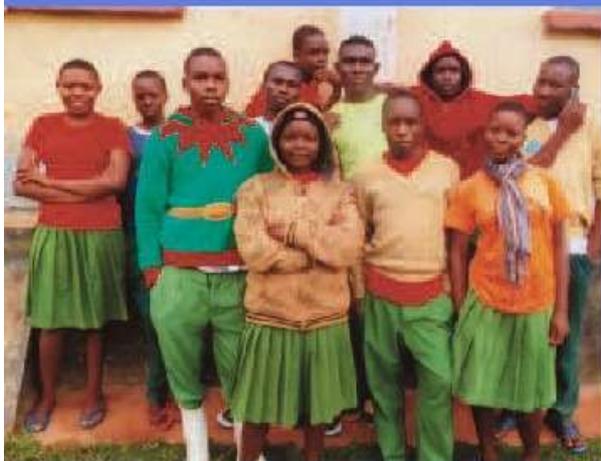


# THE Gospel News

*"To all nations"*



## **Editorial | “To be spiritually minded ...”**

We all want to overcome, to get over this or that weakness, to be more spiritually minded, to sin less, to be more devoted to the Lord, to have greater self control, to be more full of Him and not ourselves, and so forth. But there seems some kind of brake that comes on all the time. Our minds wander away from spiritual thinking so easily. A blocked gutter or broken toilet comes into our lives and swamps us; and so hour by hour, day by day, life slips away like sand between our fingers. We are only occasionally arrested by a spiritual thought, or the reality of the fact the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me, and I shall by grace live eternally in His Kingdom. We want to live in the shadow of the cross, of the hope of the Kingdom, all the time. But... somehow, we don't seem to 'get the feeling' all the time. It is occasional, rather than a general experience. Going to a Bible School or helpful gathering becomes a 'high', which recedes until the next such event or experience.

### **No Excuses: Human Nature**

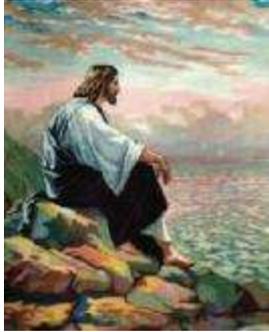
Too quickly we blame our human nature for this sad state of psychological affairs within us. We assume there are parameters which we can never really move far beyond; he'll never stop drinking, she'll always be bitter about her ex, I'll never really be able to move on from what they did. As if being human excuses us from being too spiritually minded or developing too far. But just remember- all we posit about human nature, we say about the Lord Jesus. For He too had our nature, as our total representative; yet despite that, He was “holy, harmless... undefiled” (Heb. 7:26). His character and work show us the huge possibilities there are for those who bear human nature. And the Bible is full of examples of radically transformed people; Paul sees his own conversion as a pattern for all who should afterwards believe (1 Tim. 1:16).

Cain was in the gall of bitterness and jealous hatred against his brother Abel. “If you do not do well, sin lies [crouching, ready to spring] at the door. But unto you shall be its desire, and you shall rule over it”. This is a ladder to reach to the stars. “You shall rule over it”. We can overcome sin, bad habits and thought patterns; sin may seek to get us, but we can rule over it. We may well think that we can't; the way was set, the die cast, the destiny mapped out, the genes determined; our background, upbringing, life path was as it was, and so we are as we are. But we can be made new. Sin need no longer have dominion over us, as Paul says in Romans 6; or as early Genesis puts it here, “you shall rule over [sin]”. We are not debtors to sin (Rom. 8:12) sin is not inevitable. But most people fail to see beyond the very limited horizons of both their nature and their immediate life. Earth's curvature means that we can't see beyond horizons; but we can, if we wish, know what is there. There is a doctrine of a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), whereby we really can be made new people.

### **Environment**

We are also inclined to blame our environment. Believers excuse their lack of spiritual mindedness because... they can't get to meetings or Bible Schools, their neighbours, partner, children, parents, work environment, the society in which they live... isn't apparently conducive to their being spiritually minded. But we must give full weight to the parable of the vineyard in Isaiah 5. God wants us to bear spiritual fruit. He would not put us in a situation too great for us to bear, whereby He knows we can't be fruitful. In fact, the very opposite. He did everything for that vineyard, which represented “the house of Israel” (Is. 5:7). He created, through much work, the optimal environment for their fruitfulness: “What could have been done more to My vineyard, that I have not done in it? Why, when I looked for it to yield grapes, did it yield wild

grapes?” (Is. 5:4). Your environment, your life path and current situation, is optimal for your spiritual fruitfulness. It takes some believing. We all like to think that if we lived there and not here, with him rather than with her, in that ecclesia rather than this, with his health rather than mine, in that career rather than this... then, I would be more spiritually fruitful. But the song of the vineyard shows that’s just us making weak excuses. The stones that hinder fruitfulness have been gathered up (Is. 5:2); and the crushing, powerful logic is that God wants our fruitfulness rather than our unfruitfulness. From His side, He has set up everything for us to be fruitful.



### **Focus on the Positive**

Victory isn’t going to come because we force ourselves, by dint of rigid self-control, with knuckles white as we clench our minds and bodies to resist temptation which seems so attractive. None of us have that steel will, that iron in the soul to achieve that. Human nature isn’t made of such metal. The Lord who had our exact nature was indeed tempted as we are, yet without sin. But things we struggle with, He maybe just didn’t feel that way about; in the same way as if I were offered hard drugs on the street, it would only technically be a temptation, because I have never done drugs and am scared stiff of the whole scene. I’d cross over on the other side of the street and get away from the pusher. But for someone who has struggled with these things, it would be a hard temptation to struggle with. The Lord’s environment of thought, the psychological atmosphere in which He lived His mental life, was with God. He was “with the Father”. But surely there were things He was tempted over which we have no idea of; He engaged with sin and temptation on a far higher level than we do.

‘Holiness’ means both separation from as well as separation unto. The positive things we are separated unto are to dominate our thinking. Israel were brought out from Egypt through the Red Sea (cp. baptism) that they might be brought in to the land of promise (Dt. 6:23). Abraham was told “Get out...” of Ur; and obediently “they went forth to go into the land of Canaan: and into the land of Canaan they came” (Gen. 12:1,5). The New Testament preachers urged men to turn “from darkness **to** light, and from the power of satan to God” (Acts 26:18); from wickedness to God, to the Lord (Acts 3:26; 15:19; 26:20; 9:35; 11:21). In Nehemiah’s time, the people “separated themselves from the peoples of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters...they clave to their brethren” (Neh. 10:28,29). Close fellowship with one’s brethren arises from having gone out from the surrounding world, unto the things of God’s word. The life that is consumed with care for others, with the Lord’s service, will have no time for other things. I once asked a once alcoholic brother how he managed to quit. He shrugged and smiled, and said: “I guess after I was baptized I just didn’t have time to get drunk. It takes time, you know”.

### **The Way of the Spirit**

God can work directly on the human mind. And that's just what we need. There are plenty of examples; God sent a bad spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem (Jud. 9:23); opened Lydia's heart to be receptive to the Gospel (Acts 16:14), faith itself is a gift "not of yourselves" (Eph. 2:8). There's a higher hand in our lives and thinking; hence it was "of the Lord" that Samson fell in love with a Philistine (Jud. 14:4). The balance between human freewill and God's sovereign action is impossible to define; but in the Divine-human encounter, for sure we are not just left with our own strength of will and intellectual abilities. He earnestly wants us, and wishes to indwell us with His Spirit. And so the New Testament speaks often of the gift of a new spirit, a new psychology, a different pair of eyes, another worldview, the ways of providence acting on our hearts [if that for some is a more comfortable and familiar terminology]. Peruse 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; Rom. 5:5. They all speak of how we can be given the gift which means "that you may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your hearts..." (Eph. 3:16,17). He wants to live in us, to think in our thinking, to walk in our shoes. So as we sing: "Drive out our sin and enter in / Be born in us today". Don't think that any reference to the Holy Spirit always refers to miraculous gifts. Those have long ceased, but this isn't to say that God isn't active by His Spirit in our lives. "John did no miracle" (Jn. 10:41), but he was filled with the Spirit (Lk. 1:15). The new covenant which we are under includes God writing His word upon our hearts (Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:10). The blessing of Abraham is not simply forgiveness, but to be "turned away from our iniquities" (Acts 3:26).

We pray for forgiveness for sins, arising from our knees not doubting we are forgiven; but still something seems lacking. And that 'something' is the sense that "I shall likely be here again", failing in the same area. What we subconsciously yearn for is the power not to sin; not simply forgiveness for when we fail. God's provision is exactly what the spiritual man needs, desperately. This very 'thing' that we yearn for is met in the gift of the Spirit. We have been given that Spirit, but we need to consciously be open to God's usage of it, surrendering every area of living and thinking to His influence. The Corinthians had received the Spirit (1 Cor. 1), but were "not spiritual" (1 Cor. 3:1), because they like Israel resisted or grieved the Spirit. If we want to be spiritually minded, to overcome the flesh in thought and action, then we have to accept that we cannot do this in the strength of our own willpower, nor by dint of our own unaided intellectual ability. Once that crucial surrender is made, in totality and from the core of our hearts, then God's power and willing, His Spirit, is able to work- making us a new creation, in which all things become new. The natural creation was creation by a word; God spoke, and it was done. The existing chaos and disorder, "without form and void", was transformed. It was not creation out of nothing, but a radical re-ordering of all things to the extent that effectively, something totally new was created. And now He is prepared to speak into our hearts, to work a new creation, with a similar outpouring of Divine power, to effectively create ex nihilo something new and beautiful out of our otherwise chaotic and disordered lives. "Now to Him that is able to do immeasurably above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works inside us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations for ever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 3:20,21).

*Duncan Heaster*

## News from Africa

### NEWS FROM KENYA



#### **BARATON | Bro Martin Chemiati**

The Bible Basics Reading Class is doing well and we are finding “Wrested Scriptures” by Brother Abel a great help in further understanding the doctrines and the comments in Duncan’s NEV Bible. We are in urgent need of more of these books please. The books you send me are changing the minds of many as they learn that the other Churches do not teach the truth.

Since the recent death of my wife I am finding it increasingly difficult to look after the family and also visiting the local Ecclesias, plus alas not being so well myself lately. Jesus’ return will bring these problems to an end and my happiness is that we are going to be given permanent eternal perfect life with Jesus in His Kingdom when sorrow and crying will flee away.



**Sisters Leaving the meetings after their two day Bible School**



**Sister Everyone presenting the Sunday School awards**

#### **BUNGOMA | Bro Nasongo Harron**

We are all doing well. Recently we received new friends in our ecclesia, two men and one lady.

Brothers, all the gospel literature that you have been sending to me was of great value and has imparted knowledge of the gospel in a positive way thus building our strength in the true gospel.

It takes a courageous soul and good heart to spread the gospel. We know that God is on our side and may you put on the armour of God relentlessly. Even if the environment is tough we know that He will open ways to get people to spread the gospel to the entire world.

We know very well that when we go to the Church we go there to get the Word of God and to have refreshment of the soul so as to know more about the Truth. But other people are trying their level best to gain what is not? They believe in the crosses, that they make with their own

hands, they do not have the true gospel. We believe in the Almighty God and in our Saviour, Jesus Christ, so that we can be saved and enter into His Kingdom when he comes to reign as King forever and ever. May he soon come.



**Bro Harron with four friends who are regular readers of Gospel News**

#### **CHWELE | Alice Watwati**

I am a Christian and have been following the Evangelical World Christian Church, however your members David and Jacklyne gave me some very interesting Bible based booklets which are enabling me to gain more real Bible knowledge and so am joining their meeting.

#### **KAKUMA | DROUGHT CRISIS**

**The drought in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya, especially in Turkana West- county where Kakuma Refugee Camp is located, is causing hunger due to the shortage of water.**

**At Kakuma there are 4 water bore holes amongst the 10 serving refugee camps which have dried up because of the lack of rains from the Ugandan mountains that always flow to Kakuma. Animals (goats, cows etc...) are dying because of the lack of water and grass.**

**The drought has also made the price rise of charcoal and firewood for cooking food.**

#### **KALOBYEI | Bro John Lwamba Katembo**

Yes, the preaching work we hold every Saturday in Kalobeyei Refugee settlement is progressing. We pray and hope that it will bear fruits in the near future. Three Brothers from our ecclesia hold Bible discussion there with our friends - we thank our heavenly Father one friend has now been convinced and has requested to be baptized.

We are now planning for Bro Isidore to start teaching him the 40 lessons step by step twice a week and at the end the baptism would be arranged. Also Bible discussion with other contacts is ongoing. But the challenge we face in the preaching work activity is the transport as always, to go to Kalobeyei by foot is 15kms. We have received the parcel containing 20 Bible Basics books from Christadelphian Advancement Trust to be used for the preaching work in Kalobeyei and Kakuma.

#### **Prayer Request | Pray for rain**

**Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Kakuma Refugee Camp during this time of terrible hardship and that the rains may soon come to bring the drought to an end.**

#### **KITALE | Sis Caroline Nanjala**

Many greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is at hand if we take account of the signs of the times. As we're nearing our Lord's return, things are changing speedily, and we're happy of it because our salvation is close by.

My brother, the work is too much, and needs very deep reading and comprehending. Recently we have overturned a full Church of about 31 people who are now in the class.

#### **MWKHUPO | Bro Robert Wafula**

Not all of us have Bibles, hence my requesting some for baptised members and there are others wishing to be baptised who do not have Bibles.

#### **SINDO | Bro John Owalo Onani**

The salvation journey towards the Kingdom helps me learn from the book of Joshua how the God of Israel gave support and magnified his servant to settle his people in the land of Canaan, facing challenges and human weakness and demonstrates God's amazing love, mercy and grace towards us.

From my childhood my earthly parents taught me two important words – obedience and humility. They died out of the Truth but what they taught me has made me to be what I am today. In the book of Philippians 2:5-11 you get an example of what made Jesus Christ of Nazareth to be our Saviour, advocate, mediator, author of our salvation and a faithful witness to the Truth. Phil 2:8. "And being a normal man he humbled himself becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

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To forgive is to set a prisoner free and realise the prisoner was YOU.

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Matthew 6:14,15

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#### **TARBO**



The Ecclesia has expanded and have been doing a lot of preaching at Webuye 60 km away, so a new Ecclesia has been formed there. In the photo above is the Webuye group with Bro Emmanuel Milimo of Tarbo.

#### **TONGAREN | Bro Isaac Kapa**

I was very glad when I received the two parcels of Bibles and the booklet 'When will Jesus Return', it has good topics on the return of Jesus.

In Rift Valley area we are blessed with a big ecclesia hall constructed at Kamukuywa. We are told that it's the biggest ecclesia in Africa and in April we are expecting to open it officially. There we shall have a three days area Bible School.

I have a topic to speak about the return of Jesus on earth, so this booklet will help much in that coming Bible School.

**WEBUYE | Sis Judith Kasala**

Thank you for Gospel News Godly messages and the Bible Studies which have turned my life up for good.

We have been called to be creative, effective, loving, Christians living and acting as far as we can how Christ lived, and to live and act as Christians with those around us, so that they will see by our lives that we are Christians. This contact may begin with a friendship, or at work or wherever you may find yourself. We need to spend time with God everyday by meditating upon His word in the Bible and prayer. Also asking Him to show us how to reach those with whom we come into contact, watch for divinely arranged encounter where we have the opportunity of preaching the word



The photo, shows brethren and sisters from Webuye and we expect more baptisms this year. The work is hindered because we lack the Kiswahili New Testaments you produced, indeed we need the full Bible to be produced in Kiswahili together with the Christadelphian Commentary as local Bibles have much wrong doctrine and so many are led astray. We do appreciate this is expensive, but we fear that without such many of our native people will not have the opportunity of salvation.

**WEBUYE | Flora Naswa Wafula**



I am pleased to tell that after a Sister has spoken to me and discussed many things about your beliefs which I have seen agree with what the Bible teaches. Please send me some books so that I may increase my knowledge of God's Word.

## NEWS FROM MALAWI



### Bro Thomas Muleso

Some time back you sent me a box full of Bible Basics in Chichewa, but now they are all distributed. If you have some copies in Chichewa, could you please send them to me – if possible, a good number, as you did last time.

As you know, in Malawi, well over 70% of the population cannot read English, so the Chichewa books are in great demand. I have a number of English copies, but it is difficult to distribute these as most people cannot read English.

## NEWS FROM NIGERIA



### ABA | Bro James Ogbah

Suffering is a problem in life that comes to every human being under the sun. God, in creation, gave human beings the opportunity to choose between right and wrong, good and evil. Man in his pride and lust for power, love of money which is the root of all kinds of evil, brought punishment of death to himself. God is not to blame.

God promised the human race life if he will obey and abide by his laws (Gen. 2:16,17). Unfortunately man did not obey nor keep the law, thereby bringing suffering and death to himself and his offspring.

Wars, hunger, illegal 'hard' drugs production, pain, torture are man-made sufferings on man. God is not to blame.

God is the Master and Maker of the universe and not man. He created and caused some happenings beyond man's knowledge and understanding. The power in nature is awesome. We cannot experience an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, a raging sea or hurricane, etc., without feeling helpless, for these are God-made. God's power is great and we are weak. He does not give us a guarantee of security in this life. That should encourage us to listen to His message of salvation given in the Bible.

Why is there so much suffering in the world? Why are children born blind or deformed? Jesus made it clear in John 9:1-3 that it was not always as a result of personal sin but that the works of God might be revealed in him. The Bible teaches that suffering, in itself, is not evil. It is the outworking of a much deeper problem, it is the result of breaking of God's laws in Eden.

### ENUGU | Bro Goddy Nwusu

Although not a youth, I am hoping to attend the Asaba Youth Conference as a helper and always find it stimulating.

You mentioned an experiment at comparing the cost of sending me 500 leaflets and getting a price to see if it would be cheaper to get them duplicated in Nigeria. There does not seem a lot in it price wise as your postage is so expensive. If they are individually photo copied they work out more expensive.

I am very pleased that Bro Emma Ndukwe has transferred from the Aba Ecclesia to join us at Enugu.

### **MBAISE | Bro Blessing Nwigwe**

It is with great sadness that we people of Nigeria report the death of our overseer/elder **Brother Elijah M.K. Eze** who died after suffering from sickness years past and he was buried in August 2016. He will be greatly missed in Nigeria and all over the world. He now sleeps in the hope of the resurrection when Jesus comes and awakes him from sleep, at his second coming.

We are praying for you and your family, pray for us also. May the Lord be with you to work harder. God bless you all.

## **NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA**



### **Kempton Park and surrounds**

During the month of November we brought our Sunday School to a close with an outing to Heehaw Party farm. The youngsters enjoyed a fun-filled day of play and each returned sporting airbrush tattoos, sand-art kits and a photograph to commemorate the day.

Our members put together a very varied talent show in lieu of the traditional Sunday School Concert – we had everything from biblical skits, magic acts and animal encounters to object lessons, solo singers and musicians displaying their talents. This event was a wonderful way for us to get to know each other better, as many of us tend to keep our interests and talents to ourselves during the normal course of a Sunday.



**Sisters Class Summer School 2017**

## **NEWS FROM TANZANIA**



### **ILOMBA | Bro James Mwavgmo**

Greetings in the saving name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you very much for the books you have sent me and the pamphlets. They are a great help to me and Ilomba Ecclesia at large. This Bible Basics Self Study Manual is very helpful and help me to understand the Word of God plainly.

I have found another place for our meetings now and we have started making mud bricks for it.

Please pass my greetings to C.A.T. members and all of them who are in the Truth waiting for the second coming of Our Lord Jesus to establish God's Kingdom here on earth.

## SINZA

We are please to report the baptism of Sister Nancy Ayubu Sazi on 25th December.

## NEWS FROM UGANDA



### BUGIRI | Kyolimpa Shadia

God be praised for your kind regards. I am really fascinated with your open heart in extending moral generation. I have invited friends to share with me the word of God and the Bible you sent to me is the only one in the region.

Comment: I requested the postmaster to help with a P.O.Box and, in appreciation, sent him a Bible. MH

### KISINGA

Bro Kule Remegio has had a severe attack of Malaria and was admitted to Hospital and is now recovering. However, in Africa there is no free Hospitals and so he has a nasty hospital bill to pay.



**Bro Remegio**

## NEWS FROM ZAMBIA



### DAPHAN

There has been a lot of activity in Daphan. Apart from preaching activities, the CBM and donors have provided for a substantial pump, pictured below, so that they can obtain good clean drinking water for themselves and others. This is really appreciated by everyone as good drinking water is so important to health and alas, the lack of it is the cause of a lot of illnesses and this type of practical help is really needed in many areas. Many thanks to all who have helped with this project.

Bro Costa Kanembe (pictured overleaf) has been giving many talks on the devil and satan, quite a shock for some Catholics to realise that Jesus called Peter "satan", but were greatly relieved to find that the word satan is just another word for adversary and Jesus called Peter satan because at that moment he was adverse to Christ's teaching, because Peter did not have in mind the things of God but the things of men (Matt 16:22-23).



**DAPHAN | Bro Costa Kanembe (left) explaining to student Pennwell Kajolo the parable of the sower and illustrating its meaning in a field**

**KAFUE | Bro Emerson Ntebeka**

I thank you very much for Gospel News magazine, I am very glad indeed for it to continue as it is the only Christadelphian magazine we receive regularly.

I am quite well at this time, but my wife has a lot to think and talk about concerning the death of her son, Brother Clever Ntebeka. I tell her, "Clever has fallen asleep in Christ. If you have faith in God and Jesus Christ, you will see your son at the resurrection day." She becomes happier this way, but with tears coming out of her eyes, of course.



**Bro Dan Mwabiua who loves reading his Bible**



**Bro Andrew Mbewe and his Sister Molin who are anxious to prepare themselves for Jesus return**

#### **KANYOKO | Sis Theresa Daka**

In God there are no poor but there are great riches. In God, real treasure lies not in what can be seen but what cannot be seen. Jesus told us to put our treasure in heaven not on earth, where there are rust and robbers, so let us put our treasure where it cannot be seen.

I pray that God can help all brothers and sisters to know the way to pass through, so that when Christ rules with His might, we shout, "Oh! I see the son of God."

I am the mother of a son aged one year and six months who has sickle cell disease, so I go to the hospital in and out for the treatment. The health workers help us, and they tell us words to give him a lot of food, but I and the father are not in employment. Our child needs lots of food to grow well.

#### **KAPIRI MPOSHI | Bro Chisosa Ostine**

The people who want to know the truth are many, but there are no Bibles that they can use for studies. I would like to inform you that my wife's sister Agnes has been sick for a long time. She is suffering from cervical cancer and needs proper treatment so that she may be cured. But this needs money to go to Lusaka where the machines are.

#### **NDOLA | Bro Green Mumbelunga**

I have a very big problem. We are passing through hardships with my children. The fact is that I was sick, so I sent my wife to go and buy some goods at Nakonde. While she was coming back she was involved in an accident which claimed 12 people dead, including my wife. She died on the spot.

All the goods she bought got lost- everything. So we are stranded very much, me and my children. Sometimes we sleep without eating any food.

#### **Prayer Request**

**Please pray for our brothers and sisters who are suffering from sickness in terrible poverty and grieving for their loved ones.**

#### **NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE**



Chipinge Ecclesia in particular is progressing well, with Bro Moses Dhlakama, who is always giving us excellent Bible teachings and exhortations.

## News from Asia

### NEWS FROM PHILIPPINES



The Aklan Ecclesia, pictured above, meet in a small house room or gardens. They would like to build their own hall, but are unable at the moment to afford a plot of land to do so. They are a happy expanding group, but not having a meeting place tends to put people off joining them. They are keen preachers and appreciative of literature that is sent to them.

### The Forewarned is Better



The Bible teaches that eternal life is not the natural inheritance of man, but something that must be sought (Acts 13:46-48; Heb 5:9; Rom 8:13; John 3:16). That those who do not fulfill the conditions set by God will not receive eternal life (Galatians 6:8; 2 Pet 2:12; Luke 12:48). God has revealed His purpose in the Bible by direct teaching, and through dramatic experiences of individuals and the rise and the fall of nations - written for our instruction, a warning to us all that the end of all things is near.

**“For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” Galatians 6:8**

The state of the world today is similar to the days of Noah - a type of that which Christ Jesus warned would exist at the epoch of his coming. "The wickedness of man would certainly be great" - peoples ignoring God's word, crimes and violence becoming more common, and atheists and also the so-called Christians distorting the Truth and distrust in God of promises to men (2 Tim 3:13). Peoples in the world are warned that it could only end in disaster, and after that God's divine purpose shall be manifested on earth. Therefore the faithfuls of Christ are exhorted to come out from the perverse generation and false church that would inevitably be destroyed (Rev 18). For they claim to believe in God but yet they deny Him through their teachings and actions. To have faith in God means to believe and trust in Him and His promises with complete confidence. Peoples who do not obey God and His son Jesus Christ are not true disciples and do not have access to the grace of God. So man's sins can only be forgiven through God's grace and counted righteous if we show faith in God. The right understanding of the Truth of the Gospel and baptism (immersion) in water is the new start.

God has set a time for His purpose, and He has appointed a day He shall judge the world in righteousness through Jesus Christ whose return to this troubled earth is certainly imminent, as is evident from prophetic signs that today abound - proving that we are at the very time of his appearing (Rev 22:12).

Being just religious does not please God, but true followers of Christ Jesus must have faith in God and His offer of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, "Pray, focus on the things of the Kingdom of God lest you lose eternal life".

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Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.

"Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom"

Psalm 90:12

*Bro Isidore Mwibeleca (Kakuma, Kenya)*

### **Reward of the Conquerors**

"To those who by patience in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, He will give eternal life." As it tells us in this statement of the apostle Paul to the Romans, eternal life is something which we are to seek in order to have it, and not something which is inherent to us. The faithful in Hebrews 11:13 are mentioned to confirm that they all died in faith, not having the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. We may ask, how were they strangers and exiles on the earth? In fact, the measure of men's days is a few hands breadths. True, life is short because all men are under the law of sin and death. Our forerunners in faith were seeking the city that is to come, the new Jerusalem from above whose builder is not man, but God. Mind you, it was their faith in God that made them strangers and exiles on the earth - and so they belonged to heavenly citizenship, because it is in heaven where the seat of heavenly government is located, but its citizens, the saints, will be co-rulers with Christ on earth.

Again, let us have another look at Hebrews 11:39-40, "And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect." Many of us are aware that eternal life is something God is promising us through the work of God's only begotten son, Jesus. Therefore the reward for all the conquerors in this life through their faith will be rewarded

together, after being successful at the judgement seat of Christ. We are all faced with both life and death. Therefore let us be extra wise by choosing life by leading our lives in line with God's very own laws.



**Left to Right | Bro Nyirongo and his sister wife, Bro Richard Chulu from Lundazi, Zambia, Sis Tiffness Kumwenda, Bro Sylvester Tembo, Bro Joseph Moloko from Kasunga and newly baptised Bro Mtisunge Tembo at fraternal gathering, Chilumba Ecclesia**



**Brethren with handcrafted wooden boat following baptism of Bro Mtisunge Tembo**

*Bro Sylvester Tembo (Mzuzu, Malawi)*

### **Noah's Ark - a Lesson for Today**

“And, behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life from under heaven, and everything that is in the earth shall die” (Genesis 6:17). The Bible records that in the days of Noah, God instructed Noah to build an ark because He was about to destroy the earth and everything that had the breath of life in it with a great flood.



The Bible says, “By the faith of Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house” (Hebrews 11:7). Noah hastened to build the ark and afterwards the heavens opened and heavy rains flooded the earth. All the people and animals on earth drowned and whole cities were submerged in the deluge. Yet the same flood that destroyed the world bore Noah's ark up; the very flood of judgement that came to destroy

the ungodly bore up the righteous. You have to realise that the evil, hardship and economic conditions in the world, or that may be in your country, are not set against you - for you can never be disadvantaged. The flood or economic and political disaster is not your disadvantage.

In the midst of recession and economic downturn, God has ordained your spiritual prosperity. He has already planned that you will be a success in this life irrespective of what may go on around you. Just as the ark was a haven for Noah and his family, the Lord Jesus is your refuge and strong tower. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous run into it and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). No wonder the Bible says, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). Remember that each one of those in Noah's ark was sustained for a hundred and fifty days, but when you come into Christ by making Jesus Lord your life he will preserve and sustain you for eternity.

Therefore, refuse to fret or fear, for the Lord will bear you up, above every negative situation. So, may Jesus soon come to establish the kingdom and fill the earth with the knowledge and glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

*Bro Simion Mudhimba (Chipinge, Zimbabwe)*

## **Peace**

World-shaking events are happening every day. Various religions are praying for peace on earth, but there is no peace. Mankind needs peace to stay carefree and without worry. Human beings are suffering from wars, AIDS and other disease, and hunger. It is not that God has no interest in peace. He has a long-term plan for peace which is in the Bible. God promised Abraham, "And through your offspring, all nations on earth will be blessed because you have obeyed me" (Genesis 22:18). God has made the decision already - peace shall prevail here on earth no fears, no death and no bloodshed. Sin will be abolished. This is the time when Jesus will be ruling here on earth. Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be called the prince of peace: "Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end" (Isaiah 9:6).

When Jesus returns and sits on his Father's throne, only then will peace, love and harmony prevail in this world. Jesus will destroy wickedness and transform the earth. Mankind cannot bring peace. Man's rule only produces injustice, sickness, poverty and death, which will continue until the prince of peace returns. "No-one living in Zion will say, 'I am ill', and the sins of those who dwell there will be forgiven" (Isaiah 33:24 NIV). "The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness; in his days the righteous will flourish. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed" (Psalm 72:3,7,17 NIV read the whole Psalm).

Wars, food shortages, earthquakes, just to mention a few evils, have put mankind in a terrible muddle. God knows the answer, and we can also know the answer if we read the Bible.

Look at the book of Daniel: "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure for ever" (Daniel 2:44). The kingdom mentioned in this verse is God's kingdom and its ruler is Jesus Christ. When Jesus rules, peace shall be here for ever.

## **Sacrifices**



Think about the boy who gave away his lunch to a crowd of five thousand hungry people. The people had trailed Jesus to a grassy mountain side, apparently so engrossed in listening to him that they forgot to think ahead, they hadn't brought food. One boy's few loaves and fish only highlighted the crowd's vast need. "But what are they among so many?" Andrew asked, but the boy offered his lunch anyway.

He gave what he had because he knew everyone was hungry, and sharing seemed like the right thing to do; perhaps he knew that Jesus could do miraculous things - but how could he imagine what Jesus was about to do with his small gift? Jesus called for everyone to sit down. He took the boy's lunch, gave thanks and a meal was served. How the boy's faith in Jesus must have grown then!

We have to learn a lesson from this boy. When you are surrounded by even great needs, come forward with your morsel. Give willingly because it is the right thing to do. Give trustingly to the one who knows how to apply small gifts to great needs. Let your faith grow as you watch Him take your offering, and do not worry whether there will be anything left for yourself. Now think about the Father who was asked to sacrifice his son to God. What God asked of Abraham appals us: "Go to the mountain. Offer your only son, who you love, as a burnt offering to me." Abraham was familiar with sacrifices. He often offered sheep or cattle at significant moments when he felt God near. But this request for his son was quite unexpected. Why would God give a promised son and then take him away so cruelly? There appeared to be no reason at all for the request. Yet Abraham obeyed. He took Isaac to the mountain; he tied Isaac and laid him on the altar. In Abraham's mind, the sacrifice was made: he reached for a knife to finish the task. The Bible, the word of God, tells us that God was testing Abraham when God saw that Abraham had truly given up his son, he ended the test and spared Isaac's life.

God saw more in Abraham's offering than the sacrifice itself. He saw godly fear in Abraham's heart and that is what pleased Him most. God rewarded Abraham with the promise of a great posterity that would be a blessing to all nations. We can learn a lesson from Abraham: consider that sometimes God may ask you to give up something dear for reasons He alone can see. Do not rebel. Humbly surrender the offering to God, and may He see in your heart the godly devotion that He delights to reward. We should never be proud of the sacrifices we make for God, or how He uses them. After all, God made the greatest sacrifice for us. Like the boy who

gave his lunch, God saw a throng of needy people. Like Abraham, He gave His only son. In this was manifested the love of

God toward us, because God sent His only begotten son into the world (1 John 4:9). Only because God first loved us, do we have anything to offer (1 John 14:19). Are we willing to make the sacrifices it takes to teach our children the way of truth? The Lord will always bless our contribution. May we always receive God's gift of sacrificial love and inspire our brethren and sisters with love for the truth as well.

*Bro Gaius Egwu (Ohafia, Nigeria)*

### **“The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth”**



In the sermon on the mount, Jesus said: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). Meek is a small word but one which, in the light of what Jesus was saying, is of great significance, for it portrays an aspect of human character that is pleasing to God. It was a trait that Jesus saw was lacking in the Jewish leaders of his day.

The English word covers the word in the Greek text which means humble and lowly. These descriptions represent the very opposite of arrogance, a characteristic which was so often exhibited by the Jewish rulers - the Pharisees, who tried to trap Jesus in the things he taught and did. Jesus would have been very aware of the lack of meekness in the Roman occupying powers who were overbearing and did not spare the Christian believers.

Jesus himself was the very essence of meekness as the prophet Isaiah so eloquently revealed a long time before Jesus was born. “He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearer is silent, so he opened not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). As the prophet Zechariah writes, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your king is coming to you: he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey and a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9).

In today's world of high pressure commercial business, self-assertion and a confident manner are basic requirements for success. There would seem to be no place here for meekness and gentleness. Of course, there are Christian believers in business as in public life who are both humble and gentle, but competitive society generally lies in the opposite direction. Quite clearly, the teaching of Christ and his apostles is that the believer should not become a party to unbridled ambition. Jesus encouraged all who received his message of salvation with humility and meekness to put their trust and hope in him. He always dealt gently with these who came to

him, his own humbleness of heart standing out in sharp contrast to the dictatorial oppressive attitude of the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders who sought continuously to oppose what he taught about God and himself, the son of God and true Messiah.

Only Jesus was able to offer real consolation to all over-burdened and exploited people that he saw about him as he soothed their feelings using lovely words which must have been like a balm to those who heard him. "Come to me, all you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28-29).

*Bro David & Sis Jacklyne Wanjala (Chwele, Kenya)*

### **Wanga Campaign | Akwanga ~ Northern Nigeria**

This was a three day intensive study and activity campaign with a public lecture. The days started 5:30a.m. with a wake up and clean session to a full day's activity broken up with many Hymns.

**I GIVE THANKS TO God Almighty in heaven for making it possible for us to be among the living, in Northern Nigeria for a 3-day Campaign on "Signs of the Returning of Jesus Christ to Restore God's Kingdom Here on Earth"**

#### **A Lot Needs to Be Done**

Should our Master remain away, we need to work hard, and encourage support from elsewhere to give us more courage. "Where there is no vision the people perish but he that keeps the laws, happy is he" (Proverbs 29:18). So people are perishing in different parts of the world for lack of knowing the true teaching of the Bible, which is a great spiritual famine throughout the world. "Behold the day will come, said the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the Land, not famine of bread nor of thirst of water, but hearing the word of the Lord" (Amos 8:11). This is the state of our world today, many don't even know what they do because there is a famine, just as God said to Daniel "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the word and seal the book even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase; many shall be purified and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and non of the wicked shall understand"(Daniel 12:4,10).

For such reasons, the Bible says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt 6:33). But today, the whole world, even some of the elect are on the opposite side of the scripture (Matt 6:33). They now seek prosperities and worldly things, moving from one place to another, seeking for those things and yet find no solution. "For the time shall come (which is now) when they shall not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. And they shall wander from sea to sea and from the north to the south, they shall run to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it" (2 Timothy 4:3-4). By the grace of God, He has allowed us to find the Truth, and if we really believe we have the Truth there are no reasons that should prevent us from serving the Lord. "Thou therefore, my son be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men, who

shall be able to teach others also. Therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man engaged in warfare entangles himself with affairs of this life (world); that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:1-4). This is our duty and the yoke that rests upon us.



**Brothers, Sisters, friends and children following the afternoon section of the lecture**



**Bro Soja Mamman presiding during Memorial Service at Northern Nigeria gathering in Akwanga**



**Bro Rukpa Isaac Usman giving a Bible talk during Memorial Service**

*Bro Rukpus Isaac Usman, (Northern Nigeria Trustee)*

## **The Love of Money**



I would like to talk about the love of money 2 Tim. 3:2, 1 Tim. 6:10. Money itself is a system which is good and efficient, but if your mind is evil, then it can turn you away from obtaining salvation. In 2 Kings 5 verses 20-29, the Bible records Gehazi's greed. In Matthew 28:12-15 we read that the High Priests and Elders gave soldiers money to lie and say that the apostles stole the body of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Also King Solomon's riches caused him to turn away from serving the God of Israel. (1 Kings 11:1-13) Verse 6 of this chapter tells us that "Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as did his father David."

Today we must abstain from evil and only do the will of God. The Children of Israel taken into captivity did not expect to return back to Jerusalem – only a remnant was permitted to return. Therefore we must do the will of God as our Saviour did, and he will give immortality. I admire the work of Ezra and Nehemiah in their stand to serve Yahweh, the God of Israel, against strong opposition. We too must take care about the love of money and the dangers that riches can bring, and remain firm in the Truth.

*Bro John Onani (Kenya, Sindo)*

## **Encouragement**

It is good to have letters from you, which are providing some encouragement and they are very helpful. Yes, it is very important to have fellowship with each other as this helps everyone of us on our walk towards the coming kingdom. However, this is not always too easy, as we are all so different from each other, so we must try to do the best we can. It is a sobering thought when we consider that our fellowship with one another should reflect the fellowship that we enjoy with the Lord! I am reminded of the biblical principle somewhat paraphrased, "As he has been kind to us, so let us be kind to others."

Sorry to tell you that we have lost our brother in the Lord, **Katongo Davies Mulenga** who slept in the Lord last year.

We have some problems about farming here. At this time we need a ten kg bag of maize seeds, and a 50 kg bag of fertilizer for this farming input; maize seed is at K200. With our Father's help, we will stir and give some help to our brothers and sisters after harvesting.

Every time we come together, we remember the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the chief shepherd who gave his life for the sheep. The one who gave all for us. The one who said it is more blessed to give than to receive. Let us remember him as he commanded us, "Until he come". You are so correct when you say it is more effective to put the 'truth' into actions rather than ten thousand words. Unfortunately it is often easier to talk about it than to do it. As

children of our Father, it has been made a matter of prayer, requesting help from Him, who only is the source of all good things. As brethren and sisters, and as ones who are getting older, we know for sure that to pray without ceasing is the only way to overcome all the difficulties we experience in this life.

*Bro Charles and Sis Cathrine Daka (Mufulira, Zambia)*

### **“By Whose Authority....?”**

This was the BIG question posed by Christ to those who placed such a high value on human authority!

It arrived unexpected, as a vexing question, “What about the authority of John the Baptist? Was it of God, or of the masses?” Too hard to answer? John openly spoke the Word of God. He did no miracles – yet many believed him to be a prophet, sent from God. He was just that and more! The questioners who approached the Lord had heard His Words and seen His miracles. They were without excuse. (The references are in Matt 21:23, Mark 11:28 and Luke 20:2.)

### **“I am from above....”**

Jesus showed that His authority was “from above” with Word and with Power, received directly from Heaven. His apostles were witnesses to both. They heard the Voice, they saw the miracles. They loved their Lord! Peter tells us that they were eyewitnesses, not only of His authority, but also of His Royal appointment! (2 Peter 1:16-17).

### **Disciples of the Lord**

When we were baptised we accepted without question, Christ’s authority to speak, act and to require our complete allegiance. The Jesus we have come to know, is One who daily administers His Divine authority with compassion, love and patient understanding. In this present world He has delegated His authority to many.

What ‘authorities’ might we exercise NOW as Believers?

- 1| To use the Word of God
- 2| To uphold Jesus’ teaching
- 3| To witness to His Way
- 4| To declare God’s righteousness
- 5| To serve one another ‘for Christ’s sake’
- 6| To pray for one another ‘in His Name’
- 7| To forgive one another ‘as your Father in Heaven forgives’
- 8| To address the Eternal God - as our Heavenly Father!

This is an impressive list! Positive activities that we can fully engage in, without further consultation or need for any localised authority. We can just get on with it, knowing that the Lord will approve, with the proviso that we engage in them in the same manner and for the same motives, as Christ would endorse.

### **Why do we write about these things?**

We (in the West) live in a very Christian-influenced world. The 'church' will NOT allow such license as Jesus gave us! It wants to control its members. "Pastors/ministers must have a suitable qualifications to speak for the church" or "Only the Priest can arrange forgiveness" or "We appoint Evangelists to preach the Gospel" or "Church writings / authority take precedence over the Bible." The church will usually appoint a hierarchy, a chain of command or its own authority, and may also set a high priority on cash contributions, using questionable means and motives. None of this has scriptural authority.

### **The Truth alone sets one free**

How blessed we are to be different, to embrace the Truth! Our Lord only allows His Followers to serve Him under HIS personal Headship. Paul draws attention to "The body" and "the Head" as integral, one united entity. Christ does call for spiritual shepherds to feed, care for and to guide His flock. These are "under authority" NOT the authority!

### **Let's use this freedom we have been given to serve our Master and wait on Him ...till He comes**

*Bro Neil Todd (Australia)*

### **Little by Little**

We recently heard someone quote an old saying which says, "The greatest things done on earth have been done little by little."

When we refer to things done on earth we naturally are speaking of the deeds of man and not the wonders of God. There is quite a lesson to learn from this fact of doing great things little by little.

In the vast world in which we live today, everyone wants to take short cuts to the top. Few are willing to do things little by little and yet when we study nature we see that God teaches us that great things are done slowly.

The giant Sequoia trees, the oldest living things in the world, grow exceedingly slowly but look at the height and size that they attain. In all of nature God seems to be teaching us that the worthwhile things are done little by little.

We turn to our Bibles and learn the same lesson. Adam and Eve were in a fortunate position but they wanted to take the short cut and ate of the fruit in hopes of becoming wise.

Moses was ready to deliver the Israelites when he was forty but God taught him patience and humility as a sheep herder for forty more years before God felt that he was ready. By this time Moses was much wiser and not as eager as he had been when he slew the Egyptian.

We all seem to want to run before we can walk and our hardest falls come when we are unprepared for the task we have set out to accomplish.

We need to remember that Jesus spent thirty years preparing for three and one half years ministry and he was the Son of God. This age is particularly plagued with the fast pace of life

and we find ourselves teaching when we should be listening and writing when we should be reading.

There is no substitute for experience and we get experience only one day at a time.

God is still visiting the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name and he is doing it little by little. “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” said the Lord through Isaiah. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, “Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” Isa. 28:10,16.

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God was as a grain of mustard seed, a great kingdom from a small beginning and God is calling and preparing the saints from that kingdom from all ages, little by little.

We must not be too impatient or too proud to do little tasks and take short steps – too often we want to wait and do nothing until we can do something spectacular. Instead we are wise if we will only remember that the greatest things done on earth have been done little by little.

*Bro Bob Lloyd (USA)*

### **Reaping What is Sown**



In the normal course of events a sower expects to reap a harvest after the growing season. If you plant little, you can only expect a small harvest. If you plant a lot you expect a lot. While a harvest is not guaranteed, we would agree that this makes general sense.

This is the same with the way we live our life. We will harvest from life what we sow in life. As God says; “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (Gal 6:7). This is a spiritual truth that affects much more of our lives than we care to think.

In everyday life, the reap-what-you-sow principle holds true. A friendly man will have many friends and the opposite is also true. A generous man will find people are generous to them, and the opposite also holds. We are told in 2 Corinthians 9:6 “whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.” An angry man will find many disagreements and a peacemaker is more likely to find peace. We find many examples of the principle of reaping-what-is-sown throughout the Bible. Proverbs tells us; “the one who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward” (11:18) and “whoever sows injustice will reap sorrow” (22:8). Both examples are illustrated in the life of Jacob.

Jacob sowed deceit when he dressed up as Esau and deceived his own father. He overturned the natural order of the firstborn and obtained Esau’s blessing. Seven years later he was at the receiving end of a similar case of the blessing of the firstborn. He was deceived by Laban in the

matter of marrying the firstborn Leah, rather than the second, Rachel. It can be reasonably argued that Jacob got what he deserved. Jacob's deception came back on him in other ways. Laban deceived him over his wages ten times. Later his sons learnt his bad habits and deceived him and others in the matter of Shechem. Later still, and equally dramatically, his sons deceived him in the matter of Joseph. Jacob sowed deception and reaped deception. There is a certain justice about this.

Jacob also sowed and reaped a blessing. When God asked him to leave Laban, he obeyed. It was a dangerous move. But God came to his rescue and warned Laban not to interfere with Jacob. In the same way, trusting in God, Jacob was delivered from his fear of Esau. God rewarded his trust, which also fulfilled Jacob's request to God in his vow.

So Jacob reaped deception and protection in his life. The fact that 'Jacob' transformed into 'Israel' and gave up his deceptive ways did not change the fact that he had to bear the consequences of his deception throughout his life. The seeds he sowed early in his life grew and bore fruit. Certainly he learnt his lesson and changed for the better, but he still had to suffer for the bad seed he had sown.

**“Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.” Psalm 62:12**

Jacob's mother, Rebekah, is another example. She knew the prophecy about Jacob – that the older would serve the younger. This suited her, because Jacob was her favourite. Her mistake was in thinking that God needed her help to bring about His will. So she engineered Jacob's receipt of the blessing of Esau in an act of deception at its worst. But she did not get away with her sin.

She had not foreseen Esau would want to kill Jacob, so she was forced to send him away for safety. As far as Scripture records, she never saw Jacob again. By trying to bring about the exaltation of her favourite, she reaped separation from him. Instead she spent the remainder of her time with Esau. There is a certain justice about this. She reaped what she had sowed throughout her life.

We have only looked at one person's life yet we have seen the sow-reap principle very clearly. When we look at the lives of others in Scripture, we see this principle working out repeatedly. Let us not fool ourselves and pretend it no longer operates. Even today we reap what we sow as a general principle.

Let's consider this principle in a little more detail. If we reap what we sow, then we need to be very careful about what seeds we plant in our lives, both early on and at every stage of our life. If we receive back what we ourselves have done, we need to think twice about what we do. It makes sense to sow kindness, generosity and love, so that we can receive them back. As James says; “Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness” (Jam 3:18). However, if we sow arguments, division, jealousy and anger, we will receive them back in due course. It is only a matter of time.

This is not the only issue – it is also true that seeds tend to increase. Whatever we sow will probably come back in greater measure. We may reap 2-fold, 3-fold or even more-fold. Since this is the case, we need to be extremely wise about what we sow during our lifetime.

Since we are followers of God and his commands, we should have no fear about what we will reap. "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life." (Rom 6:22).

*from "Way Ahead"*

### **A Good Testimony Through Faith**



"Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6).

This is the truth about our God, but one might ask, has God rewarded all the worthies and faithful ones of old down through the countless generations of all believers to the present day? Hebrews 11:39-40 has a satisfying answer for such questions. It says, "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the Promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." A good testimony which was obtained through faith is fully revealed in the Bible.

If we read with attention the family history of the Fathers of old, starting with Adam, then Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and the Prophets, we will find that when all that was promised to them is accomplished, they will all be living witnesses of these promises. That means they will be resurrected from the dead and then receive the gift of eternal life.

The testimony of the apostles, which is not at all different from the testimony of the Old Testament worthies, helps all of us today who rely on the Bible as the true Word of God. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might also have life through his name - because our faith should be directed by the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, as explained in Acts 8:12. We should labour to give a good account or testimony of ourselves so that in the end Jesus Christ will say of us, "Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord." (Matthew 25:21).

Such words will not be said to those who lose faith. Take a little time and consider the early generations of shining examples of faithfulness – the likes of Abraham, the Father of the faithful and many more, which Hebrews 11 records, and you will see how little we do. Surely there is no comparison. These all served the Lord in hunger and in thirst, in cold and nakedness, in toil and weariness, in prayer and in meditations and in persecution. They preached the gospel of the Kingdom and the name of Jesus. They were strangers to the world, but they were God's

witnesses through their works of faith. After you have seen such examples of faith, it will be difficult for you to fall asleep spiritually.

Paul, through his letter to the Thessalonians, also exhorts us not to fall asleep by saying, “You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.” (1 Thessalonians 5:510).

Such faith is the kind that sees the invisible things, the kind that believe the incredible things. For with God everything is possible and in Christ everything is “Yes”.

*Bro Green Mumbelunga (Ndola, Zambia)*

### **Letter from Tongaren Ecclesia | Kenya**



Many thanks for the parcel of books you sent to me. The books are supplied to Ecclesial local Elders; this will build up the faith of our Brothers and Sisters in the Ecclesia’s area boundary.

We always pray God to give you the ability to complete translating a full Bible in Swahili. In Kenya there are many translators of Swahili Bibles that have many definitions. These translators are confusing Bible readers, for example they have defined in a certain translation that there is life somewhere after the death of a person, and they quote the following verses: Psalm 6:6, 115:17; Isaiah 38:18; Ezekiel 32:1732. Such translation may confuse readers, especially C.B.M. members. We pray that God may open doors of our C.B.M. team to translate a full Bible in Swahili so that the translation may be supplied to every member of C.B.M. in the Swahili world, or else we shall be confused.

I have been on a three-week refresher course of maintenance and repairs of sewing machines, which was sponsored by the Catholics from Holland, for I am their instructor in garment construction in their sponsored vocational training centre.

I have requested the C.B.M. UK to sponsor a tailoring school which would be operated in the Ecclesia, so that I may withdraw from the Catholics’ premises. I want this tailoring school to become an ecclesial investment project so that it may benefit the Ecclesia’s members in the area and the surrounding community. This is the only way that can avoid me from working with the Catholics.

The Agape students from Tongaren are doing their exams of form four this year, and as soon as they return home the ecclesia will be busy for youth projects, such as Bible Studies and Bible Schools: some are baptised and some are studying. Will you please send us the booklets for Bible revision. Also they need their own Bibles. Their names are as follows: Herbert Wanyama, Stellar Barosa, Nicholus Simiyu, Dora Nana, Nelson Wandela, Faith Kisaka, Silvia Kadrieray, Shilar Mwanisa, Esther Kunusia and Esther Kadenge. We shall be grateful if you will send English Bibles to these candidates.

*Bro Isaac Kapa (Tongaren, Kenya)*

### **“Love Envieth Not”**

The heart of man cannot contain both of these feelings. If we have the love spoken of in (1 Cor 13:4-8) we cannot have the envy; they are opposed the one to the other; for envy is, indeed, one of the worst of the “works of the flesh.” Solomon informs us in Proverbs 27:4, that “Wrath is cruel and anger is outrageous: but who is able to stand before envy?” True brethren and sisters will guard against anger and wrath, but how much more against envy? Anger, though a danger, is oft-times of short duration, but envy is nursed in the heart, brooded over, is ready to imagine evil, to magnify small grievances, to belittle faithfulness in the one who is the object of envy, and leads to many grievous sins as a few moments’ thought will enable us to readily perceive.

The pages of Scripture make manifest the ends to which envy leads. Stephen, in the address recorded in Acts 7, tells his hearers that “the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt,” thus bringing trouble for their brother, sorrow for their father, and afterwards great uneasiness in their own minds. The leaders of the people to whom Stephen spoke had themselves been responsible for a greater crime, the death of Jesus himself, and “Pilate knew for envy they had delivered him”. The apostle Paul was opposed by the Jews both at Thessalonica and Antioch; they were “moved with envy” because almost the whole city came to hear the word of the Lord.

### **“A sound heart is the life of the flesh, but envy the rottenness of the bones” Proverbs 14:30**

But the Scripture also gives us splendid examples of the Love that envieth not. One such example is in the history of Jonathan and David. Saul’s envy of David was obvious from the day when it was sung, “Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands,” and therefore Saul “eyed David from that day and forward.” But Jonathan loved David. This brought upon his head his father’s anger; yea, Saul incited him to envy, saying “for as long as the son of Jesse liveth, thou shalt not be established nor thy kingdom.” That Jonathan realised the truth of these words is evident, for he said to David, “Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee,” and was apparently content that it should so be. It is a good example of the love that envieth not; no resentment was shown between these two, and so, at Jonathan’s death, David mourns: “I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been to me: thy love for me was wonderful.” The apostle Paul teaches that the same spirit should dwell in the brethren and sisters of Christ. The affections and lusts of the world should be eschewed by God’s children. Envy is common among men and women who know not God. In business or private life there are those who are envious of another’s position, or wealth, or attainments. But it is a characteristic which should be entirely foreign to the saints, and yet the many

exhortations in the word remind us that we can succumb to this evil; for James writes, “If ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth,” and goes on to say that “where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” Let us then be on our guard. It is possible to envy another’s knowledge and ability to expound the Word, but we should rather rejoice that the truth can be proclaimed in such manner. We can envy the attainments of others or the talents they possess, and yet not be using the talents we have. Let us endeavour to cultivate the fruits of the spirit and in so doing we shall “not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another”.

Let us endeavour to follow the “more excellent way”. When we recall God’s love to us, manifested in so many ways, but especially in the opportunity to obtain salvation; when we remember the love of Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for his friends.

*Bro J Webster (UK)*

### **One of Many**



When we think of Bible characters to imitate, we may think of Paul or Dorcas before thinking of John the Baptist. After all, what did John the Baptist accomplish? His pulpit was the Jordan wilderness, and he baptized repentant sinners in a muddy river. True, all Jerusalem and Judea went out to hear him, and Jesus called John the ‘Elias’ who was to come. But John did not even perform miracles. In the end, by preaching a few simple words, John found imprisonment through a damsel’s unprincipled dance, and met his death – a terrible end.

Since we have come to the end of his life so quickly, let’s go back, let’s think about John’s life a little more. John did not have a chequered past to make his sermons interesting, (something like, ‘I once was a notorious bandit, but I turned my life around’). John could have boasted that his father was a priest, or that his mother was of the daughters of Aaron. However, we have no record he did so. In fact, John did not talk about himself much at all. Instead, he pointed to Christ, “whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose”. “Behold,” he said, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He must increase, but I must decrease”. He fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah as he preached, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his path straight.” That is why he preached repentance, so that when Christ began to preach, many would be prepared to accept the message, and find eternal life. As we read more about John the Baptist, we see that Christ said of him, “Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist”. With these words in mind, let us consider two things about John the Baptist:

- 1| He never exalted himself – he spoke of Christ.
- 2| Because of his ministry, many more souls will be saved.

Don't these things mean he was great? Through the ages, we seem to once more hear that voice from the Judean wilderness – a voice raised in urgency. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then, near the man in camel's hair, we see Simeon and Anna, their faces uplifted in praise at the coming of the Messiah. Behind them are Moses and Noah and Enoch. Voices swell in chorus, "Worthy the Lamb!" No longer does John the Baptist cry his message alone. In this scene, he is one of many of those who foresaw the Messiah. In front of John we see ranged the faithful through the ages. We see men and women who faced great temptation and won. By victory, they freed themselves to proclaim the greatness of Christ. With John the Baptist, they raise their voices, "Worthy the Lamb!" As the platter laden executioner dragged open John's cell door, he faced a man of conviction and courage, a great man. I can imagine that from the man clad in camel hair may have come the words, eagerly spoken, "He has come! Have you seen Him?" Today, when platter bearing circumstances occur, or even when friends and neighbours with all good intent confront us, do they find us with shining eyes saying, "He has come! He will return. Do you know Him?" Like John, we can thus be one of many raising our voices in praise of the lamb. Did our life and actions point men to Christ? Did our words express who we are? The real us can never be hidden. (Matt.12:34)

*Bro Gaius Egwu (Ohafia, Nigeria)*

### **Carelinks | Belgium**

We baptized brother **Kwame** in Belgium. He has spread our literature to other disillusioned Pentecostals in the African community in his area, and we spent a pleasant time with **Kwaku**, whom we baptized after a truly wonderful discussion. He was so relieved not to have to fear demons, witch doctors, spells and the like- these ideas are promulgated and widely believed in amongst many African immigrants, and are pushed by the Pentecostal churches they attend.

Life for these migrants is often difficult, even after they receive proper residency documents. They typically work in factories doing hard work for long hours, but on temporary contracts, meaning that they don't get the longer term pension and welfare benefits which go with stable employment; and they live in tiny one room flats often sharing with other such workers. So much of Europe's economy is built upon such cheap, minimum wage labour. And many of these folks are then kidded that if they donate their spare cash to the pastor, the Lord will in the end make them rich. The prosperity Gospel is really the opposite of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Our blessings are spiritual and not material.

Our new brothers and their families are keen for us to teach a seminar about wealth, blessing and prosperity in its Biblical context. Let us know if you'd like to come to Belgium for a few days to assist.



## Carelinks | China

Brother Donald continues following up contacts in China and baptizing them, as he has for so many years. He is really a star convert, from his baptism many years ago in a hotel room in unusual circumstances, providentially arranged.

Donald reports: I baptized brother **Huang** in a public sauna pool, so I couldn't photo the baptism process. This is his personal testimony: "I was born in a peasant family in the southwest with two younger sisters. Life is tough, the only way to get out of the door is to study hard. I was admitted to the normal school, so my family is very pride of me, it also indicates that I can become civil service. After 3 years of my college career, I was assigned as a teacher with 58.8 yuan monthly income. Then I got married. Then 5 years later something unexpected happened, my wife was cheating.

The flames of anger ignited me and under the influence of alcohol, I began to carry out my plan for revenge and with a knife stabbed that man. This behavior also changed my destiny. I was arrested and taken to the police station, I confessed the crime, and was then taken to City Detention Center in custody. Stayed there for 5 months, waiting for the verdict of the law. Meanwhile my heart seems to be burning red iron drops as a drop of water, neighing and groaning and suffering. Finally I was sent to prison for 4 years... all days long with groups of the dregs of society, I was one of them. The captain in the prison only blame and dislike me, good to others, as if I killed his parents. I suffered a lot in the prison. Four years later I was released from prison. The streets was very spacious, bright, everything is so beautiful and fresh. After returning home I felt very shame. No work, no money, no status. But my parents worried about me, I kept wandering.

One day I met a missionary, who distributed me a Bible. Then I read it. At night, I sat alone in bed praying. My heart become very quiet. I started to plant agriculture, I am doing part time job in the town when I am free. I know that God put me through all of this, countless hardships, touched, pain, save me the prodigal son, reshaping me. I'm a brand new me now. Thank you, Father! All glory belongs to the Lord Jesus!"



**Above: Our new Bro Huang with Bro Donald**

### **Carelinks | France**

Cindy writes: “I’m so joyful to report the baptism of **Lena** in Paris. Originally from Russia, she now lives in Paris with her Turkish, Muslim husband.

Lena had forgotten about her Christian faith for many years after leaving the Pentecostal church in disillusion, until recently reviving her interest in Christ. She started reading her Bible again, and researching Christian teachings online. After searching the internet about baptism, she got in touch with Duncan. She wanted to be baptised by a woman due to pressure from her husband, so Duncan minded the kids while I had an amazing day in Paris praying, discussing and reading with her, and ultimately I baptised her in the local swimming pool. She lives in a solidly Islamic immigrant area of Paris, I’m glad I don’t live there! She is absolutely fearless in preaching, distributing our tracts to people, talking to women in McDonald’s and absolutely everywhere.

I took Lena Bibles and Duncan’s book ‘Bible Basics for Muslims’ in several languages, and Arabic and Turkish Bible Basics. She’s now distributing them around the place. I returned to London really so thrilled for Lena and for the progress of the Gospel in Paris.” (We might add that after this, Cindy was robbed at the Gare du Nord, and her credit card stolen. Thank God she is OK and safely home.)



**Sis Cindy with Sis Lena**

## A Light Shining in a Dark Place



By the grace of God, I am still able to correspond with Sister D in a Women's Prison in Japan. As her home is in Auckland, New Zealand where I come from, we have much in common, as well as being Sisters in Christ, both awaiting the coming of our Lord, and sharing news of the world, and prophecies of His 2nd coming. Although we now live on opposite sides of the world to each other, we can still comfort and encourage each other. Both our countries are on the "Ring of Fire", with Japan having an increasing number of earthquakes, and also for us in New Zealand, as predicted when Christ would return to the earth. I am able to send her newspaper cuttings and postcards from our country, and also in other parts of the world, and keep her up to speed on world affairs and the nearness of Christ's return. We can both see these days as being just prior to His return, and we can comfort one another with these things.



She has been imprisoned since the Tsunami in 2011. In those days, the whole of the country was suffering from the aftershocks of the earthquakes which followed, when she gave birth to a baby boy, who now lives with her family in New Zealand. He has now started Primary School, and says what he likes most of all is playing with the other children, and eating his lunch! Sister D

is now able to speak to her family on the telephone, and so she is able to speak to her little boy. What a joy for her! She is able to enjoy these pleasures being rewarded for good behaviour. She has not been given a date for her release from prison.

Sister D works in a Sweat Shop where she has had numerous promotions, which is quite a rarity as she does not yet have full command of the Japanese language. Although she has suffered ups and downs in prison life, she seems to have matured and developed by all that she has been through. I am her 'Okason', which means in Japanese her Spiritual Mother, and I am accepted as that person by the staff.

She recently has had a bad bout of toothache, when the dentist drilled holes in her tooth to let the poison out, but the pain was so extensive, that she had to have the large double back troublesome tooth pulled out. She has asked that I thank everyone who prayed for her, in her awful pain. Lately, she says "I am in excellent spirits, now that the pain has gone. I have been

doing even more reading and studying the Gospel on good helpful stuff to do with spiritual growth. The Scriptures have so much to say and teach on our thoughts, minds, feelings and emotions, and it is interesting and exciting to be able to learn and understand it all on a deeper, clearer, more personal level.” She says the best part of all is how loved and close she feels to God – the amazing thing is, she says, “I have never been happier or felt better in my life, than the way I am now. Do you think that is strange? I am reassured by all of Paul’s words, that he wrote from prison while awaiting death, and feel comforted by his indepth teachings. Living life with God just changes everything” she says. “Being in prison, yet feeling this way.”

The wonderful thing about Sister D is that she is always able to speak to other prisoners about her faith and trying to tell them about the wonderful news of the coming of Jesus. There is so much to look forward to and not so much to look back upon.

Further in her letter she says “It must be a most beautiful day outside today with the sun shining and not a cloud in the sky – I feel so blessed to be able to see a patch of sky from my window - what joy it brings. The weather is already starting to warm up and the days lightening and lengthening once more – best of all the birds are coming back. I woke this morning to the loveliest sound of a little sparrow singing away perched on the bars outside my window – what a joy! I am thinking of your little canary bird singing in your home while you are having your Church services on Sunday mornings.”

She has been learning how to do Japanese floral arranging – Origami, and she enjoys doing that. I notice in her letter that she is trying so hard to live a Christlike life in prison. She quotes from the virtuous woman in Proverbs and tells me of a friend who cannot forgive another. She can hear the pain in her voice on the telephone, so she has gently explained that it always easier to follow the ways of the Master and forgive until 70 times 7, as Jesus has shown her a better way. She was asked to repeat this, so she did, and then her friend went silent. She has obviously grasped these principles of living in Christ, and she truly tries to put them into practice in her life, in one of the most difficult places on earth.

In conclusion in her last letter, she says she is glad that she is safe, and that she is allowed to be a Christadelphian in the country she is in, with her own beliefs. She has been reading the Gospel News and feels for the other Brothers and Sisters she reads about, and what they go through, bearing up under a heavy load. She says it makes her thank God for all her blessings, and being able to embrace her faith. She sends all her Brothers and Sisters her love.



She finishes her letter with the words of Isaiah 35:10 “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing, everlasting joy shall be upon their heads – they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing will flee away”. Even so ..... come Lord Jesus.

*Sis Helen Pyper (Auckland, New Zealand)*

## Carelinks | Germany

Bro Steve Gretton reports on a recent visit to Germany: “Please do not take our photo.’ This Iranian couple are now living in Belgium in a quiet safe town, well away from the troubled centres of unrest in Brussels, yet they have a realistic fear that if news of their conversion to Christ were to leak out, then they are in real danger of death or injury. **Shapour** and his wife **Azam** are grandparents who have left Iran about 12 months ago to help their son look after their young granddaughter.

Their son’s friend, Farsio, was baptised with his wife when Duncan and I went there four years ago and it was Farsio and his wife, Raheleh, who provided beds and excellent Iranian food for us. Shapour and Azam had grasped the opportunity to obtain Bibles and started a thorough study of the Bible and worked through Bible Basics. They have spent hours every day since then reading and studying and their many thick note books are filled with their thoughts and discoveries. Rarely do you meet such dedicated students of the Word.



Andy Taylor and I visited them after they requested baptism, but rather than seeing if they understood the truth, we were confronted with many questions! Whenever we brought up any subject, they knew the answers and could quote stories from the Bible in great detail. Nothing took them by surprise. Farsio emphasised the thought that they were all unfamiliar with the idea of religion not being used to enhance one’s economic welfare or power. They had been listening to the recorded material on the Carelinks site in Farsi language.

And so with delight they were baptised into Christ in their son’s house, a fun-loving man who became increasingly more serious and engaged in the conversations that were flowing around him. And it was he who prepared the bread and the wine for our celebration at the Lord’s table. There is no doubt that the Lord reaches out to affect those who are giving their lives to him. Such people regularly speak of a great sense of calm and happiness filling them at the time of their baptism and we have often seen that the Lord is very active in their lives after baptism in ways which they themselves admit takes them by surprise.

Within their political system in Iran, the phrase ‘giving your life to the Lord’ has a much more literal significance, but so also the promise of our Lord Jesus, “I will come to you.” But the day before the baptisms, we met another son and his wife on the last day of their holiday from Iran. The wife was distant and cool towards us. She wore a typical Moslem head covering and would not shake our hands. We assumed she was a quiet submissive wife. But at one point she suddenly asked in excellent English what exactly Christianity was. I introduced her to Jesus, describing his life, his actions, his words, his attitudes, his death and the evidence for his resurrection, and why I concluded that he was truly God’s son. It was as if a light had come on in her mind! She was deeply attentive and became increasingly animated. The conversation of the whole group gradually centred on our discussion.

As she left I offered her a Bible. Not surprisingly she declined - but not because she was Muslim - which might have been expected but simply because it was too dangerous to have one in Iran, which is understandable. But I felt able to say to her that if when she came to Belgium next time she wished to be baptised then we would make the arrangements. She smiled but said she had her own beliefs. After she had left, the group were very excited and explained that far from appearances she was a highly qualified senior lecturer in Philosophy at one of the top Tehran universities. She was totally committed to her Islamic beliefs and had studied world religions in connection with her doctorate. They said they could not have imagined she would take such an interest. The next day after she had gone, her parents in law said that on returning back with them to their house she had talked at length about the conversation and described the encounter as one of the greatest experiences in her life! Surely the Lord is at work and it must be that she saw him and heard what he wanted to say. It was not me. Please pray for her and for her husband and his brother, that the Lord's efforts to reach out to this unlikely contact will bear fruit to our Father's glory.

### Carelinks | Italy



After the traumas of crossing the Sahara, abuse in Libya and then the risky sea crossing, where many drown, all the migrants say the same - that they wouldn't have come if they had known the risks. They all say that they prayed to God during the crossings, of the desert and the sea, and vowed to serve Him if they survived. And then they encounter us, offering some food, free Bibles and Gospel teaching; and explaining that baptism, going back to the water they nearly drowned in, is the way to connection with God and His Son. They really are a fruitful segment of society to preach to and assist.

### Thank you for your prayers for our mission in Italy during April

On this trip, we baptized **Elvis** in the Catholic stronghold of Cattolica. We first met him last Summer when distributing NEV Bibles at the bus station one evening in Cesena. Taking God's word out onto the streets does bring forth fruit... and Italy is full of Africans on the streets. Elvis was baptized at brother Joseph's home; and he gave a wonderful account of his preservation by God's grace on his journey across the Sahara, see link below. He speaks of how in Libya and on the desert crossing he saw many Christians beaten and killed, and how he refused to convert to Islam. He describes the Mediterranean crossing in great detail. The migrants are put into huge inflatable dinghies called 'lapalapa', or 'balloon boats'. The people smugglers don't accompany them. The migrants have to steer the boat. They sit balanced around the balloon boat, which is disposable and intended to be abandoned after its use. One large wave will capsize it. They had no life jackets, and up to 200 people were on their balloon boat, and they left in a flotilla of nine boats. Women and children were on the 'boat', although 'dinghy' would be a better description.

They left at night; but a wave capsized them, and many drowned, including the parents of two small children. Elvis made it back to shore. He tried a second time, but they were attacked by pirates who brought them back to the Libyan shore, beat them and put them in an enclosure, ordering them to contact their families and ask for money to be sent for their release. This kind of thing happens often. In that enclosure, Elvis and his friend prayed to God and promised to serve Him with their whole heart, strength and soul.

**Elvis' testimony** | <https://youtu.be/Auz26WEU4Vo>

**King's testimony** | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtSuf8DiZuY>

They managed to escape and tried crossing again- and this time, they were successful, and were picked up and rescued by the Italian coastguard near the island of Lampedusa.

When the coastguards come to them, they give them life jackets, and then guide the 'balloon boat' or dinghy to a pick up station or vessel. There are many pictures of this on the internet, with the migrants all wearing life jackets. But that is not how they left Libya and made the crossing. The shores of Libya and southern Italy are full of bodies and damaged "balloon boats" washing up on them. The brethren commented that they had seen the bodies, and yet they were the ones who survived; and burial in water in baptism seemed so appropriate; to die with the Lord Jesus, and yet to rise again with Him.

Further South, we baptized **King**. The effective advice of Italy to the thousands of migrants turning up is to go north to Germany. Many do so, but are not accepted there. And so they return to Italy, where they are given documents allowing them to remain; but they get no state support and are left without accommodation and food. There is a huge underclass of such people, and King is amongst them.

Often they move out of the competition in the larger cities to small towns, in King's case, in the mountains of central Italy. The economy in southern Italy isn't strong; there aren't jobs for local Italians, let alone these thousands of young migrants. Many of them have no documents enabling them to return to where they came from; Liberia, in King's case. So they are stuck in an awful limbo, with no income, nowhere to live and nothing to eat. These people are really hungry. Many turn to crime, especially drug dealing, or the women to prostitution. King has a room in a tenement block inhabited by other Africans in the same situation. But he clearly was different. Amongst those petty criminals, this African migrant is different. Instead of crime, he literally begs for money and food on the streets, and gets clothes from garbage cans. And he sells socks, caps and umbrellas. Whenever there's a downpour of rain, he rushes outside with his umbrellas to sell; despite notices being put up, warning against buying things from such people. He lives on a few Euros / day. Health care isn't free for them; problems with teeth have to be endured with pain or by wrenching out the troublesome tooth. King is deeply disillusioned with the churches attended by many such Africans, promising them prosperity and health- if they tithe to the pastor. And so he turned to the Bible, and came across our free NEV Bible. It was a cold, very windy day when he was baptized in the sea- in the pouring rain. Usually, he would be out selling umbrellas on such a day. We entered the water in rain and wind, with him shivering; as soon as he emerged from the water, the sun very suddenly came out and the wind ceased. It was quite amazing!

**Joseph is untiring in his efforts to teach the Truth and care for these dear people. Please pray for him, and for more response to the message preached**

Our brother gave a very simple and haunting account of what it is like to be a beggar on the streets of Europe, with no family or food or state support; no safety nets apart from the Lord. See the link on page 25 to watch King's testimony. We made the movie in his tiny room, where he has a mattress on the floor and nothing else. He explains in the movie the need to be grateful for whatever one has; in his case, he says, the mattress could fit three bodies, and it is all for him. He sees a blessing in that. But he doesn't seek to disguise the fact that living like this is tough and depressing; and racism is rife in small town Italy.

We usually seek to avoid giving help in terms of cash, but it is really necessary in some of these cases to pay for basic rent of a room. We are very open to your donations towards this. But provision of food and some clothing, especially shoes, is perhaps the most appropriate way to help; and it gives us a great opportunity to talk to folks and teach them. We are planning a week or so of this at the end of August; your donations and prayerful support are welcome. We visited a new 'camp' with brother Joseph which has just been opened. 66 Africans are crowded into a villa on a mountainside quite far from any other houses, with little food. These people are hungry- both physically and spiritually. We sat with a group of them in the courtyard, pictured below, and explained the Gospel, and passed out what tracts, NEV Bibles and Bible Basics we had; they were really interested.



## Carelinks | Latvia



The Winter feeding season has come to an end, but brother Maxim remains in Riga, running the meetings and feeding scheme on Sundays and Mondays. There are cold snaps which have been indeed very cold in Eastern Europe. Moscow has had its lowest temperatures for 120 years, with temperatures down to -40C, which is -40F. You literally can't survive in those temperatures. Our refugee brethren in Italy and elsewhere are also affected, if they are not in state provided accommodation; and some in Italy are trying to work their way further north, their welfare provision by the Italian Government having now expired. Do pray for them all. The work at the Riga Bible Center is really so necessary - providing a warm hall, coffee, food, as well as Bible teaching. People were even arriving an hour ahead of opening time in the hope of being allowed in to escape the cold. We need to pay the heating and the annual property tax on the hall, which alone comes to about 2000€. We would appreciate your support financially.



**Hand decorated cookie very gratefully received!**

**New Year Celebrations at Riga | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rj21s8Krx1A>**

Jesse Andrews from Canada, Cardia Cwiecek from the UK and Jim and Anne Barton from Canada along with many others have been a truly great team in the kitchen at the Bible Center. We held a New Year's day special gathering, where Cindy, Jesse and Evia distributed the "winter warmer packs" to everyone; we also iced gingerbread cookies with the names of people and Cindy encouraged them to ice their own cookies with their names. Temperatures get very low in Riga now, often down to -20 C [about -4 F]. Really we do warm up their lives and hearts, for their lives are as bleak as the weather and the grey Soviet block environment. It's really no fun living in night shelters when you are elderly, and having to tramp the streets all day with your bag of possessions. Some aren't even in the night shelters. You can see a heart warming video of the winter warmer packs being handed out, and our modest New Year's day celebration at the ecclesia - [link](#) bottom of page 28.



Daily Bible class and feeding meetings are run on weekdays in the Winter from 4-8pm. There are many touching stories. **Ilya** is an invalid with spinal and other palsy issues, who lost his parents when young. A woman who now attends our meetings regularly kept an eye on him, and introduced him to us. Then there was **Viktor**, a man who first came to Jesus Christ from attending the Salvation Army over ten years ago. He got a Bible and has read the Bible from cover to cover every year for eight years. He absolutely loves the Russian NEV Bible with commentary. He has a great Bible knowledge and so appreciates how our teaching has put everything in place for him; we were all really so happy at his baptism, pictured above right.



#### **Sis Anne describes the special dessert for New Year**

Brother Jesse Andrews reports: “It’s hard to put into words the need of the people who come for a cup of coffee and a bowl of soup daily at the Riga Bible Center. The area allows for the reception of a large population - being in proximity to innumerable soviet-era-style apartment buildings. What is there to say about the great work that’s being done here? Volunteers from the west come and stay for extended periods to support the efforts of Duncan Heaster; the former preparing nutritious soups packed full of ingredients like chicken, corn, tomato paste, potatoes, carrots, etc. while the latter delivers an exhortation in Russian to the people who come by.

Initially, I was told, the people who came for a cup of coffee or tea before the exhortation and meal came in to sit in silence. Now, us soup-chefs can hear the din of excited, if excitable, Russian chatter pouring through the closed door. The set-up and take-down of the whole operation outside the kitchen is particularly impressive. Though we take care of three water boilers for coffee or tea, the stools (visitors sit on stools around 3 tables) are set up by local volunteers and are wiped down, floor mopped, and washrooms wiped down vigorously also by those local volunteers who are ‘paid’ with a bit of extra food. They also set up the rows of chairs that they’ll use to sit and listen to Duncan deliver his nightly exhortation which takes place between coffee/tea and the soup meal.

To speak highly of the other soup-chefs here, the process in the kitchen is also impressive to someone witnessing it for the first time. Within the span of about 4 hours, the entire kitchen area is sanitized and wiped down before being assaulted by a flurry of cutting boards, knives, meat grinders, and trays, all to cut, chop, mince, pour, and sanitize whatever dishes the cooks use, followed by a daily mop and sweep and then a final sanitization in the evening. All told,

after a few hours of hard work, three steaming pots of soup roll out of the kitchen on a sanitized trolley nightly to the appreciation of all the visitors to the Riga Bible Center.”

Whilst Jesse was over we were pleased to witness the baptism of **Viktor**. He will not live in the night shelters, but just sleeps where he can. He was an air force pilot, serving in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation. He speaks well, and isn't alcoholic. He is aware that he has post traumatic stress issues, and chooses to manage them by living alone. He has become very interested in connection with the God who he knows protected and preserved him throughout the traumas of the war. He was truly delighted to be baptized. He had been decorated with the Order of the Red Star, one of the highest Soviet military awards. He realizes now that all human glory and achievement is nothing compared to our need for the Lord Jesus. Truly it was an honour to baptize him; and to give him clean clothes to wear.

Those we baptize have each, through hard experiences, come to think deeply about life, and had not found standard religion much of a help. They each appreciated the Christ-centred teaching they had found at the Bible Center, and the encouragement to systematically study the Bible for themselves using the Russian NEV Bible and Bible Basics. We continue distributing clothes, firewood and other welfare.



**Bro Viktor with Duncan and Jesse**

### **Carelinks | Northern Latvia**

Over the years, Carelinks built and maintain a large property used for housing for brothers and sisters and their children, and where there is regular weekly Bible study attended by local folks. This property really is a warm light in a dark place in that village.

Sister Liga continues to be so spiritually strong and caring for so many. She quite naturally asks you to pray or read a chapter with her, as the conversations go on; even shedding a tear at again reading some of the teaching she knows so well.

The utilities and running costs on this property are beyond what sister Liga can pay; we need around 200 Euros / month for it. Please do consider donating.



**The property in Northern Latvia**



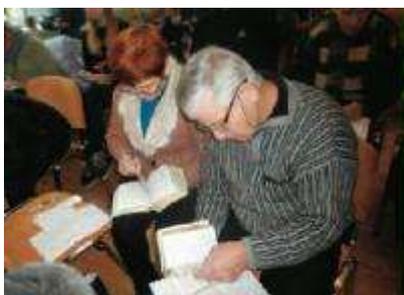
**Bible reading - Sis Cindy with Sis Liga**

### **Carelinks | Ukraine Bible School**



Thanks to your support and donations, this major event went off well.

Bro David Welch from Teignmouth ecclesia, UK came over and he reports as follows: “Four superb days in Kiev draw to a close as I write. I had never been to the Ukraine or anywhere east of Innsbruck in my life and was much more acclimatised to plus 30 degrees by visits to Jamaica than below freezing virtually all the time in Ukraine. However I was assured that I would not be outside at all and that proved the case. About fifty brethren and sisters gathered on the Thursday morning.



Most had come a distance. Three or four from the war area on the eastern border, and one or two from Russia, Poland, Belarus and Moldova, and the rest from various parts of Ukraine. Kiev is at almost a central point in the country and quite near the northern border. It is a large

sprawling city with the airport well out to the west. The building for the Bible School was half-an-hour beyond the last buildings in Kiev on the east so the taxi from the airport took nearly an hour-and-a-half. Each day there were usually four sessions of Bible exploration. Two or three of the sessions were devoted to the early chapters in 2 Corinthians for no better reason than to ring the changes with previous years, reading each time of year the same chapters from the Bible Companion. Because the Bible School falls on roughly the same date every year, the chapters from the Bible had always been the same year on year. Hence the slight change this year, reading the daily readings from March.

The other sessions had the common theme: **“Your ways are not My ways’, saith the Lord”**. Alex and Igor turned my English into beautiful Russian. I was surprised how sweet the sound of Russian was. The main function of the building in which we were accommodated was to provide recovery facilities for the wounded in the war. Some readers may recognise the irony.

The food was adequate with a preponderance of rice and pasta. From the menu I understood that fish was a Ukrainian favourite. As I like fish, I did not mind that at all. Each session ended with lively and good-humoured questions and answers. Brethren and sisters showed a very good knowledge of the Bible and the Truth in Christ.



**Marina’s baptism**

There were four baptisms in the bath tub in my bedroom. No one seemed to mind that I tidied and cleared the room just in time. Two were a married couple, **Alexei** and **Marina**. They had brought their two young children with them all the way from the war zone in the East, reporting that fighting was ongoing in some border areas and half their town was in ruins. Also baptized were another **Alexei**, and **Oleg**.

The experience would be valuable to all brethren but particularly to some a little (or much) younger than me. It would be a thrilling service for the Lord as the days and the opportunities grow fewer before his return.”



The community here is growing older; Brother Jozef attended although blind, brother Viktor can hardly walk and has to be almost dragged along by his wife, pictured below. But he and she are

keen to come. The temperatures were low, down to minus 16C, with icy pavements and roads in this bankrupt country. The way our old brothers and sisters travel such distances in such conditions, when they are far from steady on their feet, is a great testament to how much they really value these gatherings. Bro David's talks went down well, and you can see above the blessing of Manasseh and Ephraim being acted out under his direction.



Everyone returned home on overnight trains and buses leaving on the Sunday evening. That night was the worst night of casualties in the war for many months, with Ukrainian media reporting over 40 deaths and many injuries in random shelling along the eastern 'frontier'. Six of our number passed through it that night and we thank God they reached home safely.

### Carelinks | UK Conference



Our Conference in the UK was a great success. Both attendance and inspirational, spiritual content of the talks was unsurpassed. About 70 came along at various times throughout the day. Clearly the Lord is at work, thanks to your prayers and donations.

Not all the talks were recorded, but those that were are at:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqHWDPHDmR\\_yTpDDSmcW516lg3mlOW9Yx](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqHWDPHDmR_yTpDDSmcW516lg3mlOW9Yx)



Some from our house church in Croydon gave powerful presentations; sister Foozie spoke of her conversion from Islam and very eloquently and passionately expressed her simple love of the Lord Jesus.

Also from Croydon, Sister Dee gave a very powerful presentation, opening up about the sexual abuse she had suffered earlier in life and how it was baptism into Jesus and grasping the real truths of the Gospel which empowered her to forgive and reclaim her life.



Sister Yvonne, one of our early converts in Zimbabwe in the 1980s, then spoke powerfully of her conversion from Catholicism to the truth of Christ.

Brother Donald came over from China; we so often report his work in baptizing people, all the more impressive as he works in a professional capacity in the materialistic Chinese society, with little free time.



Brother Joseph came from Italy to tell us of all the baptisms and the outreach going on there to the many newly arrived migrants who turn up on the beaches every night; his testimony to his own conversion from nominal to passionate faith, in which our baptism of him played a part, is very encouraging.

We wrapped up by framing in Biblical terms what all these various testimonies were saying loud and clear- that whilst we don't possess the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, the Lord through His Spirit is extremely active in human lives and hearts today. The links to some the testimonies are listed below.

**Sister Dee** | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjV6n2mJ4DA>

**Sister Yvonne** | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ra7RRHRj8dc>

**Brother Joseph** | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw--GedB84o>

**Conclusion** | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A37CvOCSbW8&t=734s>

In the afternoon session, we packed Bibles and wrote personal notes to the 700 or so replies we received this last week from our "Get a free Bible" ad in the Daily Mail. This is all evidence

enough that there is widespread interest in our message in white working class Britain [i.e. the Daily Mail readership]. Roger and David then helpfully guided us in their experience of using the internet and social media to engage folks with the Gospel.

There was a wonderful spirit of connection and fellowship. Brother Darek, who speaks only Polish and Italian as he lives in Italy, came over and was delighted to talk to brother Joseph in Italian. Sister Sami also gave a presentation about her conversion to Jesus and there were two other Iranian converts present. It was great to all work together to pack Bibles. Others also attended who aren't yet baptized but we hope soon will be.

We'd like to remind you of the major appeal made to reprint the Bibles; and then there is cost of postage. Please do respond as you can.



#### **'All hands on deck' at Carelinks UK Conference | Parcelling up approximately 700 Bibles together with personal notes in response to our Daily Mail Ad**

We have held house church also at Bexley-heath and were pleased to baptize **Mohsen**, a young man smuggled out of the infamous Calais 'jungle', after a nightmare journey across Europe in a refrigerated truck full of oranges. The moisture in that situation apparently keeps sniffer dogs off the scent. In all these lives we see the Lord's hand at work, so earnestly seeking to save.

House church continues in Croydon, with all kinds of folks present- nearly everyone at the table had been born outside of the UK- Iran, Iraq, Bangladesh, South Africa, as well as Australia. The stories of how everyone had got to the UK were themselves a testament to providence. One man described how he was one of 14 men who were placed inside a tanker truck for the journey from the Calais 'jungle' across the channel to the UK. They stood in liquid within the truck for six hours; this was in order to put sniffer dogs off the human scent. Another described how refugees are hidden inside the huge spare wheels of trucks, where the inner tube would otherwise be, maintaining that bent over position for several hours until released; another was strapped to the axle of a truck. Once these people arrive in the UK, they really do start looking for the Lord. We went through Luke 15, talking of how the Lord searches for the lost sheep, coin and son until He finds it, doing all in His power to find His people and bring them to Himself. And these very hard experiences were all part of that seeking process. And there was therefore such joy in Heaven when finally, God finds man at the same point as man finds God, through identification with His Son in baptism.

We all rejoiced therefore with **Mustafa**, an Iraqi, whom we baptized in the bath tub after the meeting, and before the meal together. Many thanks to Cardia and Cindy for trying their best to produce authentic Middle Eastern food, and apparently succeeding, or being well appreciated. Mustafa is an older man, an engineer who previously managed one of the water treatment stations in Baghdad. We really do rejoice with the Angels in heaven at all this response to our outreach; and we look forward to more planned baptisms at our house church.



**Evia and Daniel diligently posting our leaflets through letterboxes in central Croydon**



We distributed leaflets and literature in central Croydon and will continue to do so over the next month, God willing. Let us know if you'd like to come and help. We're also receiving lots of grateful letters from those who've received NEV Bibles, and several have expressed interest in the Gospel and have requested Bible Basics. One writes: "Just a short time to say thank you so much for the lovely Bible you sent in the post for me. I was a member of a large Charismatic church up to 5 years ago. I became disillusioned as over a period of time it became more of a business than a church. I hope now to establish my faith again. God bless, Mark".

### **"Thy Kingdom Come"**

In our daily prayers we ask for the Kingdom of God to come right now, so that we may leave this corrupt world. If you open a newspaper today, or listen to the radio or T.V., you always get the impression of trouble. Our world today is torn by strife between political parties, ethnic factions, strife between nations. It is beset by problems: hunger and ever present violence, problems of society revealed by increasing crime rates, and overcrowded prisons; by hospitals filled with patients, many of whom are there because of mental stress and by an alarming number of victims of drug abuse. Alcoholism plays its part, and there are frequent threats of economic crisis, with widespread unemployment and material hardship.

Though we are experiencing all these hardships in this world, don't forget that we are all invited to a greater gathering which is to take place in the earth. In the not-too-far distant future, when the greatest person the world has ever known is going to gather his friends together to a royal feast, and is going to present them with gifts, such as he alone can give – right here on earth.

We can see then that the good time which is coming on earth is to be characterised by a kindly regard for the poor, on the part of the King, who will reign at that time. This is the time spoken of in Psalm 113, where we read, "He, (God) raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill, that he may set him with princes, even the princes of his people."

*Bro Simion Mudhimba (Chipinge, Zimbabwe)*

