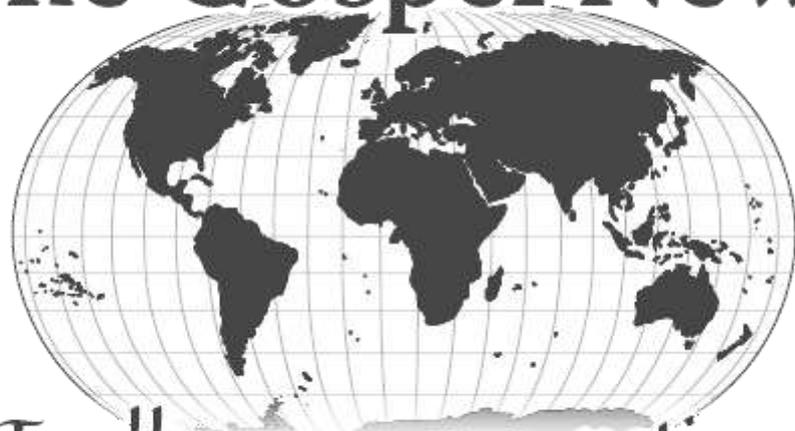


The Gospel News



“To all  nations”



EDITORIAL: Wrestling Wild Beasts at Ephesus

In the context of talking about our hope of bodily resurrection at Christ's return, Paul says that this hope was what had given perspective to his wrestling with wild beasts at Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32). The context surely requires that we understand this as referring to how he had been in danger of losing his physical life because of this wrestling, but he endured it with a mindset which looked ahead to the resurrection of the body. The wrestling with wild beasts, therefore, appears to be a literal experience which he had, rather than using 'wrestling with wild beasts' in a figurative sense. There was at Ephesus an amphitheatre, and we also know that there were cases where convicted criminals were forced to fight wild animals; if they killed the animal, then they went free. It seems this is what happened to Paul. He speaks in 2 Cor. 1:8-10 of an acute crisis which he faced in Asia (and Ephesus was in Asia) which involved his having been given a death sentence, and yet being saved out of it by "the God who raises the dead". This emphasis on bodily resurrection is the same context we have in 1 Cor. 15:32. As he faced his death in 2 Tim. 4:17, Paul reminisced how the Lord had earlier saved him "out of the mouth of the lion"; and the context there is of literal language, and we are therefore inclined to consider that he was literally saved from a lion in the arena at Ephesus. This also helps us better understand his earlier reference in Corinthians to having been exhibited as a spectacle, as a gladiator at a show, "appointed unto death", in the presence of God and men (1 Cor. 4:9). Note that despite this traumatic experience, Paul chose to continue at Ephesus even after that, because he saw a door had been opened to him for the Gospel, despite "many adversaries" (1 Cor. 16:8,9). We who are so shy to put a word in for the Lord in our encounters with people ought to take strength from Paul's dogged example in Ephesus.

But when Paul speaks in 2 Cor. 1:8-10 of his death sentence experience in Ephesus, he does so in the context of having reasoned in the previous verses of how whatever we experience, we experience so that we may comfort others: "[God] comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so in Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer".

These verses are profound in their implication.

Whatever we experience is according to God's plan, so that we might use that experience in order to strengthen others. We all share in Christ's afflictions, but "in Christ" we experience comfort, insofar as others within the body of Christ mediate His comfort to us. However, the whole process only functions if we open ourselves up to others, understanding their experiences and sharing with them the strength which we received when we went through the same things in essence. No life is of course identical; few believers have experienced what Paul did in Ephesus. And yet he says that he wanted to use that experience in order to comfort those in Corinth who in principle were going through the same thing.

We live in an age where mankind is in retreat, retreat back into himself. The online life tempts us to interact only as far as we wish and as often as we wish, and this has led many to retreat into themselves. Likewise interaction at meetings of the body of Christ can so often focus only around surface level issues. We don't expose ourselves, and others don't expose themselves to us. Within such a spirit of isolationism, we can never allow the body of Christ to function as God intends. We will fail to find ultimate meaning in our experiences; for Paul teaches clearly that

they happen to us in order that we may share the fruits of them with others. This is why so many alcoholics and other addicts who do the 12 step courses tend to fail on the very last step- that they hereafter vow to spend the rest of their lives sharing what they have learnt with others. And so they retreat back into the mire of mediocrity and into the old patterns of existence and coping.

This line of thought explains why, within Biblical history, it's apparent that circumstances repeated in essence within the experience of God's children. Ezekiel was asked to eat unclean food by God, and he found it so hard to get his legalistic head around it; Peter likewise. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness and was tempted there for 40 days to reveal what was in His heart- just as Israel had been for 40 years. It also explains why if we can dig beneath the facade of normality which we all tend to cover our faces with, we find there are others who have experienced amazingly similar experiences to ourselves. And the extraordinary similarity of experience is in fact designed by God; because these are meetings and connections made in Heaven. We are here for each other, and all we experience is in a sense for others. This opens another window onto the meaning of personal suffering; another take on the eternal question "Why?". There's an element to it which isn't for our benefit at all, but for others. Take Job. That man was "perfect" and solidly with the Lord at the start of the book, and he is the same at the end of the book. The purpose of his sufferings was perhaps not therefore simply for his own personal development, but for the conversion of the three friends. The palsied man was palsied and was healed so that others might learn that the Son of Man had power to forgive sins (Mt. 10:6-9).

We too easily assume that nobody else could ever understand our life path, the way we have taken. We too quickly consider that others have a charmed life. Some seem to have great health and family relationships, money, security and spirituality. But in fact beneath all that veneer there simply has to be in every life lived in Christ an awful co-suffering with Him. People in Christ go through the most awful, unspeakable agonies. Every one of us does. Nobody gets off light. It just seems to our limited vision that some do. We all wrestle with wild beasts at Ephesus, and are saved out of the mouth of the lion. Whatever the Corinthians were enduring, it was in essence "the same suffering" as Paul endured in that arena. And there should therefore have been a meeting of minds; the basis of our fellowship is largely intended to be our common experience in Christ. Ideas and theories tend to divide; experience unites. And what people need far more than anything else, than any smart expositions or mental gymnastics with Scripture, more than money, is the simple comfort of Christ's love.

We have each received that comfort ourselves in our life experiences; and we are to make the functioning of Christ's body effective by getting out there and sharing that comfort with others. For this is how, mechanically as it were, on the ground, in reality, "we [who] share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, in Christ share abundantly in comfort too".

--Duncan Heaster

News from Africa

NEWS FROM BURKINA FASO



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of Brothers KOUNBELE, DENIS, ALBERT, CEDRIQUE and DESIRE; and Sisters MAMOU, RAKIETA and HABIBOU; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

NEWS FROM CAMEROON



DOUALA

I can only describe as wonderful the mail I have just received from you . I cannot believe that I asked for just some pamphlets and yet you have sent me all these wonderful preaching materials. I humbly believe that all these will go a long way to help our ecclesia in its growth in the truth, and the wealth of knowledge contained in all these books will help us improve our mastery of the truth, for it's the lack of such things that hinders the growth and popularity of our group and doctrine here in Cameroon. Most of us cannot defend or preach this gospel as people who really know what they are talking about, and that is why we keep marking time on the same spot. If our Christian literature is widely circulated in town I'm very sure that many would see the truth expressed in these preaching materials. Some copies of Bible Basics will be put in our library to help some brothers and sisters come up to date with certain doctrines. You know my dear brother preaching in Africa is not like in Europe. We in Africa have great superstitions about God and demons and so on that it is not easy to get the message really through to most people. Furthermore, the mess preached by these apostate churches really makes it difficult for us as they have flooded the whole place with this stuff and many of them are also on the cable channels. Whenever I look at the TV and listen to one of this so-called Christian churches preaching I could shed tears. They spend their whole time speaking about prosperity and casting out demons from people but never teach the Word. Since most of us Africans in general are poor, we flood to these crusade grounds in the hope that we may become relieved of our poverty. Very few indeed would ever take the pains to study the Word, instead they foolishly think that is the work of the pastors and priests, and they should and be directed by their pastors.

--Bro Cyril Nadze

BAMENDA

CAT has done a lot in Bamenda. We received a large parcel of books including `Where There Is No Doctor' and `Where Women Have No Doctor' and other books. We put these into good use as we move to villages to talk about the gospel and encourage basic health care and sanitation. One of these villages is Buweh, in the photo, there some members of Bamenda Ecclesia donated some basic medicine to them; Bro Philip Mafain (with book in hand) and Sis Nanji (1st on right) and Bro Akoso Peter (1st from left), presented them the drugs on the table. The village head and wives received us and we visited them weekly for a year. The UK Brethren have since visited Buweh and today there are six Brethren and Sisters meeting in their own hall.

We also got the news of a Brother in isolation, some 50 miles away, I visited him (Bro Somsong Samson) after reading his plight in Gospel News. Since then three Visiting Brethren from the UK have been to visit him in the remote village of Bamukumbi. Where few white men have ever been.

Can you help us locate Brother Kum Donatus who we have lost touch with.

Another possible door may be opening 55 miles away from Bamenda. I am a painter and went to work in this area and stayed with a Pentecostal pastor. He allowed me



Buweh presentation of medical supplies to preach in his church for four days and there was a lot of interest in our views.

Please, if you can, send us copies of the whole Bible and any other books on the Truth, as the Lord provides you with.

--Sis Eveline & Bro Emmanuel Nanji

NEWS FROM CONGO



On this occasion of the new year 2012 I take this opportunity to convey to all of you our best wishes. Our prayer is it may be for you and your family, a year of joy prosperity and blessings in Jesus Christ, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

We love all of you. You are so precious to us.

--Bro Kim's Mukambilwa (Kinshasa)

NEWS FROM EGYPT



Here we are doing fine despite so many problems in this country and many coming and going because of it. Greetings to all.

--Bro. Oludare



Brother Oludare with his wife and son

news from kenya



BULIMBO

Thank you for your nice letter which I received recently, and I always thank God for what He does in our lives. It is good that Bulimbo Ecclesia is now a lightstand for God's truths, and we pray that God may continue to guide us in His truth so that we may attain that coming Kingdom.

Secondly, we thank CAT for the help they have sent our Ecclesia which will help us to buy timber for making church benches and a few chairs. We are in the programme of fund-raising to buy a plot to construct the church. We are also delighted to inform you that our Bulimbo Ecclesia has increased in number and God has done greatly. This is why we have come up with this issue of purchasing a plot to build our own church. We do carry out our services under the shade of the mango trees: many people at the beginning used to discourage us because we had no meeting-place.

--Bro. Sadique Juma

BUNGOMA

I was born into a Pentecostal family and have grown as a Pentecostal since childhood until the age of twenty years, and developed an interest in Scripture while very young. Also, alas, I believed false teachings that when people die, after three days they go to heaven. Jesus now is a

King in heaven and so many accept sprinkling as baptism, Hell, Satan, the Devil, Demons etc. Then I was confused and I asked myself many questions.

What made me develop is when I met Bro. Laban Kisaka and Brother Nimrody Masika and asked them many questions and all were answered. That is how I started with Christadelphians. They continued to teach me many lessons which helped me to understand well. After taking the 60 lessons, my mind reflected back to when I was the Chairman of the Pentecostal Assembly and when I was teaching false doctrines. I prayed and confessed my sins and asked God to forgive me.

Then I decided to be baptised into Christ and asked Bro. Moses. Then he asked me some questions to test my readiness and invited me to attend their meetings; so after about three months I was baptized. It was Bro. George who conducted the interview: I succeeded and was baptised and given the right hand of fellowship.

--Bro. Alfred Wanyony

It is with great pleasure that we thank God for giving us the opportunity to worship and praise Him. I, of course, appreciate and consider your former help in giving us the Gospel literature we wanted, and were in need of. In fact, I send my loving greetings of joy to you all, and I hope you are happy and in good condition in the help of our Redeemer's purpose and plan.

I now would like to introduce to you my new brother in Christ, Bro. David Masika Kasili, who was baptised recently. He is interested in the Scriptures, reading very much the Gospel literature you gave.

I am pleased to assure you that the small booklets I have been receiving from the 'Herald of the Coming Age' from Box 220, Findon, SA Australia, are of great value to me and my Brothers and Sisters in the Ecclesia, and so I really appreciate them and need their continuation. If available 'Elpis Israel,' by Bro. John Thomas would be appreciated, to strengthen our faith.

We are taking our time, in our Ecclesia, to study the Bible diligently; 'Bible Basics'; 'The Real Christ' and 'The Real Devil' are helping. We have put forward our present effort and practices to understand the Bible and be aware and learn from it. So far we are putting forward its exhortations and practices to our friends, so that we teach them the proper, enlightened truth of the Word of God.

--Bro. Martin Sibolo Situma

DAGO

We are quite fine here, and expecting the heavenly Kingdom to be established soon, so as to relieve mankind from the present state of problems we are encountering right now. I am glad to receive the new look, colourful Gospel News magazine.

Last year, for many it was a year when many were faced with such calamities as have never happened before. In recent years, there were problems ranging from droughts, wars, diseases, strikes, earthquakes, etc. In Kenya many families lost almost all their livestock possessions they entirely depended on for livelihood due to drought. The high cost of commodities is commonplace now and many shopkeepers are hoarding basic goods to fetch good prices. The Kenya shilling has lost value against the hard currencies. These and many other problems are clear pointers to the nearing of Christ's return to redeem the world.

--Bro. Raphael Joni Aimo

KOBUJOI

The N.E.V. New Testaments were enthusiastically received by my family members (some) and other two friends. They were all thankful for them, and I await supplies of the complete Bible.

The weather is cold and windy. We have harvested maize, but the produce was very low this season.

--Bro. Geoffrey Chirchir

MALINDI

I thank you very much for the good 'seed' that you're sowing in God's vineyard and the good time you're committed for God's work: you shall be rewarded on that day, God knows your work and effort is not in vain. Keep up the good work in the Lord.

I kindly request that, if the Lord remains away for some time, God willing you come and also assist us in Kenya, particularly where I am now Malindi a Muslim dominated area, and Christian but if he comes before your decision, then let us meet in God's Kingdom!

Also I request the following: 'Bible Concordance,' 'Christendom Astray,' the 'Life and Work of Dr. John Thomas' and 'The Parables of the Messiah.' I hope maybe you know of other good spiritual material from different authors with which you could kindly assist us.

And lastly, I am using a physiotherapy machine since my accident with a motor bike, three times per week. Please pray for me, first it was free but with every visit now it is 700/- per two hours.

--Bro. Walter Wasike

MYANGA

'The Real Devil' book and literature reached me well. I thank you very much for your help.

I thank our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ for giving us a sure hope of eternal life after the resurrection and judging of the living and the dead. I do feel very happy that I am in the midst of true Brothers who hold a true faith of the Prophets and Apostles, and the good promises of God.

I want to inform you about my son Peter who died a death that can't be explained, on 25-26.08.11. It wasn't a day our family will forget. He was 33 years old: I know he will be raised at Christ's coming. I enclose my family's picture.

--Bro. Edward Kunikina

NAITIRI

I hope you are fine. We of the Naitiri Ecclesia are very grateful and we thank all the participants who helped in the production of the New Testament Bibles. Members received them with happiness, together with friends. This has led to a shortage of these Bibles as some friends also wanted to have them.

Here in Kenya we are experiencing economic problems and we are facing this crisis which has become difficult to control. We hope that it is only God who would intervene, as our hope only lies with the Almighty God.

Brothers, according to the true teaching of the Bible about emerging false prophets, it has happened, when we heard over the media that "The day of the Lord has finally come and the world will end on 21st May 2011." This has caused a lot of panic to people, especially near to where I live. In Ezekiel 13:3, "This is what the Lord Almighty says: woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing." Also in Matthew 24:36: "No-one knows about the day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son of Man, but only the Father."



Family picture: Seated, from right to left, Bro. Edward, Cousin Joseph, my Bro. (young) Philip; Standing, from left to right, James (my brother's son), my Cousin Barasa, my Bro. Maurice, my Nephew Emmanuel and my son Peter, who died.

So as Christians, we only believe what the Bible says, not what comes from the mouth of people who have no important mission in their lives, but to draw the attention of the world. Jesus is the only rock in a weary land. Let us not worry for the day is near, but unknown. May God bless you all.

We have finished reading the book, 'The Real Christ,' and our friends are borrowing it and reading it. Please brothers, if the book, 'The Real Devil' is available, help us by sending it to us so that we can be sure of Bible teaching about the real Devil. May God bless the work of your hands.

--Bro. Nasong'o Haron



The lessons that you are giving me are of great importance in my life, and these I use to teach others all about God's message and its importance. I really appreciate the effort that you are making in the ministry as a whole. If you saw some of the citizens in Kenya, you would see them trying to change, just because of the Word of God. Please send us some Bibles and Bible Companions.

--Bro. Khisah Joseph

NAKURU

The work of the Lord's vineyard in Nakuru is going on well, with two baptisms last year and one this year. We are glad that we are living in the last days and the Lord Jesus Christ can return at any time that's why there is a need to be ready all the time. The Holy Bible says that neither Jesus, nor the angels know the hour, but only the Almighty God.

Did you post for me the letter I enclosed in my last letter to you? We are still experiencing high Naitiri Ecclesia cost of living, with essential commodities prices increasing every day, but the Lord is always with us.

--Bro. Samuel Wanga

NALONDO

I appreciate your publications the Gospel News amongst other literature, to enable the Word of God to be spread in many countries of the globe in many languages. I have no objection to your making any improvements in my articles which I have, or may send you for publication in the future, while our Lord is still away, and also while some of us are still alive and are in the right mind to do things for our ecclesias in the Faith of Christ.

On the New Testament which you published, it is good and convenient to carry and to read. I do support those who suggest that you produce the complete holy Bible.

--Bro. John Muyala



Nalondo Christadelphian Hall with some ecclesial members.

NDHIWA

Thank you for the dozen New Testament Bibles with study notes which we have received with a lot of enthusiasm. Our proposed idea of teaching the Gospel has started, and we have four women teenagers and three male teenagers altogether. My husband has also introduced our teaching to three of his work-mates and they are interested to join us. So I want, if God is willing, to make groups of 'Mother and Baby', as well as teenage groups, and in God's mercy this group work can do even better if enough material is available. I think it is a blessing from God that when I start something it grows quickly, for I put God first. Your suggestions for this work have started bearing fruit.

What I'm wondering is, would you be able to link each of these members to personal tutors to get complete lessons? for these two guide books I have won't be enough for the members. I am still wondering how I will get enough material to get these projects going, for it seems a great challenge. Thank you for all your help. With love in the Name of our Master who is coming soon.

--Sis. Emmy Aseyo



Sister Emmy Aseyo (in red dress), with sisters
Millicent, Bonne, Margaret and Beatrice.

NDHIWA

Greetings in the loving Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I give much thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus. I am praying always for you having been always exhorted by your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all faithful believers. I thank God because of the hope which is laid up for us in the heavens.

We have now a group of about 8-10 who come together weekly to study the Gospel, and it has started growing fruits. We would like to continue to learn more and more. We need your help. For this cause, do not cease to pray for us and make our request to God to fill us with the knowledge of His will in all scriptural understanding.

--Bro. Jacktone Ukiru Mlongwa

N. KINANGOP

Thank you for the book 'The Real Christ' and other material. All these are deepening my faith and opening my mind to knowledge, just as the Apostle Peter states in his second letter, ch.1:5-6, "For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness, knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control, and to self-control, perseverance, and to perseverance, godliness..." Now what I request is that you send me some more Bible Basics, two for the initial church in Kinangop. I have friends who are very interested and one of them is requesting baptism, which I have to organize with other Kenyan brothers soon. We have never been granted an ecclesia in Kinangop, something which I have been looking forward to. I have been in touch with Maheru Ecclesia, which has been so costly in terms of transport.

Here in Kenya we have had a lot of changes from the civil wars. We are now in the period of new constitution implementation, which reflects a lot of changes: we are also approaching General Elections. Almost everybody is educated and understands English. It takes courage and a lot of enthusiasm to reason out the faith of Christ, regarding the Trinity. If it was not the Lord who has called me, and for sure He did, it would be difficult to survive in the Christadelphian faith, as there has never been any Christadelphian faith in my area. I call for your support now.

--Bro. Peter Njuguna

RAPOGI

I do show my appreciation for the Gospel News magazine which you have frequently sent to me, although unfortunately I did not receive the one for August. I was told that the parcel was lost on the way from the post office. I know the Lord is going to enable me to receive these again.

Generally I am constant in the Lord because your work has really showed blessings throughout the world. Nowadays I do like applying Romans chapter 13:12 which says, 'The night is far spent, and the day is at hand. Let us cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light;' because the long awaited Master may come any time.

--Bro. Mike G.O. Juma

SINDO

We love each other because we were joined together through baptism. You accepted the message before me and on 21st August 1976, I was joined through baptism and we have remained steadfast and immovable to be strong witnesses to the truth together.

I would like to talk about love as the greatest gift our Father in heaven has revealed to us through His Son Jesus Christ, through his death on the cross and resurrection to life again. Let us look in the Bible to see how God can reveal His love versus hate, in the sense of Cain versus Abel in the book of Gen.4. God wants us to show our true love in the service we do every day we are being tested to see if we love God and if God also loves us. Many people do not show their love in service, as they have their minds corrupted by an evil heart.

The God of the Bible put the two sons of Adam to a test; i.e. Cain and Abel and their sacrifices to God, to teach us that God's love must be manifested in our service. This love versus hate was shown when Cain murdered his brother Abel.

The Lord God made Adam and Eve to bring forth another seed of righteousness called Seth. Abel died in faith and will be remembered, together with men and women who were faithful to God and loved the Creator. Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts; and through his faith, though he died, he still speaks." In 1 John 3:11,12 we are told, "Love one another, for this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We should not be like Cain who was of the evil one, and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous."

--Bro. John Owalo Onani

TONGAREN

During the quiet moment before worship one Sunday, the organist played a hymn that was new to me. I turned to the page noted the hymnal and read the words of the song, 'The Lord my Shepherd guards me well,' a beautiful paraphrase of Psalm 23.

No matter how often we read or hear the familiar 23rd Psalm, it seems to come to me with a fresh message of God's care for us. "Though I should walk in darkest ways through valleys like the grave, no evil shall I ever fear; your presence makes me brave; on my behalf your rod and staff assure me you will save." This message was familiar to the people who heard Jesus say, 'I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd gives his life for the sheep' (John 10:11) Unlike a hired person who turns away from danger, the true shepherd stays with the sheep to protect

them. ` But a hireling, he who is not a shepherd... sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees...I am the good Shepherd; and I know my sheep.' (12-14)

No matter what you are facing today, Jesus knows your name, he knows the danger: the true shepherd stays with the sheep and he will not leave your side. You can say with confidence, ` The Lord is my Shepherd, and He guards me well.' The lamb who died to save us is the Shepherd who lives to lead us.

--Bro. Isaac Kapa



Sis. Nancy Isaac, and Sis. Getquin Isaac, with Duncan, a new-born child.

TURBO

We thank you for the New Testaments and the Bible Basics. People in our area and far away have received the Truth, and it is the full Truth.

--Bro. Emmanuel Milimo



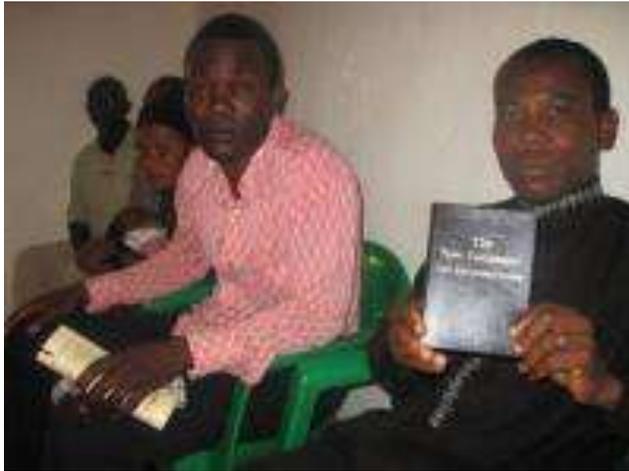
NEWS FROM MALAWI



DZALEKA REFUGEE CAMP

Here we are all fine. I've received news that you have accomplished the printing of the whole Bible, may the Lord bless your work. I do appeal for copies for us here, and your prayers..

--Bro. Bernard Wabene



Brother Bernard with his NEV New Testament

GONDA

Thank you for six copies of the New Testament, New European Version and six Bible Companion Reading Plans. For this parcel I have enclosed a photo showing brothers and sisters reading them and also holding other Christadelphian literature. When you put this photo into Gospel News please send me my own copy so that I can remember about this distribution. Gospel News is very interesting and encourages us, because through this brothers and sisters share their knowledge of God worldwide and this makes them into one family. We learn from it or tell others what we get from our Bible Study through it.

Don't forget us in your prayers. May God lead us, as Jeremiah 10:23 says, "that I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own. It is not for man to direct his steps", and Jesus said in Matt.7:7, "Ask and it shall be given to you".

--Bro. Robert Folley

KASUNGU

I have been elected to grow ground nuts. It is my wish to grow ground nuts as a cash crop, instead of tobacco as it is in our country, so through your prayers which change my life, I believe my dreams will come true. The rules are very difficult to follow, for example the minimum average amount to grow is five hectares. As I may not manage to do the work on my own I have found two young



men (twins) with their families, which is also tough as one has to feed these helpers. I would ask for more prayers that I may achieve my goals.

The picture is showing me feeding the young local chicks in my house after the mother started laying eggs. There were twelve chicks and one got lost during this time, so I thought of appreciating on what the mother chick has provided for my living and take care of them.

My fellow students are requesting if you may have some "New European New Testament" books like you sent to me there are eleven of them. I would also like to have a "Good News" Bible as it is a recommended for our Bible Knowledge syllabus.

--Sis. Bertha Khonje

Gonda Ecclesia



Sister Bertha feeding her young chickens.



Sister Bertha relaxing and doing her readings.

LINGA

Now we have five ecclesias in this area: Mnduluka, Mkaika, Mwamsambo, Linga, Thale and Msenjele May God bless, and all I want is some more Bible Basics and Bible books. I am eagerly waiting my brother John Aldersley from New Zealand so that he can assist with baptism, God willing.

--Bro. Leonard

MTENTHELA

God "will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath." Rom.2:6- 8. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor.5:10.

We saw earlier that God offers us salvation, Titus 3:5, but the Bible says that we will be judged by our works. Nowhere does it say that we will be judged by our faith. How can this be? This is not a contradiction. If we have a vehicle which works well, do we say that vehicle became well-built by doing its job well? No, there is nothing it could do to become well built, yet the true test of how well it is built is how it works. So we are created in Jesus Christ unto good works, Eph.2:10. We are saved by faith but tested (or judged) by our works. That is why faith without works is dead. (James 2:17). God can see our hearts. He would not need to see our works to know how to judge us. However, by our works we can tell if we are truly His children. It is for our benefit that He tells us how He will judge.

--Bro. Henderson Sosola

MZUZU

A child would go around bare without any feeling of shame. However, the opposite is true with a normal grownup person. If you happen to see an adult person going around naked be assured that, that person is not normal.

The Bible presents the word nakedness in this way: Adam and Eve, after eating the forbidden fruit, realized that they were naked. This realization was accompanied with shame. In other words, these first two parents had sinned.

They went around looking for a covering for their nakedness, but what they discovered was not ideal enough. It was God who had the solution for their covering: An animal was slain and its skin was used for man's covering.

This animal slaying had foreshadowed one vital thing: the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Lamb of God prepared for the covering of our sins. One thing is important: we need to admit that we are naked (sinners) and hence the need for our covering Jesus.

--Bro. Sylvester Tembo

NENO

Thanks very much for the 2 cartons of Bible Basics and other booklets, that is what I wanted, and as I said, it is my duty now to distribute them to various places and to different people. I am happy receiving these books so that the word of GOD may spread. I am hoping some will be ready for baptism by the time Bro Aldersley comes.

--Bro. Amison

NGABU

I want to thank CAT for the books as they will enable me to teach my fellow friends the Bible lessons. Here at Ngabu the work of God is going smoothly because God has added more people to our church. Please may I ask fellow Christadelphians all over the world to help us by prayers because of the situation which Malawi and the whole of Africa faces.

--Bro. Micky Mbawe

NKHTAKOTA

I am 50 and Cathy my wife is 39 years and we have 5 children one is studying in university of Malawi for 4 years she is in the second year another is finishing his form four, two of them are in form two and the last one will be going to secondary school so that I thank GOD because they were thrown out from my former mission School. Thank you for arranging for seven Chichewa Bibles and I have to share them in our ecclesia.

--Bro. Leonard Chaunga

I am encouraged by the way people are trying to respond to the word of God. Today Leonard and Catherine visited an Ecclesia at Mwansambo and next week is scheduled to visiting and training the Brothers and Sisters in these areas. I still thank God for being faithful.

--Bro. Esau

NTCHEU

Warmest greetings of love and peace in our fabulous hope in Christ. God is in control here but some months ago my mother, who was disabled, died. We cannot live without God's words. `Gospel News' is probably the most widely circulated and interactive Christadelphian magazine

and it helps a lot of people to receive God's words. I want to encourage you in printing the whole Bible: to me it is another interesting thing and I assure you we are waiting for a copy.

--Bro. Peter Mbingwani

SALIMA

I just want to share with you that by the grace of God we have found a new contact in Salima. This man is originally from Nkhotakota but settled in Salima at a place called Limbe, just close to Salima township. He is a retired pastor of Anglican Church and is still being used as a pastor. His surname is CHIWEYO and is commonly called Pastor Chiweyo. The interesting part of his story is that he has wholeheartedly accepted the `doctrine' and he has even started teaching it in his church and he has told me that he is very ready to quit. The only thing that he fears is financial support; once he quits, the church will remove his name from their pension voucher and, because he does not have any other income or any other means by which he can create any, he asks me to try to find any income generating activity so as to support him with his family should his little pension cease. Health-wise he is not 100% because he was once knocked down with paralysis which affected one of his legs. He walks by being supported by a stick. It seems he was a teacher before he joined the pastoral work so one time last year he was picked by a private school as a teacher, but this time he is not working. Since our first meeting a year last October, I have given him some books including Bible Basics and he has managed to get a number of what he styles `disciples' from his church. When we met today he told me he is arranging to have a meeting on one of the Saturdays with those disciples where I will be called to assist him answer some of the questions to the topics he may not have fully grasped as yet. How do I help this contact?

Thank you very much and may the Lord be with you as you ponder over this issue.

--Bro. George Mayimba

TSANGANO

Those who confessed their sins and turned to God, have left their sorceries. 2 Kings 23:24-25. Witchcraft has no power over God's people who keep trusting in Him. God has always been against sorcery and witchcraft. "If God is for us who can be against us?" Romans 8:31-39. I was once African traditional witch doctor, but now I am a born again in the Christadelphian Church at Tsangano.

--Bro. Gomo Lampango

NEWS FROM MALI



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of GERALD, DAMIEN & FATAH, MATTHIEU, SAMUEL, SANIBE, LUC , MARIANNE, SEWA, RUKI, MARIE, MIRIAME and JUA; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

NEWS FROM NIGERIA



ABA

I must commend the recently improved Gospel News. May the Lord be with you and your team as you work in His vineyard. I would like to request a box of Bible Basics of say about 40 or more. I have a lot of contacts that are really interested in a certain place far from our meeting place. Please do include one or two edifying materials for a brother who has been in isolation for about two years now.

--Bro. Peter Ojike

Your decision to further print a complete Bible in addition to the already printed pocket New Testament is a very welcome development. May our good Lord help and strengthen you to accomplish this project.

There have been few baptisms in this ecclesia this year. Nowadays the few who are listening and accepting the gospel news are mainly young girls. The female groups outnumber the male in all church denominations of the world. They are the group that accept Christ's advice to "seek first the Kingdom of God, and all other things will be added to you". (Matt.6:33). The male young groups are more interested in those things of the flesh that lead to them forgetting their Maker.

A recently baptised Brother is very zealous in the things of the kingdom, and due to my declining weakness in studying and reading, I have passed most of my older books to him as he was asking how and where he can get Christadelphian books.

--Bro. James E. Ogbah



Bro. James Ogbah

ASA AMATOR

I met Brother Goddy Nwosu and saw some pamphlets for preaching, printed in colours with different topics, which was handed to the people we preached to. Obviously, I am very much

interested in these colourful pamphlets and would be pleased, if you can send some to me and a complete English Bible for my own use.

I sincerely thank you for a carton of the new testament Bible and other books you sent to Asa-Amator ecclesia. It has since been received and distributed to many interested friends.

--*Gabriel Alaribe*



Sisters at Asa Amator with their NEVs

BENIN

Am so grateful for your good works in sending some copies of `Bible Basics', `Real Christ' and magazines for the proclamation of the Gospel. Following my recent marriage with Br. Endurance Ebane of Benin Ecclesia, please I would still like the magazines to continue to me through my new postal address. Please I wish to request for copies of the NIV New Testament Bible.

--*Sis Lydia Chimdinma Endurance Ebane*

EKORI

I thank you for the information on the complete NEV with explanatory footnotes and a digest of `Bible Basics' which is undergoing production I pray that the Almighty God will continue to give you the ability to complete the project.

Please kindly send me eight copies at the completion of the project. May the Almighty God help me this time that they will not end in the hands of thieves at the Nigerian post office.

--*Bro Igan i Eteng*

ENUGU

I rejoice with you and Duncan's family for the new baby boy God has given to him. Romans 12:15. It has long since been my prayer for God to give Duncan a man who will help him in the Lord's work should he get old, should Christ remain away. May God who gave the boy, bless him and give him wisdom to grow in His ways.

Now concerning the Bible you mentioned, thank you for remembering us. If it is possible for you to send us one please do so in 2012. I used to buy

our newcomers Bibles sometimes. If we have a complete Bible it will be a joy to us. Any help given to us will not be wasted. I am trying to visit those who are in isolation as they cry out for visitors to teach or meditate with them and I cannot do it alone because of transport fees.

We spent two weeks in hospital with my son and he has now recovered by the grace of God. Bro. Ik Ugwa from Msaba Ecclesia came to the hospital and saw things for himself and cried for the situation.

I enclose a picture which was taken during the traditional marriage of Bro Elijah O, Ekeoma and Sis Ukamaka Elijah at the home of Sis Ukamaka



Bro. Elijah Ekeoma's marriage .

Abakili Ebonyi-State. After Bro. Nwosu gave the exhortation they were joined together. We pray that our Heavenly Father will bless the marriage to the end of their lives. I use this opportunity to thank Enugu Ecclesia for their support throughout the marriage. The journey was long and hard, from Enugu to the Sister's home, 50 miles away, and their parents not being in our faith made everything hard for us.

Bro. G. Nwosu is the first on the left of the photo with a cap on his head. Bro. Elijah is in the centre holding his wife's hand with thanksgiving. Gen.2:18-24, Matt.19:4-6.

--Bro. Goddy Nwosu

ESA-OKE

Know the type of friends you have. Many friends have led people to their death so if you are not careful friends can lead you astray. If you are lonely and in need of something, do not put God on one side, pray to Him and ask for advice before asking advice from someone else. If you put God aside and ask for advice from your friend, advice from your friend may lead you to commit sin against God and lead you to death.

You see, we, the brethren and sisters in the Lord ought to learn lessons from the people we read about in the Bible. It was a good friend of Amnon that led him to death through bad advice (2 Sam. 13:3). Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab who was a very crafty man. We see the people of this world are wiser than the people of God. Jonadab advised Amnon to commit adultery with his sister Tamar. Little did Amnon know that he was kicking against his coffin. Any person needing advice, ought to speak to himself or herself; ponder here and there on whether what we want will please God or not before we act. You see, when Amnon was killed it was this man, his friend, that went to David to tell him the news of the death of Amnon (2 Sam. 13:32-33). Today around the world, bad advisors have led many friends to death and many countries have fallen due to bad advice. .

--Bro. Ademiyaju Ogunduro

IKWUEKE

Will suffering never end? Yes, Suffering will end. God is the Architect of the universe. He has a Master Plan for mankind. God plans to cleanse the earth of sickness and sorrow, sin and suffering, disease and death. He will send Jesus back to the earth to make all things new. Rev.21:3-5. God plans to fill the earth with his glory. The Apostle Paul said that "the suffering of this present time is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Rom.8:18. An understanding of suffering can help you towards God's Kingdom if you give your life now to

God. Truly, if we endure we shall also reign with him, 2 Tim 2:12. "Even so, come Lord Jesus".

I feel I am getting weaker because of age, but I feel some inner strength from knowing that the Kingdom shall soon come. It now takes me a long time just to walk as my right leg was seriously wounded.

--Bro. Friday Enyiogu

MBALSE

I need large quantities of the leaflets and Bible Basics you send to share with other brothers and sisters and those who are non-Christadelphians. In Mbalse Ecclesia we are eight in number worshipping together in Amuzu Oke-Uvuru Aboh Mbaise. This is more than four miles from my home and I walk there on foot every Sunday at 6.a.m. and arrive before 8.50 a.m. I am the only brother to baptise and conduct the Sunday Memorial Service. I need you to send me a Bible, Old and New Testament please.

Let us study how Jesus taught his disciples to pray: "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples" (Luke 11:1). They were listening as Jesus prayed. What power

there was in his words! Sometimes I feel like praying, "Teach me to preach" when I hear a spiritual exhortation

We can't pray like Jesus prayed, but we can be a disciple. Let's look at Matthew 6:5: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward." Their reward was that someone saw them and heard them, so now they were known as someone who prayed. That is like doing a favour for someone and then talking about it, telling others what you have done. That is all the glory you will get. But if you do it as unto the Lord, not bragging about it or looking for men's applause, you will get your reward from God. You do it in secret and the Lord will reward you openly.

--Bro. *Blessing Nwigwe*

OHAFAIA

Thank you very much for the New Testament Bibles sent to us. I have shared three copies with some friends that we discuss with during our outreach (house to house) and one to Bro. Peter Ojike of Aba Ecclesia when he visited us. In fact, the New Testament is good and understandable with clear letter words. I pray the complete Bible in print will be of the same standard. I am fine today after many months of illness in bed. I give God all the praise for



Bro. Uka Egwu and family. healing me and thanks to all the brethren who contributed one way or another and my sincere thanks to those in Aba Ecclesia.

Kindly send to us 8 copies of the complete Bible. The picture enclosed is our isolated family ecclesia, myself, Uka Egwu, my wife Ngozi Uka, Emmanuel Uka, God's Time (Geetee Uka) and

Miss Comfort Uka. May God's love and blessing continue to abide with us as we wait the soon coming King.

--Bro. Uka Egwu

WARRI

I want to thank you for the Gospel News you have been sending to me, it has transformed my life over the years. However, I wish to request for copies of the pocket New Testament Bible to share with people who cannot afford a Bible in my vicinity.

--Bro Henry Obus

NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA



CANDU

Our spirits have been uplifted by receiving the NEV pocket English Bibles, which together with the commentary and condensed Bible Basics help to clarify some of the Bible for us. We pray for the blessing upon this good work which has been done for our ecclesia. As we are first generation in the Truth, these Bibles are needed.



Sis Selinah, Bro Templeton & Sis Eugeina

We stay in villages with people who are ancestor-worshippers, which we reject and so need to be very clear on what the Bible teaches. Bro Duncan has sent us supplies of Bible Basics, The Real Devil a Bible exploration of the subject which leaves us with no questions about fallen angels etc. It is important that we have such weapons to fight our spiritual warfare against the enemy.

Here in Candu we are expecting more Bible students, since we have seminars in the village with fifty attending. In one session we spoke about the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which tells us of the origin of sin, as it was the forbidden tree. Our forefathers ate of the tree and then sin came into the world. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. Blessed are those that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life.

--Bro Templeton Mdludlu.



Brothers and Sisters of Candu Ecclesia

SOWETO

We rejoiced in the baptism of William Kameza on Saturday, 15th October. Bro. William, originally from Malawi, has been a faithful attendee of our Saturday seminars for more than a year. We are happy to welcome him into his immediate family in Christ in Soweto. His baptism was a lovely opportunity for other attendees to witness a baptism.

Our 8-week 'Learn to Read the Bible' seminar finished last Saturday, 9 students received certificates and the New European Version of the New Testament for full attendance and most completed the Correspondence Course as well. We are pleased that a number of them are continuing with us at our Tuesday Bible study and our Sunday meetings.



Seminar attendees with their certificates.



Bro. William being received into fellowship

NEWS FROM TANZANIA



KASULU

NYARUGUSU 2 Ecclesia



Nyarugusu Ecclesia Bible Seminar on "Bringing More to Know The Real Truth of the Gospel".



Soweto William Kameza's baptism



The Fraternal Feast

KIDATU

Thank you all so much for sending me many booklets. Please continue to send me literature and if it is possible a copy of the NEV New Testament.

--Bro. Joseph Kaliyaya

KIGOMA

Will you please send us copies of the new pocket New Testament. We have a number of friends at present who are very much interested, if not attracted by our Bible teachings. I do hope that by having the new books, they may change their respective ways of living through the Holy Word.

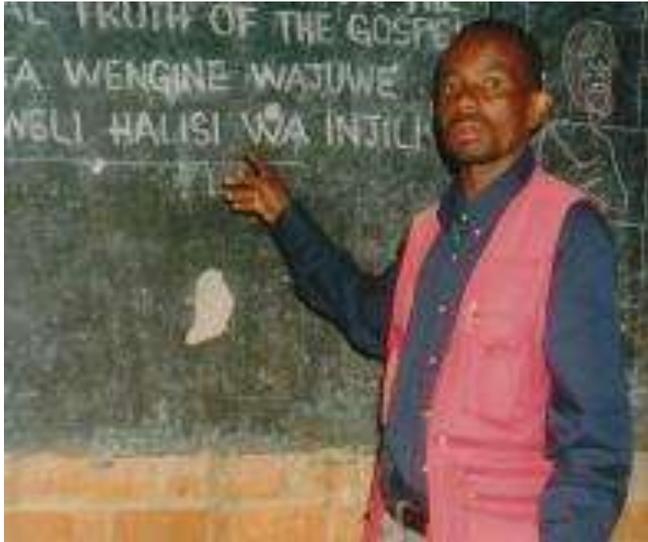
--Bro. Lambert K. Tambwe

We are required to bring more people to know the truth of the gospel, it is our duty to do that.

One of the ways of doing this is by our behaviour, so that others see by our lives that we are practical living examples of Christianity and they appreciate the example they wish to follow.

The Bible tells us, "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:7-8). "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock" (1.Peter 5:3). The Lord has chosen us to be His servants to witness to the Truth and a good servant copies the example of his Master. So let us try harder to follow the example of Christ, so that others will come to him.

--Bro Iyendya Amsini



Bro Lyendya Amisini

NEWS FROM UGANDA



ACANMAC



Brothers and sisters offering a prayer for the building as they have already burnt their bricks as shown in the picture.

MUSOMA

At last my Kevin has been baptised and we gave give him the hand of fellowship. Help me to pray for him to grow strong in the truth as a Brother. The New Testament Bibles helped a lot. I'm in need of three complete Bibles of both Old and New Testaments for the contacts, but the New Testaments also are very important as they have good references. Brother why don>t you pay us a visit to Tanzania one day? Recently Bro Samuel Mutunga paid us a visit from Kenya with his wife Christine and son Jerry. We were all happy to have him with us and it was a real blessing full of love.

--Sis. Monica

BUTURI



Sisters from Butiru and Munamba Ecclesias at a Workshop organized by Butiru Ecclesia in 2011. The Workshop was also a blessing to our neighbours and friends who attended it was very successful indeed.



The Sisters here were the facilitators for two days. The sisters were: Evalyne Buyeyi Butiru Ecc., Matsatsa Florence Mt. Elgon, Jesca Nangobi from Bugiri, Nantambi Aidah from Bugiri, Namulinda Beatrice Butiru; The work done by these sisters was marvellous and we thank God for using them for this work.

JINJA



Brothers from all parts of Uganda at a Workshop.



CHIPATA

I am praising God that I want to learn more of His word, and may God bless you so that you continue teaching us the good news through the `Gospel News' magazine. I have learnt a lot of things in this.

I am now confident that God is one, hence there is only one God. (Deut.6:4) The belief in demons is challenged by the Scriptures; see Deut. 32:17; Psa.106:37-38; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; 1 Cor. 10:20-28; Rev.9:20. The Bible says, `the truth shall set you free.' I am now a free woman I have no fear of the unknown. I used to believe in the demonic forces which are just the works of men, and I don't regret leaving my former congregation, the Dutch Reformed Church, where my zeal for what I believed was so big. My thanks goes to Bro Steven Mwale who introduced me and my husband, Duncan Mbewe to the Truth. We are now a blessed couple: We were baptised in Nov.2006 and we assist each other in truth in the walk to the Kingdom of God (Amos 3:3). Brothers and Sisters, let's encourage each other in the walk to the Kingdom, which can be hard. May the Lord come and find us without spot. Praise be to the Lord.

--Sis. Esther Mbewe

KAFUE

Being a Friend of God is better than Being a Friend of Any Human

God never disappoints his loyal friends (Psalm 18:25). Being a friend of God is better than having riches. When a rich person dies, his money goes to others. However, those who enjoy friendship with God have a treasure that no-one can take away. (Matt.6:19-20).

--Bro. Lotson Kayuni

Greetings in the Hope of Israel in which we share. I am writing this note to acknowledge receipt of the Bible you sent me recently. Thank you very much for this.

--Bro. Kelly Simayunbula

KITWE

Before you sent us the New Testaments, only very few brothers and sisters had the complete Bibles which were presented to us by the Horley Christadelphian Ecclesia. These, however, have seen seasons come and go. Some pages are no longer in their proper places. Ten of the brothers and sisters who were not on the ecclesial register at the time when the presentations were made, did not have the Bibles.

The Kitwe Ecclesia register at one time had reached a good number of 38 brothers and sisters, not including the Sunday School. The meetings were very interesting then. But somewhere along the line of years it was decided to form satellite meeting places at Kitwe Main, Garnaton, Misaka and Lwanga. These were all under one Kitwe Ecclesial Committee and this is where we went wrong, because the Committee failed to manage and co- ordinate these satellites. At one time the Garnaton group thought they were mature enough to stand on their own as an ecclesia, but CBM Zambia was apparently reluctant to grant this request. A very influential brother from Garnaton did choose to undertake outreaches into the Northern province where he originates, neglecting the local group and consequently the attendance dropped.

The stories for the other groups, i.e. Kitwe Main, Lwanga and Misaka are that the attendances dwindled, meetings became no longer interesting. We have now sought to come back as one great team, as one only Kitwe Ecclesia. The register is not constant though, the average of thirty is attained at times. Paul's letter to the Ephesians (ch.4:29-32) is currently our motivation: 'Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but as the need arises, speak what is good for encouragement, that it expresses grace to those that hear you. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by which you were sealed until the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and railing be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to each other, sensitive, forgiving each other, even as God in Christ also forgave you.' (N.E.V.)

Thanks again for these very handy, easy and light New Testaments to carry around, and we do hope that the full Bible will soon be out to our benefit, God willing. May the Lord, Yahweh of the heavenly realms grace the hands of all those who are undertaking the task. Regarding the Kiswahili Bible Basics, yes, I would like to get some copies to hand out to some of our contacts from the Tanzania and the Congo I.R. In fact, I possess a New Testament, 'Good News for Modern Man,' Diaglot Edition which has a Kiswahili translation alongside English language. This was a legacy from my late son Evangelist Clarence Muntemba.

Life has not been quite easy sailing for me and my wife. The first problem that befell us was our mud bricked house built in 2,000 AD, which had been burrowed badly by the ants. It was very necessary that we build a much better and semi-permanent



Part of the Mafuta Ecclesia. Left to right: bro. Shardrick Zimba, Sis. Freda Mbewe, Sis. Polina Mwale, Sis. Stella Daka, Sis. Esther Mbewe.

Standing, left to right: Bro. Joshua Mbewe, Bro. Donald Mwale, Bro. John Phiri, Bro. Steven Mwale and Bro. Duncan Mbewe. house. So we started moulding bricks and burning them and worked extra hard to find money for cement to mould concrete blocks for the foundations. We now have a 14x8 meters house standing at roof level with a few materials left, like cement for plastering walls and ten roofing sheets. We were then upset by illness in the family.

The signs of the times are very exciting indeed as we see labourers in the field of Yahweh getting fewer and fewer. Many have fallen asleep, some have back-slided. In God's mercy, let us pray for labourers in the Lord's vineyard. We read in Matt:9:36-38: "But when he (Jesus) saw the crowds,

he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd. Then said he to his disciples, `The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.'" We are in this situation today and we have just to do what Jesus said.

I have been also assigned to translate some booklets from English into Tonga local language and I am also a local Tutor.

--Bro. Elvin Muntemba (Snr.)

MAZABUKA

Many thanks for your kind letter, your greetings and book `Studies in the Psalms,' by Cyril Tennant. It is always uplifting to read your letters, and words of encouragement, `God is with us.'

I can tell you from my own experience that God is with you, that is why you are with God it's like walking towards a mirror, the closer you come, the closer the image in the mirror comes to you. Imagine the image is God, it moves towards you as you come closer. You may press your nose against the mirror, but you cannot merge with the image. I think this mirror image is a good analogy because we can go very close to the image, but we cannot merge with the image no matter how hard we press our noses against it. Why is that? because of our sinfulness. But the time will come when we will merge with God when we will be sinless, when God will be all in all through His grace, according to 1 Corinthians 15:28.

I was pleased and delighted to hear that the programme of complete Bibles is going ahead. May God bless you in this massive project and may He help and bless you as the need arises. The Bible says, `Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you are sure to find; knock and the door shall open, for God is good and kind.'

My leg is now cured many thanks for your prayers and medication I received. May God be thanked for such a blessing of health again: as far as I am concerned good health is the greatest gift God has given to us for this present life.

It sometimes makes me stand in awe before our God for His beautiful creations which He created. He made all things what God made is amazing, joyful, wonderful, marvellous, fabulous, phenomenal, astonishing and really true because it was through God's amazing handiwork that we see such beauty, and we praise the Lord for that.

I am interacting with whoever I can. I do meet a group of United Church of Zambia members at a nearby School for Bible Study every Wednesday. Their pastor was amazed at the level of understanding that I have. He later asked to know more about the Christadelphians and wants to do a Bible Course: I will pass on his name to C.B.M.

Also Bro. Mwale, Bro. Chrivions and I have started street preaching. We want to see what the Lord can do for us. I suggested we had a radio programme teaching once every week to teach our Faith. I emailed Bro. Andrew Walker about it and he said he would support me. He has sent 300 copies of the leaflet, `The Bible, the Most Important Message in the World.' These, together with the ones you have sent me are ideal for giving out in the streets.

--Bro. Gideon Hankomone

MUZOKA

I was very happy to receive the current Gospel News and to see the improvements which you have made to it. For the last eight months I have been taking TB treatment, and I thank God I am now feeling well.

I should be happy if you could send some New Testament Bibles to me and the family, including the contacts that I had recommended for these New Testament Bibles.

--Bro Joseph Mulawo

NDOLA

I am well, as the Lord is with me, but I am not able to get work.

Religion is a system of belief and worship of a Divine being. Judah's religion had deteriorated as they were worshipping false gods and consequently their religion was vain and useless, and unless they turned again to the Lord they would be severely punished as Jeremiah 7:3-7 says: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ` Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Do not trust in these lying words, saying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." ` For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt;

MICHELO



Michelo Sunday School then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for ever and ever.'

Following false religion is evil and we must ensure we ourselves are striving to serve the Lord and that our minds are always full of God's Word.

--Bro. Harris Mulongesha



Kneeling right, Bro. Harris, Bible student, Bro. Charles. Standing, right, Bro. Joseph, Bro. Oliver and some Bible students.



Bro. Nelson Bwalya, Bro. Oliver, Bro. Charles, student and Bro. Harris

NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE



BANKET

Banket ecclesia comprises of 12 members 5 Brethren and 7 Sisters. Sunday meetings are held at Chimwemwe Farm and sometimes in Banket at Bro. Fibion's house. 6 Members live on the farm and another 6 live in the township. Bible studies and Sunday School lessons are being conducted at both places.

In Banket Bro. Fibion Ngozi is responsible for 13 scholars, whereas on the farm, Bro. David Yelulani is accountable for 9 scholars. Bible studies are held on Saturday and Wednesday

afternoons. Bro. David travels from the farm to Banket covering 28 Km to and fro on a bicycle every Saturday for Bible studies.

With great joy we record the baptisms on September 25 of 3 sisters, namely Sister Spiwe Patinho, Sister Nosisa Purazi and Sister Nicoli Moyo. These sisters came into contact with the Truth through Bro. Fibion Ngozi and subsequently took their Bible lessons through Bro. David Yelulani as their Tutor, studying Bible Basics, a study manual, for the last ten months. They attended meetings regularly until their confessions of faith and baptisms. We look forward to sharing fellowship with our new Sisters and pray for God's continued blessing upon them. We would like to thank Bro. Gift Lungu from Chinhoyi ecclesia who conducted the interviews and baptisms.

We are sorry to lose the company of brethren Pindurat Banda and Calvin Chitano who have moved from our area to Harare. We commend them in love to Harare ecclesia and pray for God's blessing on them in their new surroundings.

--Bro. David Banda Yelulani

BINDURA

We hope and trust that Bro. David Smith and his wife, including Sis Ruth Moore, had a splendid journey back to the U.K. We last met with the CMB visitors at Mvurwi (Zimbabwe), where quite a number of ecclesias gathered including Bindura,

Mvurwi, Guruve, Muzarabam, Centenary etc. It was an admirable occasion, where we had a Bible study and challenges which we are meeting in our ecclesias. As ecclesias in Mashoualand Central we agreed that we should meet at Mvurwi since it is our focal point, on a monthly basis. However, Bro. David Smith and his wife, and Sister Ruth Moore made the suggestion, to take it to Byo and the U.K. Last but not least, as an ecclesia in isolation we also need to go to AGMs so that we will have updated information instead of outdated. They must be the time when the chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers are invited for leadership skills, i.e. competence reasons. It's actually an appeal to the linkman of Zimbabwe it is stated, 'practice makes perfect'. Let us all pray, since God is about to bring the time of Jesus' return; there are revivals of nations, outbreaks of HIV/Aids disease, and starvation in some parts of the country. The Bible has already explained all these events as signs of the times.

Thank you for the literature which you posted me.

--Bro. Joseph Mucheri

CHINHOYI

We now often hear about, read and watch with sadness, anger, disappointment, frustration, and with tears trickling down our cheeks, the suffering and death of many helpless souls. We hear on the radio, we read in the newspapers and watch on T.V. the fulfilment of the Bible prophecies of events before the coming of Jesus Christ. There are more wars, earthquakes, floods, tornados, hurricanes, diseases and famines; more godlessness, accidents and the failure of human ability to create a long and everlasting existence on earth. When the signs happen within our marriages, family, relatives, friends, neighbours, ecclesia and our community, that is when we face the reality of God's authority and power shown in the Bible. But when it happens far beyond our community, we just listen, read and watch, and perhaps brush aside the signs as

they pass away. We cannot shed a tear, or attend to the suffering, or the funerals, as distance prevents it. But the reality cannot be changed.

The greatest sign of the nearness of the end is the fast-spreading of the Gospel message. The increase in many new churches is a clear and sure sign of the coming of Jesus Christ. Christadelphian fellowship is also found in all continents of the world. The impact of the message of salvation can be seen in brethren and sisters in isolation, and in Ecclesias who continue to read their Bibles.

As we continue to read our Bibles daily, or at the meeting. As we also continue to read newspapers, listen to the radio and watch television, how many of us are prepared and ready for the unknown moment when the Chief Shepherd will appear? We must be prepared and ready at the time of our death, or at the time of the coming of Jesus Christ.

Regardless of being told and warned, many believers are not prepared and ready. Do people ever learn and understand the final plan of God with the earth? The truth is in the Scripture and its message does not change. Despite hearing, believing, repenting, being baptized, having sins forgiven and the righteousness and holiness bestowed upon us the day we were born again, many of us are gradually losing the original sense of urgency of the nearness of the Kingdom of heaven we had at the time of our conversion.

Many ecclesias are losing brethren and sisters, not because of the lack of, or the ignorance of the Gospel message, but because of the desires of the sinful nature. We see and hear and read about brethren and sisters who are no longer active nor in meaningful fellowship because of marriage, drunkenness, sex, work and material pursuits. When the evil desires are affecting those with Bibles, what more of those without Bibles? These are clear signs to watch for not outside our ecclesias, but right inside them.

My parting question is, "Are you born again, prepared and ready for the coming of the end?" May the grace of the merciful God be with you as you examine yourself to find if you are really prepared and ready. Find out the answers in your Bible.

--Bro. Obert Wiki

God is protecting us here, where our area is now a dangerous place to just move around. There are some fierce lions which slipped away from the nearby game reserve: there are quite a number of them killing our livestock, especially cattle and donkeys. Donkeys have suffered most because donkey flesh is the lion's favourite meat.

I think I am one of the few who did not receive a New Testament, and feel sure I need one as I have three students here, all without these Testaments and the whole Bible. Please can you help?

--Bro. Benjamin Makuti

I was so happy to notice in Gospel News how brethren and sisters are doing all over the world. I always pray to God to give you strength to continue doing the good work in the Master's vineyard. We are now living in the last days, where we are experiencing hard times. But we must remain true to the word of God. We all know that all things may pass away but God's word will remain.

--Bro. Tinashe Mberengwa

CHIREDDI

I am a Sister at Triangle ecclesia, a mother of two sons, Collins and Leonard, I would greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here I am quite OK and I'm in good health, able to live a peaceable life in all godliness, free from any harm and danger. I'm very happy and feel glorious, having been baptized into Christ and becoming part of the Christadelphian family world-wide. I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1). I beg you to kindly assist me with the 'Gospel News' magazine and 'Bible Basics'.

--Sis. *Barbra Makandeni*

CHIVI

We are 'called to be saints' (1 Cor.1:2) and as such accept the word of God, and have the word in us that it may build us up. (Acts 20:32). Paul also wrote to the Romans that they should not live in the flesh, but in the

spirit (Rom.8:5-8). This is the contrast between those of God and those of the world.

Believers should be overwhelmed that God has allowed them to have wisdom through His word, and so develop the mind of Christ. (2 Cor.2:14- 17) Work is required to maintain this mindset (Col.3:10). This must be in our day to day life. The word of God should dominate our everyday lives.

--Bro. *Dzingai Sumburera*

GURUVE

I was born in 1965, the youngest in a family of eight children comprising five boys and three girls. My parents were non-Christians, practising African tradition. In our family only my sister, the fourth in the family, was married to a gentleman who was a member of the full-Gospel Ministry and she eventually joined her husband.

When I was at primary school level I joined the Salvation Army for two years. At Secondary School level education I left the Salvation Army and after completing my O-level I started drinking alcohol to excess and continued this for almost ten years. After that I joined with the Apostolic Faith Mission of Zimbabwe for two years. In 1994 I joined St. Paul's Apostolic Faith Mission, and in that year I married my wife, Marita Hotera and we were both baptised. We spent ten years at that time together with Brother Fanuel Mawockeba who later introduced me to the UK 40 lesson course in 2004. I did my lessons with Sis Paula Buckler as my tutor and in 2008 I was baptised after passing my interview with Bro. Gift Lungu of Chinhoyi ecclesia. The following year (2009) my wife was also baptised. As the Truth was and is still real, we are happily here under Guruve ecclesia, even though we encountered many obstacles on our way to the real Truth.

At our ecclesia we started as a small number four baptised members but now we are almost twenty-three baptised people and these have joined because they are wanting to learn the real Truth about the Kingdom of God which is to be set up on this earth at Jerusalem in Israel.

My children are C.B.M. Sunday School students. The eldest, David, is sixteen and is taking the UK 40 lesson course. His tutor is Colleen Jannaway. The second is a girl named Meggie, aged 14. These two are at Secondary School level. The third is also a girl, named Sabhina, aged 9 years,

and the fourth is Elijah, aged 7, and these two are at Primary School level. The last is a boy named Misheck and was born in 2009.

We live in a rural village and we depend on subsistence farming in our region which receives low rainfall. It is drought stricken, an area which can encounter droughts or floods, depending on the rain pattern per season. We grow crops such as cotton as a cash crop, and maize, sorghum, cow-peas, peanuts etc. as food crops. As the real Truth is in our hearts, we leave everything in the hands of God.

About the issue of students who do not have the English Bible of their own, yes, there are almost 20 students who understand English: eleven have already completed their UK 40-lesson course. Nine students are about to complete their course. Eleven students are awaiting baptism and nine are about to complete, they do not have Bibles, so they are in need of them.

--Bro. Nice Yotamu

HARARE

When I read and enjoy the books I receive they always remind me not to forget the work done through God's grace. I pray that our Father in heaven will bless this work abundantly. We the readers should always acknowledge those writers for most of their time is spent on us, in order that we may obtain salvation.

Paul gives thanks to God (2 Cor. 1:3-7):

`Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful Father, the God from whom all help comes. He helps us in all our troubles, so that we are able to help others who have all kinds of troubles, using the same help that we ourselves have received from God. Just as we have a share in Christ's many

sufferings, so also through Christ we share in God's great help. If we suffer, it is for your help and salvation; if we are helped, then you too are helped and given the strength to endure with patience the same sufferings that we also endure. So our hope in you is never shaken; we know that just as you share in our sufferings, you also share in the help we received.'

God's complete knowledge and Care (Psalm 139:1-6):

`Lord, you have examined me and you know me. You know everything I do; from far away you understand all my thoughts. You see me, whether I am working or resting; you know all my actions. Even before I speak, you already know what I will say. You are all round me on every side; you protect me with your power. Your knowledge of me is too deep; it is beyond my understanding.'

This is also applying to us to learn of God's love for us. God knows what we need even before we pray for it. He protects us from evil and cares for us. Let us praise God each day and give thanks for the food, care and protection He gives us. Psalm 140 also helps us understand God's care for us.

--Bro. Israel Mutunduwe

KWE KWE

Christ is the door to the fold of God. Through this door all His children, from the earliest times, have found entrance. In Jesus, as shown in types, as shadowed in symbols, as manifested in the

revelation of the prophets, the sons of men have beheld the Lamb of God, 'which taketh away the sin of the world,' and through Him they are brought within the fold of His grace. Many have come presenting other objects for the faith of the word ceremonies and systems have been devised by which men hope to receive justification and peace with God, and thus find entrance to His fold. But the only door is Christ, and all who have tried to enter the fold in some other way are thieves and robbers. 'He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.' Christ is both the door and the shepherd. It is through His own sacrifice that He becomes the shepherd of the sheep.

--Bro. Melusi Ndlovu

MAGUNJE

We thank CAT very much for the books you have sent to our Ecclesia. I had asked for 8 New Testaments as a figure which had been registered, but on their delivery every brother and sister is now complaining they want one, so is it possible for us to have more? Also if possible could we have more copies of Wrested Scriptures to help with our preaching work.

In recent debates we have had with members of other churches, including A.F.M. members and Jehovah's Witnesses, we responded to the question as 'Did Jesus exist before he was born?' Gen.1:26 was quoted in response showing that God and his Angels, using God's Spirit, created all things and that Jesus was not in existence before his birth. There followed questions on John 8:56-59 and John 1:1-3 and we explained about God's plan for mankind being in His mind right from creation, ('the Word was with God') preparing the way for our Saviour, Jesus, to be born of our nature. He was glorified by God, His father, and given power to do miracles openly. As he lived a sinless life, the grave could not hold him and God raised him from death, so making Jesus a sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. So our teaching, using Wrested Scripture and our New Version New Testaments, helped them to understand properly why we are baptised into Christ and into Abraham's 'house.'

--Bro. Misheck Hondoma

I am now back in fellowship full-time and even as I am writing now, I am enjoying the company of and fellowship with Sis Ruth Moore and Bro David Smith who is our new Zimbabwe linkman.

Would you please be kind enough to put me again on the 'Gospel News' mailing list? I always enjoy reading what's happening around the world.

--Bro Thompson Changata



Left: Bro. Thomson Changata, Bro. Mazuaramhaka, Trymore Chaona, Ngoni Chikwata and Bro. Misheck Hondoma, with other brothers and sisters. This was our big Sunday at Magunje, taken before the service, when others were not yet present.

TRIANGLE

Ever since Paul had been enlightened on the way to Damascus in his career of persecution against the followers of Christ, he never missed his chances. He believed and obeyed what Jesus had sent him to do. Because of hope, faith and belief he preached to his utmost, warning people about the dangers to come. He never ceased to praise Jesus even when he was in prison. Paul had infinite love of God and a marvellous transformation had been wrought in his life, bringing all his plans and purposes into harmony with God.

From that hour Paul became a newly formed creature in Christ. He had a longing desire to assist all those who are struggling in Christ. His life became wholly devoted to an effort to portray the love, mercy and kindness of the crucified man, Jesus. (Acts 9:20). His great, brave and sympathetic heart took to all classes (Rom.1:14- 15). Paul's preaching was to transform them from idol worshipping to serving the true, living God.

We are supposed to preach all that we have grasped of God to others. By doing so, we will be showing unselfish joy in the ministry of Christ. Being in Christ's ministry, we will be showing the highest type of nobility ever revealed of Christ to many people. Paul's transformation is a lesson to us all that God can and will forgive us our sins. He showed his love, mercies and kindness to sinners. (Acts 9:15). God is still calling you to His Kingdom to come; He has forgotten all that we have done in ignorance. (Acts 17:30, 2 Peter 3:9). Paul's efforts were not without fruit, as many people repented and turned from idol worshipping to the true God. (Acts 13:43). Paul preached not to please himself or to please other people, he preached to bring everyone who was worthy to enter God's Kingdom. (Col.1:28).

We do have a shortage of Bibles. I pray God will guide us all to His glory. My request is for ten English Bibles and ten Shona Bibles, if possible.

--Bro. Tavaremba Mugova

The Gospel News

News from Europe / Eurasia

NEWS FROM BELARUS



I received the New Testaments with commentary, they are really wonderful. I am distributing them to people. I like the way the Bible Companion is in it, as always we ask people to read the Bible for themselves, but people, especially Russian Orthodox, have no idea how to actually do this in practice.

--Bro. Leonid

NEWS FROM BELGIUM



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of ALI, MEHRAN, DAVOUD and DARIUS; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

SINT NIKLAAS

Thankyou for the books. I have given them out to some friends, some are interested, but would like to meet you personally. Thank you that you care for us Iranians here.

--Bro. Mehran



Photo: Bro. Mehran after his baptism in Antwerp

NEWS FROM DENMARK



I am just writing to tell you that things did not go well for me with regard to my application at the immigration. My case was first rejected in May 2011. I was sent to the appeal court , at the beginning of November; I went to my appeal hearing, and no decision was taken, and I was told that my case will be taken to the foreign affairs service, I have to wait until I hear from them. I am very stressed, it even worsens my health . When I came here, I was following my wife as I last saw her in 1994 during the war in Rwanda ,and my son was 1 year old , now he is over 18. When I arrived here , I was informed that the woman was married to a Danish man. It is not good news for me ,but I had to be realistic and strong enough to take it as it is. I am desperate please pray with me.

--Bro. Mayele

NEWS FROM GERMANY



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of OMID, SAJAD, TAYEB and AZADEH; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

NEWS FROM IRAN



We are very pleased to report the baptism of Sister H; may God keep her strong in the path to His Kingdom.

NEWS FROM ISRAEL



KIRYAT ATA

I would so love to come to my native Ukraine for the Bible School, I envy you all there. But age and health and other reasons mean I don't have the energy or other resources to get there. May God bless you all and send Jesus back soon.

--Bro. Vladimir

NEWS FROM KAZAKHSTAN



We understand that with the rising transport costs you can't sponsor the fares all the way from Kazakhstan to Ukraine for the Bible School. We have such fond memories of you all and love you all and are looking for the return of Christ to unite us all.

--Sis. Elvira

Thank you so much for the winter welfare parcel, it arrived OK, wasn't tampered with, and the Post Office workers didn't try to extort anything from me for receiving it, your love and grace really registered with me.

--Sis. Balpysh

NEWS FROM KYRGYZSTAN



BISHKEK

Here we are all fine, living together in the house we are slowly reconstructing. At least we have made it warm against the Winter. We continue preaching here and there finding interested persons.

--Bro. Anvar

NEWS FROM LATVIA



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of ALGIMANTAS, ALEXEI, ELDAR, ERIC, IVAN, LARISA, ANDREJ, HAMID, ALIREZA and EBRAHIM. May God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

AIZKRAUKLE

I thank God my son has work, but he works such long hours and often 7 days a week, so I am at home alone a lot. I think of God, read the Bible a few times in the day, pray, and try to imagine the Kingdom for which we are waiting.

--Sis. Irena

NEWS FROM MACEDONIA



SKOPJE

It is so good to be in contact again! I do not forget you and am so grateful for all you taught me. I do still believe and am often praying to God in daily situations.

--Bro. Hristjan

NEWS FROM RUSSIA



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of YAKOV, VASILY, LIDIJA and OLGA; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

EFREMOV

The Bible School was really a spiritual recharging for me, I returned home and to my work in the factory very positive. I gave a Bible Basics to the duty nurse in the factory, she provides first aid when needed, but sits doing nothing most of the time. She has read it, and is now reading a Bible I gave her. So I am hopeful for her progress spiritually.

--Bro. Oleg

PS This lady has now been baptized.

IZHEVSK

Things are quite hard for me, I have lost my job, have no mobile phone any more, and I ask for your prayers as it seems God is testing me beyond what I can take even though I know the Bible says that shall not happen.

--Bro. Andrej



Bro. Andrej [left] with Bro. Leonid from Belarus and Bro.

Evgenii from Ukraine at the Winter Bible School

MOSCOW

With joy I read about the Brothers and Sisters at the Bible Schools, and other news. I am with you all in spirit.

--Bro. Alexei

OSKOL

I am so sad I can't get time off work to come to the Bible School, I have to work all the time to support my wife and the children. I am in touch with Sis Ludmila in Borisovka, we are trying to teach someone the Truth and will inform of the progress.

--Bro. Mikhail

POKROVKA

Things are very hard for me, I am trying to sell my apartment here in the town and move out to the village, I can then grow some food and have some cash for helping my daughter. Please pray for me. I do remember you all with love in Jesus.

--Sis. Svetlana

ST.PETERBURG

As the years go by in our association with each other, I realize more fully how what you are doing by preach- ing the true Gospel, baptizing people and nourishing them, is in fact leading people

really to eternal life. This is the most wonderful thing that could be done in this life. I for my part try to do the same here.

--Bro. Valerij

TAMBOV

I would appreciate more copies of The Real Devil, I have distributed my copies to people here and they didn't return them. This problem of evil is something which it seems weighs upon the Russian soul, as our classical writers speak much about it, and I find people very open to what we have to say about this matter.

--Bro. Vadim

NEWS FROM UKRAINE



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of IGOR, VIKTOR, KONSTANTIN, VALYA and ALEXEI; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

KAHOVKA

We here in our ecclesia are struggling with our health. The New Testament Bibles are wonderful, I love the commentary, and so much is making more sense to me.

--Sis. Nana



Sister Nana, left, showing other sisters photos of a Bible School

KHARKOV

You are always most welcome to visit us here. I keep discussing with my daughter about baptism, she wants to be baptized, but I worry she is too young and not serious enough. Please pray for us.

--Sis. Marina

News from the Americas

news from brazil



We've received some very sad emails from Brother Onaldo which require our prayerful attention:

"May God always bless you and your dear family! Thank you for inquiring about me. I have been very ill and kind of hopeless. I have not been out of bed for two months now. Doctors say my only hope is getting a treatment available only in São Paulo, but at the moment I can't afford to go there. Please, pray for me, I really need it. Love, Onaldo

May God bless and keep you safe and well! On Saturday Dérich brought your last email to me and I was deeply touched and happy with Carelinks generosity. Your contribution will sure help me to go to São Paulo and get the proper treatment. I am not yet ready to die much less to become a vegetable. I feel I have a special calling to help advance the true Gospel work in Brazil and am eager to give my all into this.

In São Paulo I will go into a private clinic and ask to be taken into the university hospital, but to attain this I will have to undergo a series of tests while hospitalized in the clinic and pay for them, this will take from five to six days. The costs are going to be high. We are imagining that between transportation there, doctor, hospital and medications, it will cost over two thousand and five hundred dollars. Some of my friends and relatives have already contributed and I have 265 dollars with me already. Please be free to contribute with whatever you feel you can, any amount is very welcome! I also have some good news: D is now ready to be baptized, besides him we have six others two men and four women ready to be baptized. I am working hard toward wining as many as possible to the real Jesus. Sometimes I think I will lose my mind so strong is the pain I suffer. Please pray for me. May God bless you. Onaldo

I have a metabolic myopathy with hypertrophy of my leg muscles that gives me much pain. Now that morphine is not working anymore, the doctor in São Paulo is going to implant an electrode in my brain which is supposed to kill pain. I am paying the doctor the visit plus five or six days in his clinic and the exams. If every test or exam shows I can undergo the operation I will be transferred to the University hospital where he is a Professor and there, the operation (which costs 50 thousand reais if I was to pay for it) will be free of charge, since it is going to be a

class. As for the doctor's work and my stay in his clinic plus the tests blood tests, MRI and others he is even making it for less for me, because I am willing to be a case study for his students. Well, please, be free to help with whatever you can, you don't need to come up with the total. Please, pray for me. God bless you. Onaldo"

PELOTAS

I am getting in touch with the other Brothers in Brazil so we can prepare a common website and plan of action together to share the true Gospel further.

NEWS FROM CHILE



SANTIAGO

It has been a long, long time. Here we are okey, we have not grown a lot but our small ecclesia the One God and you started is walking and walking, it has been a long way and very difficult. It seems Chilean people are hard ground despite of the big efforts that Christadelphian brothers make 2 or 3 times a year to preach or make Bible talks. You know, I always read your comments and exhortations in Gospel News. Is there someone who is translating your messages to Spanish? Actually I have received a lot of invitations from different Brothers in Spain and other countries to publish comments or exhortations in special for isolated Brothers and Sisters so if you do not mind I will be really happy to send the translation to those Brothers and Sisters who do not speak English.

--Sis. Gisella

A Canadian Visit to Chile

During the Christmas holidays, my son, Luke, and I had the chance to spend some time with Sister Gisella and her young son, Jeremy, in Santiago. We managed to find one another at the airport despite only having a rather vague idea of who to look for! After relaxing for a bit in the summer heat, the next 24+ hours were spent in vigorous spiritual discussion while Luke helped Jeremy put his new toys together. Luckily he speaks Spanish! Gisella and I also managed to have a Bible class with two very interested contacts, Christian and Sonya, at the beautiful meeting room in central Santiago. Sadly, we were not able to connect with the other five brothers and sisters for a variety of reasons. It was a wonderful chance to enjoy some precious spiritual fellowship at an ecclesia that is quite isolated from the rest of South America and dearly needs visitors.

If travels of any kind take you to this region of the world, the Chilean brothers and sisters would love to meet with you. May God bless each of them on their walk to the Kingdom.

--Sister Grace Butler



Sis Gisella and Jeremy



We are indeed blessed to see prophecies being fulfilled and need to heed the warning of Jesus to `look up, for our redemption draws nigh,' and `to watch and pray.' Let us earnestly pray for that day when the earth will be filled with God's glory, as the waters cover the sea; and to hear our Lord's words, `Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'



Back Row, L-R: Sisters Joy Branford, Anna Lou Barnwell, Lois Joseph, Kendra Trim, Joanna Porte, Saluta

Barnwell. Middle Row, L-R: Phebe Joseph, Carolle Joseph, Janet Williams. Front: Jenifer Porte

--Sis. Janet Williams



News from Asia

NEWS FROM CHINA



We are very pleased to report the baptisms of HU, GUO and CHEN; may God keep them strong in the path to His Kingdom.

I'm still organizing online Bible study and fellowship. Some are responding and seeking baptism. I look forward to coming to the missionary training program. God willing.

--Bro Donald

I thank God and you for sending me my first ever English Bible. I am so pleased with it and read it every day. God bless you!

--Sis. Belinda

NEWS FROM MYANMAR



YANGON

Thank you for continually praying for our ministry in Myanmar, please do constantly pray us. Thanks. Shalom.

--Bro. Suumpi

NEWS FROM THE PHILIPPINES



I would like to request, if possible, a copy of the book, "The Real Christ," which I would appreciate.

--Bro. Angelito Corpuz

Joseph the Saviour

There is no more amazing life story in the Old Testament than that of Joseph. God's master plan was for Joseph to become the second most powerful man in Egypt, the assistant to Pharaoh who ruled the greatest nation on earth at that time. But how does a Jewish young man become number two in a foreign land? Through his jealous brothers, he was betrayed and beaten and finally sold into slavery which is how he came to be in Egypt.

Betrayal, beating, rejection, imprisonment that is a lot of fire, (which is the symbol of trial) but it was that very fire that produced the amazingly beautiful outcome. Joseph was put in a world class position where he saved many lives from famine, including the lives of his own family members. Joseph later said to the brothers who betrayed him, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good to bring it about that many people should be kept alive as they are today" (Gen 50:20). Earlier on, Joseph explained to them the divine plan that was being accomplished, even through their sin, "It was not you who sent me here, but God" (Gen 45:5).

Whatever happens to us, brethren and sisters, has first to pass through our Father's hands; God promised us that "He will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear" (1 Cor 10:13), and God will bring something amazing out of what seems bad in our lives.

Let us continue to share Christ with all those we can teach. We know that most people are not interested in the gospel, because they have been overtaken by earthly desires. There are, however, some who are willingly to listen to us. God wants to put us in a position where we can save lives by turning others to Christ. Let us be bound to Christ for our spiritual and natural families and help each other to come to the light of the gospel.

It is one of the strange ways of God. 'The boy the brothers sold' becomes a saviour for many peoples in Egypt. I also compare Joseph to Jesus Christ because the Bible tells us, the stone the builders rejected (by the Jews and) later became the capstone (Mk12:10). Jesus told them, "A prophet is not respected in his home town". No matter the outcome, both Joseph and Jesus remained strong, looking up to God even to the end. May we remain true to our calling in Jesus Christ.

Bro Gideon Hankomone (Mazabuka, Zambia)

Blessed Assurance

One day I was talking with my friend whose wife had died. He shared with me that a friend said to him, "I'm sorry you lost your wife". His reply? "Oh, I haven't lost her; I know exactly where she

is!" To some this may seem like a rather bold or even flippant assertion. With so many 'after death' theories, one might wonder how we can be really sure where our loved ones go after death, let alone where we ourselves end up. Yet confidence is appropriate for followers of Jesus Christ. We have the assurance from God's word that when we die we are buried in the grave until the day of resurrection and be judged about what we did in our life on earth. Thankfully, this is more than just wishful thinking. It is grounded in the historic reality of Jesus who came and died to blot out sins, so that we could receive eternal life after judgement (Rom 6:23). We know that there is life after death, for Jesus exited the grave and ascended to heaven where he is preparing the kingdom he will establish on earth for the righteous to live in.

So let us rejoice, because, for the followers of Jesus, death means a deep sleep. When Jesus comes his followers will be awakened and meet him at the judgement seat, and we shall meet with our beloved ones in the kingdom of God on earth.

Bro Isaac Kapa (Tongaren, Kenya)

Forgiveness

The attitude of a true child of God is the ability to forgive, no matter the extent to which they have been hurt. A true son of God learns not to keep records of wrongs, knowing very well that such an attitude is unscriptural. "Peter asked Jesus, 'Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times?' Jesus said unto him, 'I say not unto thee seven times: but until seventy times seven'" (Matt 18: 21-22).

It is a fact of life that when we are deeply hurt, it is not easy to let go. Vengeance becomes the ringing tone in our minds. Maybe, logically, there would not be anything wrong in paying the person back, but for the sake of God, forgiveness must rule our actions: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine: I will repay', saith the Lord. 'Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good'" (Rom 12:19-21).

Our Creator could have decided to punish us severely for every wrong we commit, but for the love He has for us, He forgives us each day. Jesus Christ, when on the earth, forgave us of our sins, and today most of us beat our chests with pride and call ourselves the saved ones. "For God so loves the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1 John:11). "Be ye angry, and sin not, let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil" (Eph 4:26-27).

Though it might be natural to want to retaliate, yet in the same way that God forgives us each day, we must also learn to forgive others irrespective of hurt. Perhaps it is very difficult to forget but remembrance should not so provoke us to take a wrongful action. We ought to forgive wrongs that our neighbours commit against us daily. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matt 6:14-15). So please let us all try and learn to forgive one another.

When our Lord Jesus Christ comes, let him find us doing what he tells us about forgiveness, to the glory of our Almighty Heavenly Father.

Bro Joseph Kwesi (Ghana)

Who Was Lucifer? (Isaiah 14:12)

The name 'Lucifer', which means shining one, only occurs once in the Bible and is used in the following verse:

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!"

This informative verse does not say who Lucifer was; we shall therefore study the context to find out who he was.

We discover the answer eight verses earlier; he was the king of Babylon! Verse 4 reads, "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, "How hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased." A proverb in this context means something written in metaphorical style, a form of poetry also used concerning the king of Tyre.

The whole passage from verse 4 to verse 24 is a continuous taunting of the last king of Babylon, Belshazzar; it taunts his arrogant pride in the words, "For thou hast said in thine heart, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God"" (v.13). It also prophesies his demise. "The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of rulers. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming...and they shall speak and say unto thee, "Art thou become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? (v.10) Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worms spread under thee and the worms cover thee"" (v.11). When was this 'proverb' given? At the end of chapter 14 an historical event is mentioned, 'In the year that King Ahaz died was this burden' (v.28). This was well over a century before the Babylonians came to power, such is the wonderful foreknowledge of God.

The Fall of Babylon

The last king, Belshazzar was holding a feast when the end came. The Medes under Darius and the Persians under Cyrus had combined their forces to surround the city Babylon in which the defenders thought they were safe. It had very high walls but a river flowed through it, protected by gates. The successful strategy was to divert the water through an artificial channel enabling invaders to enter the city by passing under the gates. Being engaged in revelry the defenders had no idea that their end had come.

Daniel Chapter 5

In this chapter the prophet Daniel describes the scene on the last day.

Belshazzar had ordered the holy vessels taken from the Jewish temple in Jerusalem to be brought out and used in their revelry. He then saw a man's hand writing his doom on the

plastered wall which his wise men could not understand. Daniel was brought in to interpret the words. These were as follows, `ME-NE, ME-NE, TE-EKEL, U-PHAR'- SIN. MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. TE-KEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PE'-RES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians'. (v.26-28)

The chapter ends with the brief announcement, "In that night was Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Mede took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old." (v.30-31) This account of Belshazzar's death in literal terms is the fulfillment of the `proverb' of Lucifer falling from heaven.

Figurative language

Some people might take figurative language literally which if they do, is bound to lead them into making mistakes. This has happened with the idea that rebellious angels, led by Satan, have been thrown out of heaven and Satan goes around tempting people to do wrong. This idea is completely fallacious and is not taught in the Bible.

Temptation to sin

A sinner is held responsible for any sin he has committed. There is no recognition of a sinner's temptation originating from a source other than his own heart and mind. Here are some scriptures on this point:

Ez.18:4 `The soul that sinneth it shall die'.

Matt.15:19 `For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man.'

James 1:13-15 `Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.'

These verses clearly show that temptation to sin comes from within. It is our own human nature that is responsible for our desires and lusts. We, therefore, cannot blame God or Lucifer or anyone else for the sins we commit.



One of the world's biggest refugee camps close to Kenya's Border with Somalia, designed for 90,000 refugees, now shelters over 270,000

Bro. Ralph Green, (Torquay, U.K.)

Resettlement of Refugee Brethren

The examples of compassion cited in an earlier issue reveal the quality of faith in God that made it possible to exercise this, at times, a challenging act, when we are faced with overwhelming obstacles. Clearly this was the case of Jesus feeding the multitude of five thousand men beside women and children with only five loaves and two fish. Looking at this large number of people and the food he had, plus the insufficiency of manpower as he and the disciples were outnumbered for this task, and also at evening when darkness would soon descend on them, the entire situation was just impossible. Speaking for myself, despite my feelings of compassion for them, I would not have attempted the task of feeding them under these circumstances, and would have decided, like the disciples, to send them away. Did Jesus not see the problem too when he was handed the meager provision? Let us not forget that he experienced the same fears that we do, even though he was the Son of God, Heb 4: 15 "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The difference is that he did not allow this human weakness to take pre-eminence over God's power and supremacy. This weakness had to be defeated by his faith in the power of God, especially when it ran counter to his nature. Again it involved the simple act of looking up to heaven no intense exploration and investigation for God's location -His father was nearby. No instructions from an automated voice machine to press buttons for connection he had direct access.

As for the feeding of this vast multitude, no complicated office procedures involving intercom or loud-speaker system, but simply directing his disciples, guided by his Father to whom he

appealed, for the effective operation. Jesus worked with what means he had in both the food and personnel, and God blessed his efforts to the extent that there remained twelve baskets of fragments.

We could at this point reflect on the simplicity of doing things God's way compared to man's problematic and stress-producing systems. Yes, I agree that this is easier written than done. However, if we consider the paralyzing inaction resulting from our fears, we would see that an attempt to begin some sort of action, looking up to heaven, would be more productive, supported by the Most High God of Heaven and Earth. I am reminded here of Jochebed who, rather than succumbing to the paralysis of fear and hopelessness of the other mothers, resulting in the drowning their male babies, took proactive steps to use what she had with faith to save the life of her baby son. God blessed her effort by taking over and accomplishing His purpose with the child.

Hebrews 11, the chapter on faith verse 6 "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him". Unless we align ourselves with God in total belief faith - we will not be able to carry out what he desires of us. And what He requires of us is to love Him in this absolute way and in so doing to love our neighbour as ourselves, the expression of compassion.

In our situation, faith is undoubtedly required to attempt the complex undertaking of resettling our brethren in the refugee camps. We must take courage from the examples shown - the beginnings of the achievements cited, were very humble Jesus started with five loaves and two fishes to feed a large multitude, and Jochebed used bulrush, slime and pitch in her attempt to defeat the command of a mighty tyrant in her time. Our Heavenly Father blessed their effort of faith to the utmost. Had they focussed only on their meagre beginning, they would not have moved on. Considering our goal, it would appear that we, too, do not have much to begin with, but learning from the above examples, we should look up to heaven and move on with what we have, leaving the outcome to the Most High God of Heaven and Earth.

Sis Ether Worrell (Canada)

Why We Became Refugees

I have just read the dreadfully sad five-page account of how Brother and Sister Nyongolo survived to become refugees.

Bro Nyongolo is now 28 from a married Congolese father and Burundian mother. During the tribal war between the two tribes his father was killed and he and his mother, in fear of their lives, fled into the bush for a few years and ended up in Mboko where they were attacked; his mum suffered gunshot and knife wounds and his father's relatives threw them both into lake Tangnyika to drown. Sadly, Bro Nyongolo's mother drowned but he somehow managed to get to the shore and eventually to Kigoma (Tanzania), where a kindly truck driver enabled him to stow away in his truck to South Africa, as he had no passport. He stayed for a while as an asylum seeker, managed a little work and then was beaten unconscious and left for dead. Amazingly he recovered in hospital, but later suffered another attack and after further hospitalization was discharged and put in prison; after six months he escaped and ran away to Zimbabwe.

His wife was raped at 13 and again later and had two children and fled to Zimbabwe. These two met in Zimbabwe and shared their horrible experiences and eventually got married and God has blessed them with twin girls and the six of them are now together in the Tongogara Refuge, Camp, which, as camps go, is reasonable and they are so, so happy to be there. The Lord provided so that CAT and others have been able to give them a little help, for which we thank and praise Him alas not all who seek to be refugees have such a happy ending. We praise the Lord, that several more have been baptised in the Tongogara refugee camp where there are is now an ecclesia of fifteen Christadelphian refugees.



Bro and Sister Nyongolo and their four children

Judging by Appearances?

Samson: Like Isaac, Samuel and John the Baptist, Samson was born to a woman who was previously barren. An angel promised Manoah and his wife that they would have a son who would begin to deliver Israel (Judges 13:5). Judges 14 records Samson's meeting with a Philistine woman at Timnath and a wedding was arranged against his parents' wishes. The chapter also tells us about the killing of a lion, the nesting of a swarm of bees in the carcass and the way that Samson used this as the basis of a riddle. Thirty Philistines were killed to provide the changes of clothing that were needed because the riddle was solved.

Judges 15 tells of the refusal of the woman's father to allow Samson to visit her and how he burnt the Philistines' standing corn, vineyards and olive trees as a result. After they had tried to capture Samson, he slew 1000 with the jawbone of an ass.

Delilah: Judges 16 describes Samson visiting a prostitute and destroying and carrying away the gates of the city of Gaza. Then we come to the account of Samson and Delilah and we read how eventually he was tantalised into telling the secret of his great strength, the Nazirite vow of not cutting his hair. Blinded and put to humiliating labour at the mill with slaves, Samson was at last led out of prison to the forecourt of the temple of Dagon to clown before a festive crowd. Meanwhile, Samson's hair had regrown. This, combined with his repentance, meant that his strength had returned as his hair grew. "And Samson called unto the Lord and said, `O Lord, remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes'. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars

upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up; the one with his right hand, and the other with his left.

"And Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines'. And he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life" (Judges 16:28-30).

How would we sum up Samson's life?

We might say he was sensual in the extreme. He was a man who succumbed to the lusts of the flesh and disobeyed the plain commandments of God. Yet Hebrews 11:32-40 makes it quite clear that Samson, with Gideon, Barak, Samuel and others listed there, will be in the kingdom of God.

How can we reconcile these things? There is one verse in the account in Judges that is easy to overlook: "And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years" (Judges 15:20). Here is a man who will be in the kingdom of God in spite of his failings and who, we are told in Hebrews, died in faith. Yet almost the only things recorded about him are those which do not show him up in a creditable light. If we had not been able to read the passage in Hebrews we would assume that the twenty years of his judging Israel were all of the same pattern as the few incidents we do know about. How deceptive are appearances and how dangerous it is to judge by appearances.

Do we still make the mistake of judging by appearances? Many of us enjoy a very close relationship with our brethren and sisters. We know as real friends a very large number of people not only those at our own meetings but we also know many all over the world. Because we know so much about them, we sometimes forget that there is a lot we do not know. If we have problems and difficulties we tend to look at them from a self-centred point of view. Our own problems loom very large. We may complain of others that they don't understand. "Some people have everything easy". "They ought to have my problems". "What do they know about the burdens I have to carry?" We forget the questions about the converse situation that we ought to ask:

"What do I know of the burdens others have to carry?" We ought to be asking ourselves what efforts we have made to understand the problems of someone else. Do we know about a brother's problem with relatives 100 miles away? Do we know of the nights a sister spends sleepless with worry etc?

Samson judged Israel for 20 years and we do not know anything about most of that time. If we know someone is in difficulty, we may do all our best to help, but it is all too easy to ignore things we don't know about. How thankful we should be that God does not see as we see. Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. The Almighty knows our circumstances. His judgement is, and will be, merciful.

These all died in faith

We know that Samson, with others of faith, will be rewarded in the day for which we long. This means that God was willing to forgive Samson's sins that we read about in Judges. In spite of these incidents, Samson died in faith. Few of the details of Samson's prayers are recorded. We can imagine what he prayed when in captivity and they were prayers of faith which God heard.

We fail in our walk to the kingdom of God and our heavenly Father knows. We daily ask to be forgiven as we forgive others when they sin against us and our heavenly Father hears our prayers. The Almighty also knows the efforts we make as we try to serve Him. Jesus wrote to the ecclesiastics in the first century: "I know your patience. I know your works. I know your love. I know your faith" just as God knew Samson's.

Let us then never be discouraged when we realise we have fallen down. Let us pick ourselves up and with courage and trust, approach God in prayer as we can be sure that Samson did. We have a very special blessing of which the apostle also wrote: "We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:15-16).

Bro Mumbelunga Green (Ndola, Zambia)

The Weak Are Encouraged

In one's life there are some ups and downs as one tries to perfect their lives. Though things may seem to be so hard for us in one way or another, God will never leave us nor forsake us because we are His own children. Maybe we tend to lose courage because of the many stumbling- blocks which are being heaped on our way, then we become hopeless or discouraged. Do not worry, God is there for each one of us and do not lose even that little courage we have, since it can be sufficient to enable victory. Sometimes we may have a health problem we have to endure, so that we may be perfected spiritually.

This good news which I have thought to share with you comes from Isaiah when he gave the word of encouragement in order to stand firm for truth, and believe in the God of Israel in whom even today we base our hope: "Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, `Be strong, fear not' behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water --- And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up there on, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:3-10).

Brothers and sister, what a remarkable passage of hope! Here are verses in which we see what God will do for those who abide in His commandments until the end of this evil world. Therefore let us hold on to the truth in the Lord forever and ever.

Bro Stephen Siamabi (Lusaka, Zambia)

Asking Questions

Asking questions is how we learn. Children in school are taught to ask questions. The answers to fundamental questions have been the pivot on which great changes in people's lives have depended.

Paul, on the way to Damascus was blinded by the light which was brighter than the mid-day sun. He asked, "Who art thou Lord?" The realisation that he had seen the risen Christ was to change completely the direction of his life.

The people who heard Peter on the day of Pentecost had their minds opened to a new understanding of who the Messiah was, and what God's purpose was through the risen Christ. They asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered their question and told them to repent (to change the direction of your lives, is what the word really means), and be baptized for the remission of their sins. The record in Acts tells us that they gladly received his word and were baptized. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:37-42).

The African official returning home from Jerusalem in his chariot, was reading the book of Isaiah, but he did not understand what he was reading. Philip explained that the prophet was writing about Jesus. The Ethiopian, when he understood the gospel message, said "Here is water. What stops me from being baptized?" Philip gave an answer which was to change the African's life. "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest" (Acts 8:37).

Before we were baptized, we were asked many questions about our beliefs. This was to make sure that the body of believers is of one mind in matters of belief and practice as we are commanded in the New Testament. Do you believe the things concerning the Kingdom and the name Jesus Christ? This question is based on the words of Acts 8:12 and summarises the confidence of our faith, so we respond, "I do". Then at the baptism, the brother taking the service will say: "Upon the public confession of your faith, you are baptized by God's command into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins".

Our baptism marks a fundamental change in our direction:

The past has been washed away (Acts 22:16) We have changed our allegiance, so that we will not be serving sin but we will be making our service to God our life's aim (Rom 6:16-22). By our baptism we have also associated ourselves with the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:3-4). Our baptism was not the end of our search for God: it marks a new beginning and one that should prompt more questions:

How can we continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship? (Acts 2:42). How can we be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work? (2 Timothy 3:17 NIV). How can we seek first the kingdom of God? (Matthew 6:33).

How can we use our talents in a way that will please our Master so that when he comes he will give the answer to our unspoken question that we want to hear more than anything else? "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your Master's happiness!" (Matt 25:21). If you want to know

what God wants you to do, ask Him, and he will gladly tell you, for He is always ready to give a generous supply of wisdom to all who ask Him. He will not resent it. (James 1:5 Living Bible)

Bro Mumbelunga Green (Ndola, Zambia)

How to Resist Temptation

Ephesians chapter 6 describes the armour of God which will help us to stand in the day of temptation. Therefore take up the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand on the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm, having fastened on the belt of truth, and put on the breastplate of righteousness, and feet shod with the readiness of the gospel of peace.

In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication. "In every respect he (Jesus) was tempted as we are yet without sin" (Heb 4:15). Jesus was dressed in the whole armour of God. We can see how this enabled him to resist temptations, such as in the wilderness (Matt). Jesus was tempted three times in the wilderness; firstly to turn stones to bread, then to throw himself down from the top of the temple and, finally, to take the kingdom by force.

Each time Jesus quoted a passage of scripture; he used the sword of the spirit to resist temptation. Throughout his life Jesus used the armour of God to overcome temptation. In Luke 22 we read about the agony he was in when preparing to offer his life for us. His response to that agony was to "pray more earnestly" and to encourage the disciples to do the same. "Pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Luke 22:46).



Carelink Messages Promoting Care and Prayer Amongst Us

Bro Samuel Onyango (Mayuge, Uganda)

Winter Welfare Project

Carelinks have made their annual appeal for Winter welfare funds in order to provide assistance to brethren and sisters and their families in the Eastern European winter. Sister Jeannie Barton of Toowoomba, Australia reports: "Warren, Tamara, Jonathon and I are in Latvia. It really is interesting where God sends us in this world, and what growth we gain from these experiences. Every time I am so thankful to our Father for these opportunities. And we do have a

responsibility then to pass what we see to you. This way you can then help where you feel is necessary.

My first meeting at the Riga Bible Centre was very humbling. As we see it, made up of people that suffer physically, mentally, and/ or financially, though joyfully there for spiritual food that is able to ease the struggling soul. Providing lunch after the meeting is such a wonderful idea. The warmth of the atmosphere, the warmth of each other's company and the spiritual reminder that our Heavenly Father has something much better to come that will ease this suffering, was so very touching.

What made my heart cry was Sister Nina, whom we drove several hours to visit. I slept maybe three hours last night. Thank goodness Janine and Jane were on line, as I could talk to them about this pain that we had witnessed. My mind was in a whirl trying to plan out what to do for this very distressed 80-year-old sister who lives in isolation. When we say isolation I mean ISOLATION. It must be so hard in the severe winter to access anywhere for supplies.

She lives in a shack, a well for water; subsistence farming is her livelihood. So what was in her larder for winter? A meager crop of potatoes (which will not last the winter), some home-made jam and pickled cucumber. She has not been able to plant as much as she used to as her age and ailments are preventing her from working. No wonder she does not feel well as the diet is not adequate for good health. She mentioned numerous times that she is dying, and needed reassurance that Duncan would bury her. She wanted to make sure she would not be left to rot with none to care about her burial. She was so emotional to see us, especially Duncan, as he is the only one that shows her that she is a worthy being and cares. She does know that her Heavenly Father has sent him to her, and is thankful for that. Her emotions were so overwhelming as she was very grateful for our visit, crying, hugging, praising God for this blessing, and these emotions continued throughout our whole visit. And guess what she had prepared for us- a banquet to eat; eggs, pickles, potatoes, sausage and biscuits. However did she do that? We all are so blessed at home, and I am so thankful for my life. What we need to remember is that, if we have the means, there are people that need our help. Even so, Come Lord Jesus".

Marcus, Jeannie & Warren & Jonathon on Winter welfare visit; Warren giving firewood; Nina with her woodburner in her main room, feeding in the firewood; wrapping Nina in a blanket knitted by Sisters in Bodalla ecclesia, NSW; Jeannie achieving amazing rapport with our sister despite the language barrier [Nina has just put on a fur coat which

Jeannie gave her]; Marcus saying goodbye to Nina





First Baptisms in Mali and Burkina Faso

You've probably heard of Timbuktu, the proverbial town in the middle of nowhere in the Sahara desert of Mali. What's amazing is that the true Gospel has spread even to Mali. Mali and Burkina are, on many indicators, the poorest countries on earth, comprised largely of the Sahara desert. You're never going to get too wealthy in the world when your main export is groundnuts, most of your country is desert and your population largely illiterate and sick. We appealed a while ago for French speakers to come forward and assist on a visit to contacts in Mali and Burkina Faso, and we were delighted in the response of Sister Astrid Holt, who brings with her a wealth of practical charitable experience as well as a firm knowledge of French.

For a long time now we've been in contact with Gerald, a young man from Burkina who works in Bamako, Mali, as a teacher at a small primary school. He's worked through Bible Basics and has it and our other publications in French ever on his desk at the small 'office' at the school, where he lives and sleeps on a mat on the floor after school. Gerald has a true heart for people as well as for Christ. The 'School' is just three classrooms, and was founded by a Frenchman named Damien. Damien has a most unusual story. An electrician from near Nantes, in France, he was a rally driver in the various treks across the Sahara from Spain to the ports of West Africa which are widely popular amongst adventurous young people in France and Spain. He took a liking to Mali, sold his car after one trip and remained in Mali. Here he married a Malian woman called Fatah:



Damien and his wife Fatah

He came to believe in Christ in Mali- which is amazing, seeing it's 99% Moslem and only 1% Christian. He decided to give his life to practical service to others, in the spirit of Christ. He obtained the use of three rooms, owned by a French woman in Paris, rent free. He transformed these into a simple school. His aim is to offer free primary education to poor children. All schooling has to be paid for, and many children grow up unable to read or write. So he aims to provide basic literacy and maths for free. No food is provided, the children live locally with their parents, and they have 87 children enrolled. He has two other teachers, one of whom is Gerald. As Gerald began to learn the true Gospel through Bible Basics, he shared his findings with Damien. Their studies enabled them to put meaning into the words "I am now a Christian... I have come to Christ". They spread the knowledge of the true Gospel to others in their neighbourhood. After an exchange of around 100 letters, it was clear that this group really understood the Gospel and were ready for baptism, hence our visit. It's amazing that an electrician from Nantes, France, should find the Gospel in the Sahara desert of highly Moslem [99%] Mali. But this is the way providence works. It's for sure the first time we've baptized a trans-Sahara rally driver.

After extensive discussions it was a pleasure to take GERALD, DAMIEN & FATAH and another 10 people [brothers MATTHIEU, SAMUEL, SANIBE and LUC and sisters MARIANNE, SEWA, RUKI, MARIE, MIRIAME and JUA] down to the Niger River and baptize them into the real Christ. Duncan baptized Gerald first and then together they baptized Damien, and then the others:



So an ecclesia was born, with very great joy- we feel this is one of the most beautiful photos we've ever shared on a Carelink message. May they all hold the confidence and rejoicing of the hope [which they so clearly have] firm unto the end:



In a situation where total poverty, malnutrition, lack of education and basic hunger is everywhere apparent, it's so hard to know how to appropriately assist. We agree with Damien that providing basic education is about the best way to go forward, given our limited resources. But it's also important to give people at least something which they can do and achieve, even if they make no real money from it.

Astrid came into her own here with a project involving recycling plastic bags. With no garbage collection, Mali like much of poorer Africa, is drowning under discarded plastic bags with much of the urban open space looking like a garbage tip. Astrid got the kids to join her in collecting bags, and then taught the new brothers and sisters and the older kids how to twine them together and weave them into furniture upholstery- the younger kids eagerly waited at the door of the `office' of the school to pass their collected bags to Astrid and her eager team of newly trained helpers:



The final joy was that at least a few mothers had somewhere more comfortable to sit with their children.

Astrid and Damian have subsequently taken the idea forward, constructing a loom with wood, nails, a hammer and string, upon which the plastic bags can be woven into yarn, and are teaching some amazed local people just what is possible:



Exactly how far and in what direction this initiative can be taken further is unclear and anyone with any knowledge about plastic bag recycling is welcome to contact us. Whilst it costs almost nothing, it's very labour intensive and the products can be used but not so easily sold in the poverty-stricken Malian environment.

Please pray for this new ecclesia in their poverty, and especially for Astrid, Damien and Gerald as they continue the work here and now head overland into Burkina Fasso hopefully for more baptisms. There are serious travel warnings everywhere due to the prevalence of kidnapping by various extremist Moslem groups, especially is it dangerous for Christian missionaries.



The hotels in Bamako wouldn't let us use their pools for baptisms, hence our trip to the very polluted and disease-ridden Niger River. One good thing is that through this new ecclesia, the Gospel is spreading yet further to the ends of the earth- "and then shall the end come". We conducted our meetings in French and the local language, Bambara, and made MP3 recordings of them. There is very little Christian literature of any description in Bambara. At the baptism service, we recorded Damien reading Romans 6 verse by verse in French, and Gerald translating it verse by verse into Bambara. We will in due course put the MP3 on the carelinks.net website. This is really taking the Gospel to "the regions beyond", to those in the Sahara who have never had the Gospel in their language. Here's the recording being made:



Apart from donations, you can assist by deep prayer for this group and also anyone with access to primary school material in French could usefully post it out to the school. And of course if you know French and can travel, well, you could be very, very useful to this new ecclesia.

From Jerusalem to Jericho

In Luke ch10, we come across a certain lawyer who asked the Lord, Who is my neighbour? In reply, the Lord told him about a certain man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. This man was attacked by robbers on the way and was badly wounded and they left him half dead.

We realise that the city from which the man came meant a lot to him as it does to us. because the name Jerusalem means `City of peace'. We also remember what Joshua said about Jericho after destroying it: "Cursed before the Lord is the man who undertakes to rebuild this city Jericho: at the cost of his first-born son will he lay a foundation: at the cost of his youngest will he set up its gates" (Joshua 6:26). From this simple statement, we can deduce that this city is associated with a curse and death.

This man decided to travel from the city of peace to the city of curse and death. No wonder he could not complete the journey peacefully. In any case, the Lord Jesus, when describing the type of journey the man took, says he was going down not up! And who would love to go down and not up in this life? Even in worldly wealth no one loves to go down; how much more in spiritual things. Would we love to go down from the heavenly calling and descend to the depth of death? If we are in our right senses we will say, No!

Perhaps this man originally lived in Jericho but later went to live in Jerusalem, and he decided to return where he came from. Of course, he could not reach his downward journey's end, because he was leaving the city of peace. I can say this man was fortunate not to have reached Jericho, because if he had, he would have found only death there.

What about us? Should we long to go back to Jericho after having been given a place in Jerusalem by our Lord? And why did the Lord say this story of going down from Jerusalem to Jericho? It is because physically there is a very steep road between two cities. Therefore, the Lord is illustrating to us how steep we can go down from him if we return to our way of life,

whose end will only result in death. Hence, whenever we think of leaving our Lord and long to return to our old ways., let us always remember what the Lord said to the ecclesia: "Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place" (Revelation 2:5).

Bro John Kasanda (Kazembe, Zambia)

We Must Love One Another

The epistles Paul wrote to the Thessalonians were both touching and educative. He mentioned that brothers and sisters loved each other in their daily lives. Paul commended them that their "love had increased greatly" (1 Thes:3), and so their work went on easily with this love. But despite this love, they had troubles. The ruling authorities at the time abhorred the gospel, and the power of the Almighty was needed because of the persecution. The brothers and sisters persevered in spite of the troubles (v4). God Himself will pay back trouble to those who give it. These troubles will continue until the Son of Man comes, when he will bring relief.

Paul went on teaching them to keep on praying. Some of them had questions about when the Son of Man would come, but Paul urged to keep on praying because the day of his coming is not known. Jesus gave us signs to look out for when he will come. People who do not listen to the truth, perish. We can be saved by listening to the truth. What then is truth? There is life in Jesus Christ. Jesus is truth (Rom 5:17; 1 John 5:12; John 3:16; 14:6).

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

Bro Emmanuel & Sis Caroline Joumer (Bulimbo, Kenya)

The Power of the Tongue

The tongue is a small organ found in man and woman. It has good and bad effects. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those that love it shall eat the fruits" (Prov 18:21) - meaning that those who love life through the tongue should utter what is right and will live well, but those who love death and fail to maintain their tongue, shall die. Blessings and curses all come from the tongue, thus bringing life or death respectively.

"Even a fool, when he holdeth his tongue, is counted as wise, and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding" (Prov 17:28). Therefore it is always best to keep quiet so as to be counted wise, instead of making a noise and expose our foolishness to other people.

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth what is good and an evil man brings what is bad" (Luke 6:45). Therefore if you talk, many people can understand what type of person you are; if you keep quiet you give someone a hard time to get to know you, so beware!

"What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days? Therefore keep your tongue from evil and your lips also from evil" (Ps 3:12-13). "Therefore whoever wants everlasting life should keep the tongue away from evil and his lips from speaking deceit" (1 Peter 3:10), therefore keep the tongue away from lies and he/she shall live long. "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26). Therefore as true Christians we ought to take care of our tongues.

Bro Adriano Wanjala (Nyange, Kenya)

Luapula Regional Grouping

The second CBM Luapula Regional Grouping was held in October covering four ecclesias (Mushota, Mbereshi ` Hoist', Kasumpa and Nchelenge) and was attended by 32 members.

Theme: From Jerusalem to Gath

In 1 Sam 16 we saw how Shimei cursed king David as David fled from his son Absalom, who staged a temporary coup upon his father's throne in Jerusalem. Shimei went along the hill opposite king David and hurled insults, stones and dust upon him. But king David restrained his men from destroying this insolent man and accepted the insults. It came to pass when David was returning to Jerusalem after the death of Absalom. Shimei was the first to welcome him and apologised for his wrong-doing; David accepted his apology and Shimei was not put to death! Was that apology genuine? I think not. As the saying states: "Actions speak louder than words." I like to believe that David did not think so either, because he told his successor, his son Solomon, to see to it that Shimei did not die a peaceful death (1 Kings 2:8,9).

When Solomon was established in his father's throne, he called Shimei and reminded him about the insults he shouted at his father David. Then Solomon told him that he would not do him any harm if he would be found sincere in his doings. Solomon gave Shimei a simple command; he was very quick and happy to say to king Solomon, "What you say is good. Your servant will do as my lord the king has said." And Shimei stayed in Jerusalem for a long time (1 Kings 2:30).

But after three years, when two of his servants ran away to Gath, Shimei went after them, leaving

Jerusalem and going to Gath. He thought that leaving Jerusalem temporarily was no problem to the king. Remember that Gath was one of the Gentiles' cities where God's enemies lived. One such enemy was the giant, called Goliath, whom David killed when he was insulting God. This is where Shimei went! I like to think that he went to learn more insults from that city to insult Solomon as he had insulted his father David.

When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and returned, the king summoned Shimei and said to him: "Did I not make you swear by the Lord and warn you, on the day you leave to go anywhere else, you can be sure you will die? At that time you said to me, `What you say is good.' I warned you, then you did not keep your oath to the Lord and obey the command I gave you." The king also said to Shimei, "You know in your heart all the wrong you did to my father David. Now the Lord will repay you for your wrongdoing. But King Solomon will be blessed, and David's throne will remain for ever, secured before the Lord." Then the king gave the

order and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck Shimei down and killed him. The kingdom was now firmly established in Solomon's hands (1 Kings 2:41-46).

We all know what we are waiting for: the return of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ to come and set up the kingdom of God. This will be centred on Jerusalem. While we await this to happen, we are eagerly hoping to be gathered there any time soon. But in the meantime we are urged to behave as citizens of that kingdom (Heb 12:22-25).

We are not physically living in that city of God because God does not live in concrete structures. We are only doing that in faith and by obedience to do His will. As the ecclesia, we are that spiritual city wherein God dwells. As such, we are expected to live exemplary lives befitting those who can live with God. If we try and leave this city, King Jesus will destroy us because we have sworn to him in baptism that we will always live in spiritual Jerusalem. If we leave by disobeying his command, we will die but the kingdom will be firmly established in his hands (1 Kings 2:46).

Bro John Kasanda (Kazembe, Zambia)

The Rallying Call

The Greek word (parakaleo) is indeed a call to action. Young's Concordance shows us that, although it is rendered 23 times as 'comfort' (strength) it is also translated 19 times as 'exhort' and 43 times as 'beseech.' Moreover, William Barclay in the book "New Testament Words" tells us that in ancient writings, "Above all it is used of exhorting troops who go into battle." He also wrote, "Again and again we find it is the word of the rallying call".

Let us remember that we have been called out to battle. Christ said to us, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). That is one battle front. But preaching to others also involves getting ourselves right with God first. That is another battle front. Hence the need for the two-edged sword, sword of the consolation of Christ's helping hand, for he said, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt 28:30).

We are an army engaged in a life-long war: war against outside opposition. Let us heed the rallying call and each strive to make the standard which the apostle Paul set himself, our own.

Bro Luke Chawinga (Bolero, Malawi)

Being Careful in Building

Building regulations lay down requirements on how buildings should be constructed so that they will be safe places in which to live and work. The scriptural parallel to my theme is clear from the passage Paul wrote: "I laid a foundation as an expert builder, someone else is building it. But each one must be careful how he builds" (1 Cor 3:10).

Building regulations are there to make sure the construction industry takes care over what it builds, and there are extensive supporting documents that give architects and engineers

guidance on how to do the job in safe and efficient ways. In the same way, we have requirements and guidance laid out in the Bible on how we should be building our spiritual house. We will explore some of these ideas in this subject. The first important issue in a building is a proper foundation without that, the building will be fragile and liable to collapse. Jesus made this point very clear in his parable about the two men, one of whom built his house on sand, the other on a rock. As Paul plainly shows in a chapter to the Corinthians, the rock that we need for a secure foundation is Jesus Christ. If we are not rooted and grounded in him, anything we build is wasted effort.

After the foundations come the walls and roof; again, if we are to build something of enduring value, each builder has to follow the plans carefully. Before we start, we have to make sure that we have the materials to complete it. This was the point made in Jesus' parable about a man building a tower (Luke 14). There is a cost to being a disciple of Jesus, and there will be sacrifices that will need to be made by those who want to be part of that spiritual temple that God is building with us.

Working together

Another important part of a building is teamwork and collaboration. Many different skills are needed - carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, electricians and many more. As well as doing their own job, the craftsman needs to think about the work of the others. It is no good if the plaster is put on the walls if the electrician has not finished running the cables. And so it is with us as spiritual builders; we each have our role to play, but we also need to be aware of others and what they are doing. By our own actions, we can make life difficult for others, or we can make life more straightforward and productive. Therefore we should constantly be thinking about the way our actions will help or hinder others' spiritual progress. We should always be building one another up.

There is one particularly important section in the new building regulations. Until now, it was mainly the builders' plans that were assessed before a building permit was granted, with an occasional site check on things like foundations to make sure they were being properly done. In the new energy regulations, there will be a careful test of the building to make sure that it has been put together properly.

A major reason why buildings do not work as well as they should, is that people cut corners, are a bit lazy, and the result is lots of little weaknesses. Each little weakness is insignificant on its own, but the combined effect of all of them will make a big difference to how well the building will do its job.

Responsibility in building God's house

Building the temple of God is a bit like this: the work involves lots of little tasks, each one on its own, seemingly unimportant and insignificant. Yet if we do not take that task seriously enough, and if we do not fulfil our responsibilities with proper care and diligence, the overall result will be disappointing.

There is a direct spiritual parallel to this new aspect of building that we quoted earlier which tells us that our work will be tested to see how good it is ... the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward (1 Cor 3:13-14). So the next time you see someone building a new office block, think about how the Bible uses this as a practical illustration to teach us many spiritual lessons.

We are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow- citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him, the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord (Eph 2:19-21).

Bro Mumbelunga Green (Ndola, Zambia)

The Truth Taking Root in Soweto

There has been a fair bit of excitement in the ecclesia in Soweto because unexpectedly we were afforded a God-given opportunity to "air our views" on the local radio. This was thanks to our Bro. Zachariah Mulovhedzi having a relative working on Radio Jozy. For the month of June 2011, for one hour a week on Thursday evenings, two of our brethren braved the airwaves and were able to explain who the Christadelphians are and advertise the activities at our Bible Education Centre and Ecclesia. They were also able to explain many of our beliefs and faced the rather daunting task of answering questions from listeners...This was a totally new experience and Bro. Daniel Makhado (our linguist of note he speaks all the 9 local languages) said the first evening was the most nerve-racking of his life! He was assisted some evenings by Bro. Obed Mafifi and both acquitted themselves so well and aroused such interest from listeners that they were invited to be on air for another month. This wonderful 2-month exposure has given the Christadelphians a welcome credibility in Soweto and many students are attending our Saturday seminars as a result.

During the month of July it was a pleasure to have 4 excellent seminars by our local Gauteng brethren: Stewart Gomeza, Obed Mafifi, Daniel Makhado and Emmanuel Mphambo. Coming from the same background as many attending, these brethren are particularly well equipped at handling and understanding many of the issues raised.

The ecclesia has been in existence for nearly two years, when we started with 10 members. Our membership is at present 15 we have just had the baptism of William Kameza (a Malawian living in SA), and with the transfer of Sis Paddy Campbell we now have an experienced Sunday School teacher who has energetically `set to' with that valuable work. In all, it is a fascinating experience to work in this different environment where strongly entrenched views on ancestor



Bro Daniel Makado presenting a seminar worship, demon-possession and the Pentecostal prosperity theology hold sway.

There is considerable interest in the Bible as has been evidenced in the good attendances at our seminars after our last Learn to Read the Bible seminar, which was held during September and October last year, 10 students received certificates for full attendance, as well as a New European Version of the New Testament, thanks to the generosity of the Christadelphian Advancement Trust. After one Saturday seminar, we invited students to witness Bro. William Kameza's baptism. It was a great opportunity to encourage students to make baptism the goal of their studies.

Some attend seminars just to increase their Bible knowledge and some want to become pastors (considered a quick route to riches), but there are the discerning who are willing to search the Scriptures, and these are a joy to nurture and assist in becoming true disciples of the Lord, who in turn, will take the gospel to many others. At the moment there are four from the last seminar who now attend all our meetings. What a privilege we all have, just before our Lord returns.



Animated discussions at the seminar



The Soweto Ecclesia



Student Synthia giving a whoopee of delight on presentation of her certificate and a NEV New Testament.

Sis. Leonie Verster (Soweto, S. Africa)

Questions and Answers

Is it advisable to pay tithes in our

QUESTION 1: ecclesiastical, out of our salaries or even if one is not working?

Jesus never told his followers how

ANSWER: much money to give to God. We can read in Mark 12:41-44 that Jesus sat down opposite the treasury and watched as people were putting their money in the box. Some rich people who were putting in gave a lot of money and had a lot left over, but he also observed a poor widow who put in the last money she had. Verse 44 says: "For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

What do we think happens when

QUESTION 2:

God does not answer our prayers on time?

There are always three answers God

ANSWER: can give us with regard to prayer. With `yes', He will give us what we want; with `no', He will give us something better than what we asked for; thirdly to `wait', He gives His best at His own time. Jesus also prayed to God in heaven that he would not suffer on the cross, but then said: "Do not do what I want, let your will be done." This is a good example of prayer for us to learn.

Is it advisable as Christians to have

QUESTION 3: more than one wife?

The bible tells us that a man should

ANSWER: have only one wife (1 Timothy 3:2) A man ought to be faithful to his wife, but we have incidences in the Old Testament of people who had more than one wife: Abraham was one of them, David, King Solomon etc. The trouble is that it usually led to unhappiness. It was not the way that God meant it to be (Mark 10: 6-8). Once one is baptized if they are single they can only take one wife. However, if when they come to a knowledge of the Truth they have more than one wife, they are to keep them all and look after them, but not to take any more.

Should rebaptism take place?

QUESTION 4:

I have observed many people saying, ANSWER:

`I was baptized when I was a baby, therefore I don't need any rebaptism.' Infant baptism is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible. Jesus told us to preach the gospel to all and baptize all those who believe in him (Matt 28:19). All the first century Christians were baptized, dipped in water (Acts 6:36), often in a river the way John the Baptist did in the river Jordan. Before a person is baptized, there must be an understanding and belief of the gospel and the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Therefore baptizing babies is not valid baptism in the sight of true Christians and God, and scriptural baptism is needed.

Bro Gideon Hankomone (Mazabuka, Zambia)

God's Will

"Let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:10). God's will is fully manifested in His son Jesus Christ. We all know that Jesus grew up in a spiritual life style. He used to speak with authority. Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and with the favour of God and man (Luke 2:52).

What does it really mean when we say God willing? The Sermon on the Mount will give us highlights of the basic principles of life found in Matthew 5:1-6 which we need to follow.

We must be poor in spirit. This means we must have humility of mind in our daily lives. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility.

Count others more significant than ourselves (Phil 2:3).

We must be those who mourn. We must have sensitive of the needs of others. In our lives, let each of us look not to our own interests but also the interests of others (Phil 2:4). 1 John 3:18 tells us not to love with words or tongue but with actions and truth.

We must be meek. This means we must have a submissive, teachable spirit. Let our manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ so that we may stand firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel (Phil 1:27).

Those who hunger and thirst. We must have a passion for God. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of His glory, Him we proclaim, warning every one with all wisdom that we may present every one mature in Christ (Col 1:27,28). For God is not willing that any should perish, but, that all should be brought to repentance and be saved.

As followers of Christ, we must have a forgiving heart. Jesus answered Peter that we must forgive others seventy times seven. In other words as long as a brother asks for forgiveness, we must forgive. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil (Matt 6:12,13).

We must be pure in heart. This means we must by all means avoid things which lead us to sin. Our hearts must be as pure as white robes.

We must be peacemakers. This to us means we must have a reconciling attitude in our daily lives. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. The Bible tells us that whosoever believes in God shall be given the right to be called the child of the living God. John 6:38 tells us that Jesus came down from heaven not to do his own will but the will of Him who sent him.

We, as brothers and sisters in Christ, are a chosen generation, we are a chosen people. Let us continue to do God's will until the establishment of the kingdom. It will not be long. Sooner or later our Lord Jesus Christ will return to the earth. "Behold, I am standing at the door and knock. If anyone opens the door and hears my voice, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with

me" (Rev 3:20). May God keep us all safe until Christ returns and through His mercy may He grant us all places in the kingdom.

Gideon Hankomone (Mazabuka, Zambia)

The Joy of Singing

One of the most beautiful gifts God has given to mankind is the ability to sing. The cadence of several parts blending harmoniously is more than enthralling; it has brought joy and comfort to many weary and fainting hearts. Man is not alone in his enjoyment of singing; God delights to hear His people lifting their voices to Him in praise and adoration. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teach and encourage one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord" (Col 3:16). Many people can be blessed when the message of the song promotes the word of Christ and is sung with the desire to exalt God. Our hearts stir when we sing "We would see Jesus! For the shadows lengthen", and are blessed anew by the great sacrifice Christ made". Our hearts swell with adoration and praise as we sing, "All Hail the power of Jesus' name". Think of the impetus we receive to live a more holy life when we sing, "Blessed are they who listen not to evil counsel". These songs stir our feelings but their messages promote spiritual growth.

The Colossians quotation tells us that our songs should have purpose, that they should teach and admonish. Doctrinally sound music will always complement truth by conveying a sound scriptural message. Sound gospel music centres around God, not man, it will exalt God, His attributes and the wonders of His grace and mercy to man. It will inspire an attitude of surrender and submission to God's will. It will evoke a growing commitment to serve God as a living channel of His power. Our singing should help prepare us for the coming kingdom. Colossians also tells us that our singing should instruct others. Many songs testify to the saving merits of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Others portray the road to peace, joy, humility, love and many other Christian virtues, and the words are greatly enhanced when they are sung with grace in your hearts to the Lord. A brother once advised me to sing songs when I am 'down', that I should sing my favourite hymns (the advice of Bro Ibeka really helped me).

So, brethren and sisters, if you are weighed down with trials and tests in life or burdened with grief don't despair. Instead, think of Paul and Silas in prison and sing (Acts 16:25). When we, from a heart of love and adoration, exalt God in praise, we are reminded that God knows and cares, and thus our cares grow lighter. The oppression of discouragement or even despair cannot survive long in a heart that overflows with gratitude, for God is love and of tender mercy. The Psalmist instructs us, in the context of singing to show His salvation from day to day: "Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people" (Psalm 96:2,3). The witness of song has made a deep impact on many searching hearts, stirring the conviction that has aided them in finding salvation.

To man's disgrace, much music that has developed in modern times does not bring glory to God.

Carnal man capitalises on the emotional nature of music to enslave multitudes in a state of sensual ecstasy. Modern music has contributed greatly to the current exercise of free love and its contempt for moral restraints. Sad to say, the influence of this sensual music is subtly

making inroads into today's (Gospel music) Christendom. We hear more and more songs focused on human feelings and emotions - an offshoot of the country music of the mid-1900s, from jazz comes the swinging rhythm, phrase repetition and the subtle use of syncopation. Even more recently we hear the inroads of strong beat and off beat patterns so reminiscent of rock music.

The fact that the gift of music has been adulterated does not mean we should stop singing, but we do need to exercise spiritual discernment in the kind of music we enjoy, because it will affect our worship and our desire to know and follow God. The beauty of ecclesia blending in four-part harmony is soon replaced by a trained choir, a singing group, or even recorded music. But as we follow God's directives for the New Testament era (Mark 14:26; Eph 5:19.) Singing our praises from the heart, we are blessed by the inspiration of true heart worship that ascends to God as a sweet incense. Our singing needs to be a heart response to the work of the word and of the kingdom. Paul said, "I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor 14:15).

When we sing from the heart our spirit is strengthened and we gain fresh zeal to remain faithful to God. One of the joys of eternity, when our Master returns, will be singing the praises of the Lamb, the one who is worthy of all adoration and praise. Let us exalt the name of the Lord now from a heart of love and thanksgiving, so that we can be a part of the blood-washed throng who will sing the praises of the Lamb for ever.

Comment from Sister Esther Worrell.- I could attest to the advice given, as once whilst undergoing tremendous trials, the song my parents sang when I was quite young, came to me over the many years from the past, and I found myself singing it, and it brought me great relief. It was only then that I was able understand what they were going through at that time, and the relief it brought them. The words were - "I must tell Jesus all of my troubles: I cannot bear these burdens alone: When in distresses, he surely will help me: He'll ever love and care for his own". The chorus - "I must tell Jesus, I must tell Jesus, I cannot bear these burdens alone etc." just seemed to resonate throughout my feelings, bringing out an earnest prayer for his attention to what I'd been going through, and his help, bringing me ever so close to him and his Father, that I found great solace in singing it, and thus the relief I was seeking. Yes, I often long for the time when in his Kingdom, we'll be singing praises to our Heavenly Father and Our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, accompanied by those musical instruments.

Bro Uka Egwu (Ohafia, Nigeria)

Death

To die is to have no life. Death is natural and is part of our being. It is the time when our breath is removed from us. "Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years, and he was gathered to his people" (Gen 25:8 NIV). The deceased are free from pain and suffering, happiness and sadness. They are thought-less.

Death comes in different ways. Some people die after a very long time of suffering from very serious disease, while others may die after a short time, of illness. "One man dies in full vigour, completely secure and at ease, his body well nourished and his bones rich with marrow.

Another man dies in bitterness of soul, never having enjoyed anything good. Side by side they lie in the dust" (Job 21:23-26).

We mourn for the deceased because we know for sure that we will miss their physical being for a while. Their works, love and voices will be missed. Mourning is normal and is a Bible custom. Mourning for our dead does not mean that the deceased knows that we are weeping for them. Whether our deceased was a believer or not they know nothing after they have died. People are dying from all age groups, starting from infants, going up through teenagers up to adulthood. They all face death.

We must regard death as an enemy because it has taken our loved ones, our children, our parents, our friends or relatives who shared their lives with us, and now are gone. This death needs to be defeated. We should not be happy with the ceremonies surrounding death. Let us start fighting against this enemy today by keeping close to God and understanding His wonderful plan of salvation.

Bro Harmony Ntchalachala (Kasungu, Malawi)

God is True to His Word

A soothing trust in God will operate in following the principles of biblical faith: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13); "Call unto me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not" (Jer 4:13); "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heavens" (Ecc 3:1); "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come" (Ps 65:2); "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Prov 3:5); "And it shall come to pass, if thou shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth" (Deut 28:1); "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord, praise ye the Lord (Ps 150:6); "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28); "Beloved, I will above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in good health even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 2); "Behold I stand at the door, and knock; if any hear my voice, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with me" (Rev 3:20); "Your word I have hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee (Ps 119:11); "Set your affection on things above, not on things on earth" (Col 3:2); "With God all things are possible" (Matt 19:26); "In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2); "God is spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).

To childishly believe in these principles is the way to success: "For the time is come that judgement must begin at the house of God, and if it first begins at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Pet 4:17-19). God is true to His word so, ` Be merciful to us, O Lord, that we may have a good share in the kingdom that your beloved Son is coming to set up on earth;

Bro Joseph Kwesi (Ghana)

What Is True Peace?

Zambia has recently had its elections and a lot of people celebrated the emerging of the new era. Many have confidence that it will provide what they need and want, e.g. the fight against corruption and stability (peace). This reminds me of the time when the Israelites wanted to have their own king like the surrounding nations. With God's mercy, He gave them a king (Saul) who imposed the costs of a kingdom on the people as God had promised the human king would do. This signifies that only God can bring stability in human affairs of the kingdoms of men.

We all know how crafty some of the rulers of the world can be, forgetting that it is God who puts men in the ranks they hold (Dan 4:17). Since God has the upper hand in human affairs, He alone is the granter of peace. This He has demonstrated in sending His much-loved son as a peace offering for those who want to live in God's kingdom. Paul exhorts on this peace that we (you and me) are given once we realise the wrongs we have committed in our past life (because of the sin that we are prone to), through repentance once we have realised our errors. In our new life in Christ, Jesus will give us this peace, true peace to reign in our hearts (Col 3:15).

So, in conclusion, in the kingdoms of men people promise peace, but things work the other way round. Violence, fights, crime, etc become the rules of the day. This means that there is no true peace, but God has shown how we can attain that peace through being identified with Jesus Christ. It is through his blood that we (people who have agreed with him) are able to have a clear conscience. Thus, as we baptised brothers and sisters, break the bread and drink the wine they remind us of the peace which was made possible by Christ's death on the cross (Isa 53:5).

Bro Musanda (Mufulira, Zambia)

Haiti Progress Report

No common word can be used to let you know how delighted I was to receive the literature and messages. I am happy to be a Christadelphian.

At the moment I am New York spending Christmas with the Brethren and Sisters here. We break bread



Bro Esmath Sainval

Your Vision Is Your Future

God told Abraham, "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (Gen 13:15). Abraham was to visualise what God shows him including the future. The Bible says: "Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth" (Prov 6:2); "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof" (Prov 18:21). We learn that together, conduct Bible Classes and praise God together. In Haiti we are facing a difficult situation, as the church is increasing enormously, as you see from the photo opposite, and we have a deadline to leave the location where we meet because the owner is selling it and we cannot buy it. So we especially need your prayers on this matter.

Haiti Ecclesia words have authority over man and they control one's destiny. We are to see beyond our midst because beyond what we see now, are other more important things in life. The Bible talks about the eagle's sharp vision, so in the same manner, we are to have the same sharp vision. My brother always say: "Imagine it, believe it, attempt it and you become your dream". The Bible says: "As the man thinketh, so he is".

If you want to change a man's life, first change the way he thinks. He will also change his words and ultimately his destiny. Thoughts words action habits character destiny. So your future is governed by what you think, what you see and what you say. We cannot live above our confessions because when we speak out something, we have spoken a law that governs your life. Speak God's words and we will become what He says about us. Our confessions are a creative power. Speak positive words, not negative. God created the world with words, so we are to be mindful of what we say.

Bro Tinashe Mberengwa (Chinhoyi, Zimbabwe)

Watchmen and Love

God spoke to Ezekiel and declared that he was made a watchman to the house of Israel to give them warning from God. If he failed in this, he would be responsible and the blood of the unwarned would be required at his hands (3:17,21). These things are for us an example, for whatever things were written before, were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope (Rom 15:4). We are watchmen.

We are strengthened through this written testimony that has come down to us from God. Let us not fail to declare the truth without fear or favour after the examples of the prophets of old, whose company we hope to share in God's kingdom; and it is pleasing to God that we give ourselves to the study of His prophets that we may know His will and obey it.

"For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge and people should seek the law from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 2:7). And again: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet 5:11; see also Eph 4:29; 1 Cor 10:31). But there is much preliminary "lamentation and mourning and woe" in which both Israel after the flesh and the Israel of God are affected for a season.

Ezekiel was much strengthened by God against apostate Israel: "The house of Israel will not listen to you, because they will not listen to me (God); as an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead. Fear them not" (3:7-9). The apostle Paul, in contrast, commended the

elders who rule well; they should be counted worthy of "double honour, especially those who labour in the word and doctrine" (1 Tim 5:17). And again: "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly" (1 Pet 5:2).

In these last days, some elders fail in their duty, "But you have departed from the way, you have caused many to stumble at the law" (Malachi 2:8). Further, God rebuked them: "The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you heeded those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away nor sought what was lost, but with force and cruelty you (the elders) have ruled them" (Ez 34:4).

All those things that God rebuked the elders about through the mouth of these prophets, we also found in the mouth of Jesus our Lord in his time (Luke 15:4), and later in the writings of the apostles (1 Tim 3:2-3). Instead of feeding the flock, they became savage wolves not sparing the flock (Acts 20:29), forgetting the warning the apostle Paul had given them with tears: "Therefore give heed to yourselves (the elders) and to all the flock among which the holy spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). And now they are lords over God's heritage, instead of being good examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:3). They have blinded themselves that they love God and hate their brothers; it is written that they are liars: "For he who does not love his brother whom he can see, how can he love God whom he has not seen?" (1 John 4:20). "By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brother. But whoever has this world's good and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? Let us not love in word and tongue, but in deeds and in truth" (1 John 3:16-18).

Anyone who dismisses those in need as in the word of James: 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled', but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?' (James 2:16).

Brothers and sisters, "If anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules" (2 Tim 2:5). Let us draw a lesson from what could be said about a fictitious elder of the church at Ephesus he had good works, labour, patience, he could not bear evil and he disapproved of failed apostles but he failed in one thing: love (Rev 2:4). "For whoever shall keep the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:20).

Brothers and sisters, the time is short, the Lord is almost coming. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col 3:16 and Eph 3:17) and the Lord is the judge of the whole world. Before he sets the sheep on his right hand and goats on His left hand, choose today where you shall stand on that day, for we shall all want to hear his voice: "Come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," or it could be "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:34, 41). "For if we wander from the way of understanding, we shall rest in the assembly of the dead for ever" (Prov 21:6) like the beasts (Ps 49:14).

Let every individual pray as follows: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties, and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps 139:23-24).

Bro Walter Wasike (Mombasa, Kenya)

We Want to Be Strong in Faith

The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that he hoped to see them so that he could "perfect what is lacking in your faith". Let us examine our hearts to see whether our faith is strong: if we find that this is not the case, we have to do everything in our power to gain strength and fortify our faith. Yes, we are children of God. The word that is proclaimed to us is the word of God. These are the true apostles who have been commissioned by the Lord. Our Lord's return is imminent. We expect it any day.

There are various signs that indicate a weak faith. One of these is that our prayers diminish in frequency and intensity. We may no longer pray as fervently as we used to, so that our prayers become superficial. Maybe we forget to pray together. Let us be alert here. If we notice something is wrong, let us begin today and seek a connection to our Heavenly Father in prayer.

Hesitating when it comes to offering is another sign that indicates a weak faith. If we neglect to give and to do our share because we think that first of all we have to see to our own needs this is a sign that our faith is inadequate. This realisation would help to remind ourselves of all the good and all the gifts we have received from the Lord. Contemplating these things creates thankfulness in our hearts. And thankful hearts offer, and sacrifice, gladly. Those who are strong in faith accept the word of God with pleasure, and want to do the will of God.

Another sign of a weak faith would be if we were not to take following Christ seriously and decide to put off doing so until later. We must follow now and not hesitate. We must do our best and put everything else off. The Lord Jesus was very clear about this. Let us concentrate on the Lord and His will; that is true discipleship.

Lack of trust in the Lord and His word is a very serious matter. If we lack trust and stop following Christ, then it is a sure sign that our faith is weak. We find a wonderful example of real trust in the book of Daniel. There we read of three men who refused to obey the king's decree to worship a golden idol. The king was infuriated and threatened to have the three men thrown into a fiery furnace. "Let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the golden image which you have set up". Let us act: it is unlikely that we will be threatened with a fiery furnace, but there are certainly situations in which we have to demonstrate our ability to trust in the Lord and have confidence in Him. We prove that we have confidence in the Lord when we say, "No matter what happens, we will stay with the Lord and His word. We want to have a strong faith".

Bro Blessing Ngigwe (Mbalse, Nigeria)

Separation

The disciples were doing what their Lord had instructed them to do, but suddenly they found themselves in grave danger. They were battling against waves and wind and they were afraid. Although they were in the place where the Lord wanted them to be, everything seemed to be working against them. This experience is similar to that of many modern Christians. You may be serving God to the best of your ability, and as far as you can ascertain you are doing His will, but things seem to be continually going wrong. Doubts assail you, and you may feel haunted by the fear that even the Master has deserted and failed you.

When the first disciples were struggling with fear the Master saw that they were in serious trouble and made his way, across the water, to them. Then when he was near the boat, it seemed that he was going to pass them. In their fear, he spoke to them. He joined them in the boat and their fears immediately subsided. Whatever may be your trouble or difficulty, the Master knows all about it. To know his guidance and feel the joy of his presence, it is necessary to invite him into the situation in which you are placed at the moment, and ask him to control your life.

Bro David Yelulani (Banket, Zimbabwe)

Responding to Insult

By internet or television, much of the world one day saw an Iraqi journalist throw both of his shoes at an American president. The shoe incident, however, was a minor embarrassment compared with a public display of contempt described in the Bible. The insult happened on a day that was already one of the lowest moments of king David of Israel. One of David's sons had seized all control of Israel's army and was forcing his father and friends to leave Jerusalem for fear of their lives (2 Sam 15:16). As if that were not enough to be run out of town in tears with head covered and feet bared (2 Sam 15:30). Someone began celebrating at that moment. Somewhere between Jerusalem and Jordan, an angry man began throwing stones and accusing David of being a murderer who, for all his wrongs, was finally getting what he deserved (16:5-8).

In response to the insults, one of David's officers offered to cut off the head of "this dead dog", but David denied permission. Instead, the king suggested that God was saying something to him through the insults. Even to this moment David seems to give us an indication of why the Bible remembers him as a man after God's own heart. He had been humbled and broken by his sons' wrongs; he knew his leadership of Israel had been marred by personal failures that included an affair with a married woman and conspiracy to have her husband killed. At this point, David would have had a reason to wonder whether God was giving him what he deserved. According to 2 Sam 13, David's firstborn son, Amnon, raped his half-sister Tamar. Two years later, Tamar's brother, Absalom, killed Amnon for raping his sister. Those losses broke David's heart: one son was dead, a daughter was defiled and another son was in exile for murdering his brother.

Years passed before David agreed to let Absalom return to Jerusalem. By the time the king was ready to unite with Absalom, however, Absalom had other plans. Deeply embittered in his father's reluctance to see him, he would not accept David's change of heart. Instead, he conspired to use flattery and his own good looks to win the hearts of Israel and become king in his father's place.

When David heard that the men of Israel had joined Absalom, he realised that he and his friends should get out of town to avoid being killed by his own son. It was then, as the king and his friends left the city, that a relative of Saul named Shimei created a scene by throwing stones at David and cursing him (16:5-6). When Abishai offered to kill Shimei, David denied him permission. Instead, the king indicated that God might actually be speaking to him through

Shimei's curses. With a broken heart, David said, "My own son is trying to kill me. Doesn't this relative of Saul have even more reasons to do so? Leave him alone and let him curse, for the Lord has told him to do so. And perhaps the Lord will see that I am being wronged and will bless

me because of these curses today'. So David and his men continued down the road and Shimei kept pace with them on a nearby hillside, cursing as he went and throwing stones at David and tossing dust into the air" (16:11-13).

Just as David's fear of the Lord had once kept him from lifting a hand against a raging king Saul (1 Sam 24:6), David now showed similar restraint toward Shimei by not ordering him to be killed. The ageing king of Israel showed his willingness to be taught even by an angry enemy out of control.

David's response makes us wonder how different our lives would have been had we always handled criticism and insult with teachable hearts. What if, in the face of far less offensive insults, we had taken occasion to wonder whether our God was lovingly saying something to us even through the angry voice and accusation of critics? What if all of us followed David's wisdom of learning from a bad moment? What is the worst that could happen if we let the accusation of an enemy turn our ear toward God? Would we have wasted time by being wise enough to listen for a half truth in the unkind words of someone who had no interest in flattering us? Even if the present 'attacks' are old news, forgiven sins, or were altogether unjustified, would we be poorer for the experience if we took the occasion to remember that the real truth about us is probably far worse than any of our human enemies could know? Would remembering how much we have needed the mercy of God be something we would regret?

We should ask our Father in heaven to help us to be wise as His servant David to give us the grace to listen to His voice in the accusation by our enemies.

Bro Isaac Kapa (Tangaron, Kenya)

A Meditation

"And, behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven". The bright beams of God's glory went before him, and illuminated his pathway. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men. Brave soldiers that have never been afraid of human power are now as captives taken without sword or spear. The face they look upon is not the face of a mortal warrior, it is the face of the mightiest of the Lord's host. The earth trembles at his approach, the hosts of darkness flee, and as he rolls away the stone, heaven seems to come down to the earth. They see Jesus come forth from the grave, and hear Him proclaim, "I am the resurrection and the life". As he comes forth in majesty and glory, the host of angels welcome him with songs of praise.

An earthquake marked the hour when Christ laid down his life, and another earthquake witnessed the moment when he took it up in triumph. He who had vanquished death and the grave came forth from the tomb with the tread of a conqueror, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, the roaring of thunder. When he shall come to the earth again, he will shake not the earth only, but also the political heavens. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard. The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. But the Lord will be the hope of His people and the strength of the children of Israel (Heb 12:26; Isa 24:20; 34:4; 2 Pet 3:10; Joel 3:16).

Bro Melusi Ndlovu (Kwe-Kwe, Zambia)

Why Some Prayers Are Not Answered

As you continue to read your Bible, many questions are bound to arise in your mind. And no wonder! For the truth is so limitless that no-one can hope to compass it in our brief period of life. Occasionally you may stumble on an answer accidentally, but usually it has to be searched for with diligence. One such question concerns prayer. Perhaps you have asked about it yourself. If God is the God I love, why doesn't He answer all my prayers?

There is no doubt about God's willingness to answer: "Call unto me and I will answer", He says (Jer 33:3). Again, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened" (Matt 7:7,8). Nor is there any doubt about God's ability to answer. He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph 3:20).

Nevertheless, it is clearly evident from everybody's experience, that some prayers are not directly answered, Why? Are there any conditions attached to prayer? There are indeed. Here are several:

1. You must have faith. "Whatever you ask in prayer you will receive, if you have faith" (Matt 21:22). You must believe that God is able to do what you ask Him to do. Without faith it is impossible to please Him. "For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him" (Heb 11:6).
2. You must be thankful. "Have no anxiety about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Phil 4:6).
`Thanksgiving' connotes a worshipful state of mind, which is as important as believing in God's power to help.
3. You must be at one with God. Jesus says: "If you abide in me, and my word abides in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7). This has the same meaning as: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and His ears are open unto their cry" (Ps 34:15). Identification with God's righteous purposes is essential.
4. You must be resigned to His will. "This is the confidence which we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14). Jesus set the supreme example in Gethsemane when he prayed "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt ... thy will be done" (Matt 26:39-42). As it is God's will that ultimately will be done, it is but wise and reasonable to yield to His will before you pray.
5. You must be patient. Says David: "I waited for the Lord, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry" (Ps 10:1). Again, "I wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps 27:14). If all your prayers were answered immediately under the urgency of your pleading, you would probably become disillusioned. Human vision is so limited that it is always wisest to wait for God to answer as and when His wisdom may deem best.
6. You must cherish no sinful desire. The Psalmist says: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps 66 18).

A Brother (Nalondo, Kenya)

Seriously Serving God

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable (Phil 4:8).

Whatever we are doing, we are Christ's representatives. The world we live in is full of wicked people who live without a spiritual foundation. Paul wrote to Timothy telling him about this (2 Tim 3:1-5). Jude compares these times with Sodom and Gomorrha (Jude 14- 16). In contrast, we must try to be serious in a pleasure-loving age. I can underline the word "pleasure", as this world is full of it. And looking for a good time can permanently threaten our spirituality. A man who has a love of pleasure will devote his time to it.

Paul tells us to be serious in prayers, intercession and thanksgiving. However, before Paul, Solomon was appraising pleasure (Ecc 3:4; 7:2-4). But we must always be serious about God's word; if we do this we will enter through the narrow door (Luke 13:24). We must pay careful attention to Christian life. We must work hard as God always works (John 5:17).

Bro Dzingai Sumberera (Chivi, Zimbabwe)

Eight Fears

1. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7). This shows that whenever we need to have knowledge like that of king Solomon, we should fear the Lord in all our endeavours.

2. The fear of the Lord really is the beginning of wisdom. There is no king or any other person in the little life I have lived who is anything like as wise as the king Solomon of the Bible.

As Christians, let us fear the Lord and we will have part of the wisdom described in Psalm 111:10.

3. The fear of the Lord is the fountain of life (Pro 14:27). If we wish to put our life in the strong fountain of life, that is the Lord Jesus, we must fear the Lord.

4. The fear of the Lord can prolong life (Pro 10:27).

5. The fear of the Lord is to obey God's word (1 Sam 15:22).

6. The fear of the Lord is to hate all evils (Pro 8:13).

7. The fear of the Lord is to run away from evil (Gen 39:12).

8. The fear of the Lord always leads to promotion (Gen 41:38-44; Ps 75:7).

These show that once you fear the Lord, all the dreams, visions, desires and plans will be achieved through our Lord, Master and Saviour Jesus Christ. As Peter did, let us cast our nets again in the sea, and we shall catch our fish as he did with the Lord's help.

Bro Nasongo Haron (Naitiri, Kenya)

At the End of the Road (An Imaginary Journey)

Two men were walking on a Roman road pondering the fate of Christians.

"They are a crazy lot don't you think, willing to die for a crucified man who died on the stake fifty years ago."

An old man joins them and listens to their conversation. They are quite oblivious to his presence

"They say he rose from the dead."

"Go on! After fifty years who is going to believe. It's all claptrap I say."

The old man spoke quietly. "Have you ever met a Christian?"

"No," they both answered cheerfully.

"We are pagans and proud Romans."

Then said the stranger, "Why are you so concerned?"

"We just wondered why they would die for such a useless cause ?"

"Well I am a Christian and there is a wonderful reason why Christ died and another wonderful reason why he rose from the dead.

They came to a shady spot where they all sat down for lunch. The Stranger brought out a loaf of bread and began to divide it with his fingers.

"See this bread I am breaking. Imagine that it represents Jesus Christ's body. We need bread to survive and live and in a spiritual sense we need Jesus in our lives to live spiritually.

Every Christian sees this bread as a reminder of Jesus' sinless body and when we eat we are reminded that he is our Saviour. We share this bread and recognise how all Christians are united in purpose. Together we seek to share the promises God made concerning His Kingdom on Earth. "

"But you already have a Roman kingdom. You have Caesar is that not enough?"

"Caesar will die." said the stranger. " My Lord is in Heaven and gives me power."

He opened a bottle of wine and the men's eyes lit up.

"Share with me" the stranger said as he offered them a swig.

"Nice wine" they said.

"Well, here is the other side of the story. Jesus shared wine with his disciples on the same night as he was betrayed by his close friend Judas." The stranger went on. "Jesus said, ` This is my blood that is shed for many'. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

"Oh I see." Said one of the Romans, Christians don't get eaten by lions just for the fun of it then?"

"No, they would willingly die for Jesus."

"Why?"

"Because he offers them life eternal. He was resurrected and so will they be raised at the last day when he returns to set up God's Kingdom on earth."

The men were amazed and said, "Caesar doesn't look so good now. He's always fighting and putting up taxes. May be the kingdom you mention just might be the one to find."

The old man began to tell them stories from the deep recesses of his mind, how that Jesus was spoken of thousands of year previously by a man called Moses and by Hebrew prophets and everything they said had come to pass. He first came to the attention of the people when he was thirty years old and in just three years had convinced many that he was the Messiah - or in our language, Christ. For three years he performed many wondrous miracles and told many parables about a coming kingdom. They expected him to overthrow the Romans and reclaim a Jewish Kingdom but this did not happen. They got him on some trumped up charges of blasphemy and sedition and arranged for the Romans to do their dirty work and crucify him.

"We heard that this was the case," the men said. "So what's the big deal here?"

"That might have been the end but this man Jesus rose from the dead." and my father was one who actually saw him and touched his side and his hands where the nails pierced him on the stake"

"Your father actually saw him after he had risen from the dead?"

"He did and that's not all." The old man continued and told how his father was standing at the foot of the Mount of Olives when Jesus ascended into Heaven leaving two angels to explain that the same Jesus they had seen go into Heaven would return the same way as they had seen him go up.

"This belief is what gives Christians the courage to face any trials that the Romans can bring upon them."

They looked at the stranger with great amazement. "Where can we find out more?" The old man told him about a man called Timothy who lived at the end of the road.

"God be with you. "

Sis. Audrey Christopherson (Port Augusta, Australia)