, is very difficult. To forgive is to let go finally, to overcome resentment. If this were to be done, there would be no tension between Russian and Latvian people, there would be no continual reference to the past. But for the secular, agnostic people in Latvian society, there is perhaps no motivation to do this because there is no experience of having had their sins forgiven by God. Even if they consider themselves 'religious', attending Lutheran or Orthodox church, there is little awareness of having personally offended God, and therefore no real experience of forgiveness. And so forgiveness of others is hard for them, and understanding grace is hard for them.

All the time we are preaching grace. I have listened to very many talks by Duncan, many more than I can remember, and there is usually a reference to grace. But I am not sure that people understand it. It seems to me people understand grace only by personal experience. It is one thing to read of it, or hear it preached. But we have to see it in order to really understand it, and to be motivated to live like that ourselves.

As to my personal experience of grace, I believe all people are born with a vague feeling that there is a force above us/ whether you are born into a religious or an atheist family. And during your lifetime God knocks at your door, at the door of your heart, and if you are hard of hearing He is gracious enough to knock and knock again. I have been an avid reader and both Russian and Latvian literature abound in references to God, quotations from the Bible. That was what made me wish to read the Bible, but as Bibles were not easily available in Soviet time, that wish just lingered. And it was only after my baptism and those references to grace in Duncan's talks that I realized that my wondrous teenage experience was actually God knocking, trying to get through to me: I was bathing in the sea, I stood up and raised my eyes to the pines on the shore, the sky, the sand... the colours brightened umpteen times....and I stood gaping at the scene in wonder. After a time all returned to normal. And the first person I spoke to of it was Duncan. Only after so many years did I realize it for what it was.

Our ecclesia in Riga has grown very much because of grace. Which leads me to question, whether grace can be misused, or even abused. For example, when we started providing food at the meetings for the street people and those living in night shelters, more people attended. It was grace to provide food for those people. The obvious question was, 'But many of those types of people are in that position from their own fault, their own bad decisions'. Our constant fear was, 'But aren't they just going to use us?' I suppose that is a risk, and so I would like to suggest that living with grace involves a risk. On the more personal level, we can forgive someone but they can misuse that, and end up abusing us. But does that mean we don't show grace? In my own life I see how God was showing me grace from my teenage experience and onwards, in fact, I suppose, right from birth. And maybe beyond that even, before the creation of the world we were known by God, by His grace. I could have not responded to that grace. I could have come

to the end of my life without having responded to all the nudges and taps on the shoulder which God gave me. But in my case I have at least tried to respond. But God wouldn't have been wrong to show me that grace, to have tried with me. So maybe our showing of grace in Riga, everywhere, is a kind of 'trying', just as God is probably trying with millions of people right at this very moment.

And then on a more simple level, it is also true that there are many very needy people in Latvia at this time and we need to try to help them. There is money, but only with a few, and there are people, especially the elderly and those without families to support them, who are not cared for very well by the state. There are also those without the right documents, there is discrimination, there are many factors and reasons which can mean that a person isn't covered by the state. And pensions for many people and things like child support are really very small. Child support is e.g. only about 8 Lats (£9.31) per month. Some of those who live in the night shelters get only 7 Lats (£8.25) a month. You can't live on this. So, as I say, on a more simple level, grace means being gracious to others without even hoping for a response. I know that there are hundreds of people, literally hundreds, in Riga who have been deeply affected by your grace in supporting the work being done. I want to thank you on their behalf, and on my own behalf, for showing me the right understanding of grace and the hope of eternal life in the Kingdom, which you have shown me. That somebody, by grace, put an advertisement in a newspaper, that God, by grace, led me to notice it and respond, that someone organized a seminar and Bible Schools, that God by His grace has promised to save me - from all my heart, thank you so very, very much, to God, and to you!

Sis. Irma Sabele, (Riga, Latvia)

The Importance of the Bible

"All scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness. That the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The Bible was inspired by God - men wrote it as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. It is very important and uplifting in spirit for us to continue reading our Bibles daily; we can follow the table plan of Brother Robert Roberts.

What does it mean that the Bible is inspired?

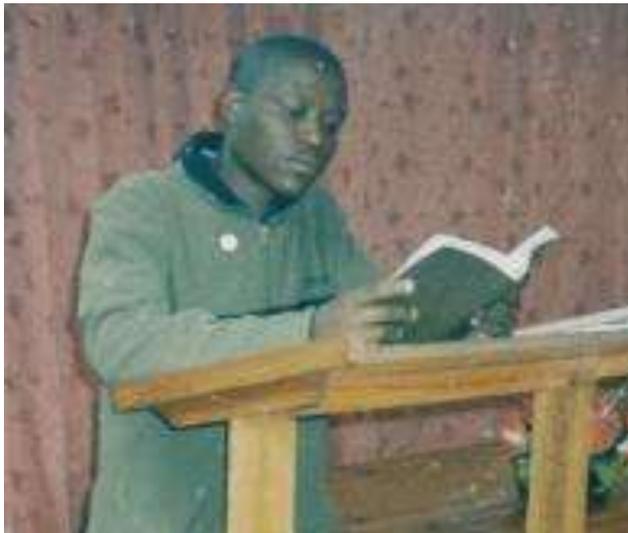
When we speak of the Bible as inspired we refer to the fact that God divinely influenced the human authors of the scriptures in such a way that they wrote the Word of God exactly as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Other verses are which claim that the Bible comes from God, 1 Cor.2:12-13, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God, and we impart this in words that are not taught by human wisdom, but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual". 2 Peter 1:21, "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit".

These verses teach us that though God used men with their distinctive personalities and writing styles, He divinely inspired the very words they wrote. Jesus himself confirmed the verbal plenary inspiration of the scriptures when he said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law..." Matt.5:17-18. In these verses Jesus is reinforcing the accuracy of the scriptures because it is the Word of God.

May God bless all those involved in making it possible for us to have this. Thanks to all the brothers and sisters, especially those in Africa, who made appeals and requests for more Bibles to use in their ecclesias and for their contacts. Carelinks, as a small organisation of brethren and sisters, saw that a complete Bible was needed to help brethren and sisters who do not have a Bible of their own. I thank all those who donated funds towards this project as this is the only way we can minister to people and encourage our friends to read the Bible for themselves.

In conclusion, a correct view of God will lead us to a correct view of the Bible. God is all-powerful, all-knowing and completely perfect. His Word, is the same in nature and in characteristics. The same verses that establish the inspiration of the scriptures also establish that they are both inherent and authoritative. Without a doubt the Bible is what it claims to be. I can sum up the Bible as the undeniable, authoritative Word of God to humanity and a recommended resource for our own spiritual growth. May God bless us all as we journey towards the Kingdom.



Bro Gideon Hankomone

Bro. Gideon Hankomone, (Mazabuka, Zambia)

A Good Church Must Be Doctrinally Correct

Many people who are looking for a church 'home' have the wrong priorities. Some are drawn to a church by the beauty of its buildings. Others are more interested in its size. Still others are attracted by an outstanding musical programme or by the pastor with the most impressive appearance, personality and speaking ability. Some look for a church with a service that

appeals to them. Then, too, there are those who are drawn to a church because of denominational loyalty, its location, or the people who attend.

As meaningful as these things may be, however, the most important consideration should be the doctrine of the church. In other words: what does it believe and teach? That is the bottom line. I would rather be in a church that meets in an old broken-down building with no choir, and a stammering preacher who teaches the word of God, than attend a church that is proud of its beautiful buildings, magnificent choir, and an eloquent minister, yet denies or ignores the clear teaching of scripture. What is believed and preached in a church is all important.

The Marks of a False Church

I would warn you, however, that not everyone who calls himself a Christian is genuine. A number of groups have appeared representing themselves as having new, final, religious truth. But they don't. These groups are a distortion of historic Christianity and pose a great threat to all who would place their confidence in them. These groups often attack the church for some failure or error even while they themselves are leading people astray. And unless you are careful and discerning, it is possible for you to be fooled by them. They often use the same terminology that Christians use. They believe in some of the same things. They often meet in church-like buildings and carry Bibles. As a result, they have misled many. Their false teaching has been accepted as truth by their undiscerning followers. That is a tragedy because, contrary to what some may say, what we believe is vitally important as important as our destiny.

Faced as we are with so many different religious opinions and groups, it is essential for us to know how to tell the genuine from the counterfeit. It is helpful, of course, to be knowledgeable about the cults and to be aware of their false and dangerous dogmas. But we should also be so well acquainted with the truth as we find it in God's Word that when we encounter that which is not genuine, we will detect it immediately. We must study the Bible and become so familiar with the real thing that we perceive anything counterfeit at once. Many unsuspecting souls are being led astray because they are not aware of what they are getting into. Let us be so familiar with the real thing that we can detect the counterfeit at a glance. Christian friends, I warn you against those who promote discord and division within the body of Christ. The apostle Paul spoke against false teaching, referring to them as "savage wolves" who rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves" (Acts 20:29,30).

Salvation is received through faith. And faith must be in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough just to believe something. You must believe in a person: Christ Jesus the Lord. Accept what the Bible says about him, that through the shedding of his blood on Calvary's cross and resurrection, he opened the way for the forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation to God.

Receive Jesus

Christ as your saviour. He said: "Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).



Bro David Yelulani

Bro David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

God the Deliverer of Refugees

Our brethren in the refugee camps are God's children, just as special as the children of Israel were when they were in bondage under the Egyptians. Just as he witnessed their suffering - Exodus 3: 7 "The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. 8 So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land..." in the same way He is seeing and concerned about what his children in the refugee camps are going through. Just as He planned to come down to rescue the Israelites, He will do the same for our brethren now. However, in this move, He worked through His servant Moses in his special way. It seems as if Moses in his zeal felt that it was up to him to make the move in this direction, without God's direction - Acts 7 23 "When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his own people, the Israelites. 24 He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. 25 Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not.". While it was God's plans to work through Moses, He was going to do it in His way,

because this was His people, and He had a fixed and comprehensive purpose in the entire operation.

When He commissioned Joshua to take over the lands of those foreign nations for the possession of the Israelites, He sent His captain to lead the way for Joshua, even though he still worked through him. 5:13 Now when Joshua was near Jericho, He looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" 14 "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." . This commander was there to specifically carry out God's commands. This did not mean that Moses and Joshua were to remain inactive, but rather they should, like the commander, work directly through God.

I think that we must strive to keep this uppermost in our minds, whenever we are carrying out God's service. He is our Lord and Master and we are His servants, hence we must seek His direction, and not take over and do our own thing. I wonder if this is why He instructed both Moses and Joshua, when He was preparing them for this important mission, to take off their shoes, because this was a special a holy- mission. Hence, we must keep close to, and work under His direction in order to be effective in a spiritual way and this is best done by continuous prayer during our operation, as we are so easily side tracked. In reading the book of Acts recently I've noticed the frequency of prayer and fasting during their activities, which is a pointer to their mode of operation, as God's servants, and we've seen how the Holy Spirit directed them, and how their work prospered. In this way God could operate freely through us, accomplishing in a comprehensive way, in the process of his operation, His purpose both with us and with our brethren.

Sis Esther Worrell (Canada)

Focus MORE on Faithfulness!

Every baptized brother or sister wants to `do better' than before. We want to improve and advance in the knowledge and the service of the Truth. This is a worthy ambition. With this objective, outlook and hope, Paul states, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Paul also says, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, I press forward to the goal...(Phil 3:13)

There is an enemy that get in the way! Paul terms it `flesh'. It gives rise to failure, frustration or perhaps, feebleness. It's from within ourselves and often arises from fear. Paul says, "I find another law (motivation) working in my members..." (Romans 8:19).

Temptation is everywhere, sin is a common result. This unfortunate situation comes directly from our forebears, Adam and Eve. No one, other than the Lord, has ever overcome or beaten it!

However, the reality is that we struggle even more, because we are determined (with a self-imposed mindset) to try to live `sinless lives' like our Lord did - a truly worthy goal, but hardly unachievable. I believe that `faithful lives' (not sinless lives) are what God really wants from us. Faithful lives can truly glorify Him.

Hosea 6:6-8 carries this message from God.

Now this is a goal or objective we can achieve. Jesus invites believers to strive for this goal. This is possible; we can be faithful and right to the end! "Be faithful to the point of death, and I will give the crown of life." (Rev 2:10) Abraham appears to have met this criteria.

Faithfulness is the fruit of a single-minded approach to a Godly life. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." Jas 1:5. So let's try to focus more on faithfulness, less on sinlessness, encouraging one another to this end. This is the positive approach. Sadly, when sinlessness engages us it's usually about another! You may well know the words of our Lord about motes and beams, specks and planks!

Faithfulness is singular and faithfulness is uniquely personal. Faithfulness honours God, pleases our Lord and is helpful to others. Let's be determined to focus more on achieving faithfulness. It will please God and generate a more peaceful mind.

Bro Neil Todd (New Zealand)

Our Preservation

The best position and highest privileges will fail to keep a man right with God. Dependence on the Lord, and obedience alone can do this. The greater the privilege, the worse the fall if the soul does not wait upon God. It is a great mistake to think that only the wicked can fall; the Christian (brother or sister) may, and must, also fall, if unwatchful.

The condition of a true worshipper is not such that he remains immovable as a statue. He is alive unto God, but he is responsible morally. He ought to grow but may decline. No doubt he has his 'old man'; the only thing to do with it is to judge it, treating it as vile and evil according to the cross, where it was condemned, root and branch in Christ who was made sin for us (Romans 6:6; 8:3).

Bro Henderson Sosola (Mtenthela, Malawi)

Calvary

When they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood: "Christ suffered without the gate" (Heb 13:12). Christ, our representative, was to suffer without the boundaries of Jerusalem. He died outside the gate where murderers were executed; "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal 3:13).

The news of his condemnation had spread throughout Jerusalem, and people of all classes and ranks flocked toward the place of crucifixion. The Saviour's burden was too heavy for him in his weak and suffering condition. Did they know that they were putting to the torture one who had come to save the sinful race from eternal ruin? The spotless Son of God hung upon the cross. There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings for sin. The Son of God has come according to the word: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God"; "By his own blood, he entereth in once to the most holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb 10:7,9,12).

On the day of crucifixion, the day of apparent defeat and darkness, the promise was given. While dying on the cross, Christ assured the poor sinner: "Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise." The thieves crucified with Jesus were placed on either side, with Jesus in the middle. This was done by the direction of the priests and rulers. Christ's position between the thieves was to indicate that Christ was the greatest criminal of the three. Thus was fulfilled the scripture: "He was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa 53:12). As Jesus, crucified with the thieves, was placed in their midst, so his cross was placed in the midst of a world dying in sin.

Jesus suffered the most intense agony of mind and body. In his humiliation he was prophet, priest and king. He had pleaded with his Father, as a loving Saviour, to forgive his murderers. Christ was the prince of sufferers. Christ saw the hold of sin upon the human heart. Upon Christ as our representative and surety, was laid the iniquity of us all.

Bro Herbert Tigerepasi (Lusaka, Zambia)

Rahab

In the city of Jericho in the past lived both good and bad people. Some were priests, governors, royals, slaves and criminals. Rahab was no better; she was a prostitute. She had no respect and was regarded as an outcast in her family. Prostitutes had a respect only above the level given to lepers, who were regarded as living dead and were not tolerated in towns. Rahab was therefore a nobody in society, though she had hidden potential.

The Israelites sent some spies to the city of Jericho when they entered the promised land (Joshua 2:1). When the people of Jericho wanted to harm them, Rahab hid and saved their lives (vs 3,4). The spies took an oath to save Rahab and her family on the D-day, and they kept that pledge (Joshua 6:24,25).

They burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein. Only the silver, gold and the vessels of brass and iron were put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, together with all her father's household and all that she had. "She dwelleth in Israel even unto this day, because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho".

Rahab was still a prostitute! Aren't you touched by this story? It shows that no human being is useless. One needs to find out one's potential. God has plans for people who turn to Him (Jer 29:11-13), and everybody needs to seek Him well. Rahab had neither respect nor future, but she recognized the powers of Almighty God when the opportunity arose (Joshua 2:9- 14). Man should learn to be careful to avoid treading on the feet of those chosen by Almighty God. They may be in the form of ordinary people but not priests, the elite or rich.

"The Lord killeth and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, he bringeth low and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them" (1 Samuel 2:6-8).

When David was confronted with the man who killed King Saul, he affirmed that nobody was to touch people chosen by God. David became a man after God's heart for he knew the will of God. The end of man is not seen from the beginning. Even in your mediocrity, a system can only

function well in your presence. Do not look up to man, for only you can help make yourself what you want to be. Nothing is ever late, so life is how you make it. Man will only deceive and disappoint you when you need them most, but not so God. The Almighty God will never fail you, only trust in him, and to this end say: "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Psalm 48:14). Brethren and sisters, let us all have a good time with the Lord at all times. Amen,

Bro Joseph Kwesi (Ghana)

A Faithful Leader

"Because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it" (Numbers 14:24). We must have the type of leadership like that of 'Caleb' for us to cross into the coming kingdom of God. Many churches are failing because of these undevoted leaders. God is seeking for spiritual leaders not, for those who are greedy of earthly things. When appointed to be a leader in God's work ask Him for intelligence, wisdom like king Solomon. As a leader, learn to separate yourself from the darkness of the world so that God will bring you and those whom you lead into His kingdom. Let the light shine and people see the following things in you:

L Light: people must see light in your living style, not works of darkness

E Eternity: spread the word of God's reward (eternal life) and make people know about the coming kingdom of God

A Age: both spiritual and physical growth must be seen in you

D Death: You must have died to sin and live unto Christ

E Everyone: must see you depending on His guidance and provision

R Resurrection: the hope of resurrection will make you stand firm.

Brothers and sisters, if all these things are identified in us, we will be like Caleb, heirs of God's coming kingdom.

Bro Joseph Zishechi (Mhangura, Zimbabwe)

Milk and Solid Food

We have here two types of foodstuffs, milk and solid food, that are well known to us. They are recorded in the Bible as examples of spiritual infancy and spiritual growth respectively. Milk is the ideal food stuff for babies. That is why Peter had to say: "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation" (1 Peter 2:2).

The writer to the Hebrews, when warning against apostasy said: "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of

righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil" (Hebrews 12:14). Therefore the basic principles of the truth are represented by milk, while the spiritual growth one acquires by constant use of the Bible is the solid food. Since the bible was inspired by God, its contents are spiritual. And so one aspiring to be such a disciple has to make use of it daily.

We learn of Jesus that in him the spirit was without measure. One may ask why was this so of Jesus? Right from his childhood, Jesus had his heavenly Father's business at heart as Luke says: "He increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." He therefore was wise because he feared the Lord which is the beginning of knowledge. Jesus knew his Father and so obeyed Him to the last. He is our greatest example. The apostle Paul said: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." To achieve this, one has to deny oneself and look ahead to him who is the "author and finisher of our faith".

Bro Sylvester Tembo (Mzuzu, Malawi)

The Great Trouble Maker

Clearly something is wrong and somebody is to blame. Trouble and more trouble: that is the human story and so it has always been. Many centuries ago Job said: "Man is of few days and full of trouble", and things have not improved since.

Crime, famine, wickedness, war civilization is reeling like a drunken man on the brink of a precipice. Who is to blame? The Bible blames the devil, but...But the devil of the Bible is not the devil of superstition. Those who have little first hand knowledge of the Bible are surprised when it is pointed out that the devil of the Bible is a symbol of sinful human desires.

Consider this passage: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (Hebrews

2:14). This verse tells us that Jesus came in our nature. Thus he was able to die; and by his death he was able to destroy the devil so Jesus destroyed the devil by his death. If the devil was a powerful person this would not make sense. How could Jesus have destroyed a monster by coming in weak human nature, and being tortured to death on a cross?

Think of the devil as human sin, and the problem is solved. We know that our Lord "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26). Further, the devil is called "him that had the power of death", and the Bible tells us repeatedly that sin brings death. Remember, for example: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

Human devil. So man is the trouble maker after all! The human mind is full of deceit. By greed, folly and sheer wickedness, man has inflicted a deal of unhappiness upon himself. And he proceeds, without batting an eyelid, to push the blame on to a mythical monster. Can you beat it?

The cause of war. The responsibility for wars rests squarely on man's shoulders: "What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passion - desires that are at war in

your members? You desire and do not have; so you kill. And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war" (James 4:1,2).

How it all started. The scriptures tell us how the sad story of human sin began. A man named Adam made an unwise decision (Genesis 3:1,5,6). Here we note that man has the ability to make decisions: is this a good thing? All right then, the ability to make decisions is a good thing. But man cannot have this ability, and not have it, at the same time. If he has the ability to decide, it follows that he may decide wisely, and he may decide unwisely. And, obviously, he must accept the consequences of his decisions.

The tragedy of human history is all man's doing. But God has not forsaken us in our misery: "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).

Bro John Muyala (Bungoma, Kenya)

Locusts

Many people today may not know what locusts look like even though many peoples have been brought to the brink of extinction by their activities on the environment. They were well known by the ancient peoples. Locusts are winged insects belonging to the group of grasshoppers and are brown in colour. They thrived well in the wilderness where the conditions were dry, sandy lands covered with vegetation and uninhabited. They moved in great swarms from one area to another searching for vegetation and breeding. Once a swarm had infested an area, it fed heavily on the vegetation leaving the land bare. It eventually settled on ground, laying millions of eggs that hatched out producing millions of larvae which matured quickly forming even greater swarms.

These insects occur in many verses in the Bible, and they represent different things:

1.

Food to God's people

The Israelites were God's chosen people and they were forbidden to eat unclean insects. God said: "With the exception of those that jump; locusts of all varieties ordinary locusts, bald locusts, crickets and grasshoppers may not be eaten" (Leviticus 11:22). In the New Testament, however, God fed John the Baptist on locusts while preaching the gospel in the wilderness of Judea before the baptism of Jesus: "Now John the Baptist wore garments of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins, and his food was locusts and wild honey" (Matthew 3:4). This was God's personal love and care for His people. Even now God can do the same if we can obey Him.

2.

Punishment to those who disobeyed

On the other hand God used locusts to punish people who disobeyed Him. After turning a deaf ear to Moses, a plague of locusts was sent upon Pharaoh to terrify him and destroy all vegetation. "And the locusts covered the land of Egypt from border to border; it was the worst in Egyptian history, and there will never be another" (Exodus 10:15; Psalm 105:34; 78:46). Such

miracles of terror in the land of Egypt demonstrate God's power and we should thank Him for all the glorious things He does.

3.

Invasion of enemies

Prophets were given visions of enemies invading those kingdoms that disobeyed God. Babylon was one of the greatest nation that fell as the consequence of the sins it had committed. "The Lord Almighty has taken you, and sworn to it in his own name; your cities will be filled with enemies like fields filled with locusts in a plague, and they shall lift to the skies their mighty shouts of victory" (Jeremiah 51:14).

4.

Glorifying God in unity

God uses locusts to emphasize the idea of unity in our ecclesias. We know that by gathering together every Sunday in our ecclesias in breaking bread and drinking wine, we demonstrate oneness in Christ. At times we fall short of God's glory because of our weakness, our disunity, unlike these small creatures that are united and perfectly glorify God: "Locusts have no king yet all of them march in rank" (Proverbs 30:27). It pleases God when believers live in unity always.

It is thought by many that

the "locusts" John ate were possibly the seeds and pods of the locust tree. --MH

Bro Manasseh & Sis Dorcus Wamamili (Chwele, Kenya)

Acceptable Prayer

"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened" (Ps 66:18). This does not mean that a person has to be perfect before he can pray. Over and over again, God invites sinners to call upon Him. But it does mean that unless we are sorry for our sins and are willing to be free from every evil thought, word and deed, our prayers will not be effective.

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1,2). Sin separates man from God. Like dirt in an electrical connection, it stops the flow of power.

Nor does He answer prayers of a purely selfish nature. "You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions (James 4:3). A prayer asking to win \$100,000 or a TV will not have a very high priority in the courts of heaven!

We must pray in the name of Jesus. "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the son; if you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13,14). This means more, of course, than merely saying "in Jesus' name" or "for Christ's sake" at the end of a prayer. It suggests a desire to glorify God by asking only those things that are pleasing to Him and will be helpful to His cause.

Here, then, are the conditions for successful praying, follow them, and your prayer experience will take on a new richness and beauty. Answers will begin to come. God will surprise you with the swiftness and greatness of His responses.

Remember Paul's experience. After being struck down on the Damascus road by a light "brighter than the sun" he suffered severely from "a thorn in the flesh" from which he sought deliverance: "Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me" (2 Corinthians 12:8). But it did not leave him. Instead, he was given this message to sustain his spirit: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (v 9). For some reason known only to God, it was best for Paul to bear this trial, so his prayer was not answered.

So it could happen with you. If so, do not lose heart. Hold fast your faith in God: "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end: they are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. `The Lord is my portion', says my soul, `therefore I hope in him'" (Lamentations 3:22-24).



Bro Alfred Wanyonyi centre with two of his friends

Bro Alfred Wanyonyi (Bungoma, Kenya)

The Tree

First, there are the little green leaves, then the big green leaves and then the juicy fat fruits. That's how the ecclesias should grow. Are we doing that, brothers and sisters? The coming of Christ is at hand. Let us not be found on the wrong side. Jesus commanded, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28: 19,20). By teaching and baptising those who want to observe and obey the word, then the ecclesia will grow like a tree.

A good sculptor must have a sharp chisel, a painter should have a palette and brush and proper mixture of paints. The big thing for us is to win people and to help them to have faith in Christ. To do this we must use skilfully and wisely the word of God as a tool and an instrument of instruction. "Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves (James 1:22). The tree uses its roots to draw minerals and water from the soil, and grows and produces fruit. Like the tree, let us use the Bible to draw people from the evil world. From the signs of the times, we can see that the coming of Christ is near, so let us not leave other people in darkness but let us give them the light. The ever shining light is Christ. We must get rid of moral filth and evil. Starting with our families, and the others we meet.

Let them know the gospel so that they can be written in the book of life. If anyone's name was not found in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15). As we try to follow the commandments of Christ, let us preach to everybody in this sleepy world (in fact it is indeed in slumber). What a rude awakening awaits them and how shocked they will be like a tree struck by lightning: no more growth, no leaves and no juicy fruits. There will be much gnashing of teeth.

Bro Green Mumbelunga (Ndola, Zambia)

The Book of Books

Today, more than ever, men and women are concerned about job satisfaction. Finding fulfilment has become important. Yet the one book that tells us why we were made goes largely unread. The Book of Books written to tell us what life is about is seldom consulted. Is it any wonder that the world is in a mess?

Almost the first noticeable thing about the Bible is its size. Some modern literary masterpieces are long; most books are not. The Bible is large or, if small, is printed in a close type hard to read. This is because the Bible is actually a library of books. The title actually means "The Books". Sixty-six books have been bound into one volume because they make up a set. They depend on one another. Together they form a complete story. Individual books cannot be completely understood on their own. The title contains the word 'Holy'. This means separate, put aside for special use.

The Bible is different from other books. There are several ways in which we may consider it different. First of all, we shall be struck with the transparent honesty of the writers. Their openness in writing of failure and sin, even their own, is most unusual. It is clear that they are hiding nothing; their language is direct and forceful.

Secondly, the standards they uphold are to be admired. They present ideas far outside those to which men normally aspire. They consistently condemn what is offensive to God and applaud what is right.

Thirdly, the Bible displays an amazing foreknowledge of future events. It predicts the future with an accuracy that would be alarming if we were to meet it anywhere else. All this is in keeping with the Bible's claim to be the word of God.

The Bible has only one author. God used many writers, but His message has a 'wholeness' about it. It harmonizes. It fits together. The sixty-six books of the Bible are divided into two

sections. The first is called 'The Old Testament' covering thirty nine books, while the second section is called 'The New Testament' covering twenty-seven books. The word 'testament' means covenant or solemn undertaking. Each testament shows the way in which God's mercy was being shown to people.

The Old Testament is the record of God's mercy to the nation of Israel. It describes the covenants promises - God made to them. The New Testament is concerned with developing God's mercy to all. It is very important to read the Bible every day in order to know God, and to understand and do what He wants in order to please Him. What a blessing to read God's love letter "Just for me".



Bro John Kasanda with his grandchildren, January 2012

Bro John Kasanda (Kasumpa, Zambia)

"When I Am Afraid, I Will Trust in You" (Psalm 56:3)

Today we are facing different types of challenge but we are to trust God and will be conquerors. This world is a sinful world. Many things are happening: wars, hunger, floods, earthquakes, accidents and evil works such as killing and raping. As Christians fear not these, but put faith and trust in God and He will protect us. "Do not be afraid; you will not suffer shame" (Isaiah 54:4). Today's Christians fail to stand firm on their Christian ministries because of fear. We give in to fear, because of little faith.

We, must fear God only, the Creator of everything and the foundation of our knowledge. You who are afraid of your enemies should remember, "With God we shall gain the victory and he will trample down our enemies" (Psalm 108:13). If it is the fear of hunger, He provides food for those who fear him (Psalm 111:5).

We, like Jonah, may divert our routes because of fear, but as God turned Jonah to the right destination; so it could happen to us. Moses was afraid of Pharaoh and his people (Exodus 4:10-13), but God encouraged and strengthened him, for He was with him. Finally, brothers and sisters, no matter who you are facing different types of challenge, stand firm and put your faith

and trust in God who knows everything. So fear not the world and the 'powers of darkness' but fear only the Mighty God (Revelation 14:7).

Bro Joseph Zishechi (Mhangura, Zimbabwe)