

April 2012 Belgium, Malawi, Brother Viktor

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Philippians 1 and 2, and there's an MP3 about these chapters at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/phil12.mp3>

BELGIUM

We're delighted to report the baptism of M. His baptism was a deeply spiritual occasion, with him recounting a wonderful testimony of God's calling Him to the Truth. Our brother began reading the Bible from curiosity in Iran, many years ago. He then moved to Belgium, where he has been living many years. He got involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses, but came to see many errors in their approach as he's a very careful Bible student with a good knowledge of the text of Scripture. He wanted to be baptized into Christ, but not into their organization. Our brother works in a shop selling Iranian and Middle Eastern food. After one of the first Iranian baptisms we performed in Belgium, we entered the store along with brother X, because X wanted to buy some Iranian food for a small baptismal celebration. M asked him: "What are you celebrating?", and X answered "My baptism into Christ". This was a brave thing for an Iranian to say to another Iranian given the generally Moslem culture. M explained his connection with the JW's and dissatisfaction with them, and from then onwards studied the copy of *Bible Basics* which X gave him, and the ways of providence came to a happy point this week when M was baptized. At the baptism we had a lot to be thankful for and stood in awe of the Lord's ways and the grace of His calling:



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



BROTHER VIKTOR, SISTER NATALYA

Brother Viktor was a typical inhabitant of the Riga night shelters. He came to the Truth and gave himself fully to the Lord, but was then felled with a massive stroke which nearly killed him. If it hadn't been for the kind financial support of Western brethren and pressurizing the health care services from local brothers and sisters, then our brother would likely be dead by now. The staff wouldn't even turn him over from one side to another without demanding 2 Lats for doing so. Of course, God was ultimately Viktor's saviour, but He worked through the outreach of Carelinks supporters here on earth. We got our brother into a care facility within Riga and arranged for him to receive therapy and treatment, which under God's hand has resulted in him being able to walk with a frame, being able to talk, although very quietly, and even being able to read out loud.

We fetch our brother to the meetings at the Bible Center, and he has distributed our literature within the care facility. We have been occasionally bringing with him a woman called NATALYA who lives in another wing of the same facility. Having studied *Bible Basics* she was convinced not only of the Truth but felt we were truly her spiritual "home" and family. We baptized her this week, and Viktor quietly read Romans 6 at the baptism and assisted our sister out of the water as best he could. It is all really a triumph for God's grace and the outreach of that love, grace and care into this world. Humanly speaking, Viktor would've been left to die in the snow or in a very grimy, dimly lit hospital ward assigned to the "bomzh" as they are known here, those without insurance and state support.

Photos: *Viktor and Natasha outside the care facility on Monday.*



Viktor reading Romans 6 and assisting sister Natalya at the baptism.



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

MALAWI

We recently reported the visit of brothers John and Greg (New Zealand) to Malawi, during which time they were able to intensively train some brethren to take more responsibility in the work there. There was a group of 18 people near Lilongwe whom they were unable to baptize due to lack of water; we're pleased to report that brother Leonard and other local brethren visited this group, which already meets as an ecclesia although unbaptized, and baptized them into the Lord Jesus. Sisters RUTH, MARTHA, ELENA, JENEPHAR, BERTHA, MAUREEN, DENENCE, MONICA and DELITY and brothers ENELES, PAUL, STELLAR, TELEZA, KENNEDY, MOSES, KONDWANU, JOSEPH and TONY were baptized. We give thanks for the wonderful progress of the Truth on a sound basis in this very spiritually fertile land.

SISTER NANA

Regarding our previous appeal for sister Nana, we're pleased to say that the funds have now been sent to our sister, she is hugely grateful, and has now arranged a date for her operation.

With love and thankfulness from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks