

April 2016 UK, Belgium, USA, Congo, Australia

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include John 21 and there is an MP3 file about this chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/jn21.mp3>

You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://aletheiacollege.net/archives.html> and on iTunes at <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/podcast/christadelphian-bible-talks/id987163468>

UK

We're delighted that some of the Iranians recently baptized have recently attended and broken bread at ecclesias in Huddersfield and East Ham.

In another part of the UK, we were pleased this week to baptize ALIREZA, MOHSEN, AHMAD and MAJID. We could find no bath tub and they were nervous about going to the local swimming pool, as local people have the perception that all Middle Eastern males are trying to act inappropriately towards local females. So... we did it in the sea. It was one of the coldest, wettest and humanly speaking miserable baptisms imaginable- although doubtless the Angels were singing in Heaven. It was pouring with rain, and we walked through the bitter wind underneath a disused pier. The 'beach' was comprised of either razor sharp stones, or sludge which you sunk down in very quickly and deeply. It was a testament to the sincerity of these four men that they eagerly went through with it. Some were shaking uncontrollably from the cold, and some ran back to the pier as fast as they could to re-clothe their shivering bodies. The photos do no justice to the feelings- you can see a brief video at https://youtu.be/Ep_4lzxY4wY



Truly we are fools for Christ's sake, in the view of a few bemused local British folks looking on at five men clambering underneath a fragmenting pier and immersing in the dirty, muddy water. But we are made a spectacle to the world- as well as to Angels, as Paul put it. Huddling together in the car afterwards with the heating going full blast- that was fellowship in Christ indeed.

BELGIUM

Duncan & Cindy and the children spent a few days travelling Around Belgium and Holland visiting existing brethren and baptizing. Brother Mehran was baptized in 2010 and has remained faithful to the Lord and grown so much in his faith. He has now been 16 years in Belgium without documents. He is one of the large subclass of rejected asylum seekers in Western Europe who cannot return to where they came from but are not accepted where they are. The only option is for them to work on the black market for low wages. This huge underclass of people are largely hidden from public view and get little attention in the press, but there must be millions of such people in Western Europe- a fertile ground for extremist Muslim ideology. But Mehran is at peace with the Lord and as he says, simply enjoys living daily with Him. He has introduced the Gospel to a lady friend, and Cindy was able to baptize AZAR . To their credit they are not living together although this would be far cheaper for them, nor can they get married in Belgium . Please pray for them- they both really love the Lord. Here we are happily together having a meal at home- again, fellowship over meals seems the way to go in relationship building with middle Eastern folk, as it was in the Lord's day:



There were other contacts in their area whom we hope to baptize some time later God willing. They fear the reprisals of Islamic family members- even in Belgium. One woman knows she would be divorced by her husband were she to get baptized. Do pray for her to decide, we offered to make a secret baptism for her when and where convenient. There are whole suburbs in Belgium which are solidly Islamic. It was a similar situation in another part of Belgium, where we baptized KOUROSH [modern Persian form of 'Cyrus']. His wife was dressed wholly in black with a head scarf, and strongly disapproved of his baptism, reciting verses from the Koran as we conducted the baptism service in their one room apartment. She refused to be photographed but here we are together with Kourosh and his *Bible Basics*:



Another highlight of the trip was a visit to brother Martin Rozestraten, now in a facility in Holland where he has nurses constantly on call. Martin made several visits to Latvia in the earlier and more difficult days of our work there, and was a tireless supporter of Carelinks work. We reminisced about his trips and the various tight situations the Lord had brought us out of whilst on His work together.

We were always fond of Martin for his intense love of the Bible and of the Lord Jesus personally, and he is the same today. Martin felt this would be our last meeting this side of the Kingdom and we literally wept tears over the bread and wine we shared in a brief memorial meeting, so, so deeply grateful for the wonderful, blessed Hope we have in Jesus. That meeting was worth everything to be present at, including the 3 hour drive back through the night.

Anyone who would like to encourage and be encouraged by our unusually spiritual brother could let us know. Martin is supported by a very wonderful and spiritually minded wife which is a wonderful blessing and our prayers are for her endurance too. Steve & Sue visited our contact Taylor and his family a few weeks ago in Belgium. They have converted to Christianity from Islam but are still studying our material until they feel ready for baptism. We struggled to comfort them in the news just received that their eldest son had been killed. So please remember them in your prayers too.

USA

We continue to get a stream of responses from the USA- here is one of them. It is your donations which enable us to send Bibles and literature to many of these people:

Thank you for sending me the *NEV Bible*. I have just received it. I'm looking forward to reading from it. I also got a used copy of "*Bible Basics*" a couple of days ago. I have only skimmed through it a bit, so far, but it looks interesting. I've seen some of the carelinks videos on *YouTube* as well. Until a few years ago I didn't know of any specific groups that held beliefs similar to my own.

I started looking around on the Internet and first found material from Anthony Buzzard and the CoGGC. I eventually found out about some other non-trinitarian, kingdom believing groups. I discovered that there is a small Christadelphian ecclesia (usually there's twelve or less in

attendance) not to far from where I live. I started attending meetings towards the end of the summer and soon started class for joining the ecclesia. I am currently still going through the class. Anyway, I wanted to let you know that I appreciate the Bible. Thanks, Jason

AUSTRALIA

Mike and Betty started what they call a Tiny Library, a book stand outside their home where passers by can take literature home with them. We've put photos of it in previous messages and are glad to assist any who want to distribute literature in this way:

Another short note to let you know the last book, "*The Real Devil*" was taken last night from the tiny library. I find it interesting that many people are out at night and check the books at that time. My guess is that these people are young people from Europe on a working holiday on Bundaberg farms. If you feel you are able I would appreciate more books you may have available. Love in our Lord Jesus, Michael and Betty

CONGO

We get lots of cries for help from isolated groups who feel abandoned, the following is typical. *Carelinks* only made one visit to Congo, and we did visit South Kivu where these isolated brethren are. It is a mad place, we visited the hospital where the victims [the luckier ones] get some treatment, lots of limbs off etc.; 15 year olds with rifles driving commandeered cars over the potholed roads; corrupt soldiers demanding money from us in order not to take Cindy aside and forcibly inject her with a supposed yellow fever vaccine... Below this email received we have put a few links to descriptions of the extreme violence there which is still continuing, the last report is from just a few weeks ago. You may like to contact these brethren directly and provide encouragement.

From: Jacques Balenga <balengaj@gmail.com>

To: carelinks@biblemedia.co.uk

Dear brothers and sisters, We always thank you for the materials you are sending us via internet. We are a cbm ecclesia here in Baraka centre, Fizi territory, South-Kivu province, in the DR Congo. When we watch what you do on *YouTube*, we remark a tough task of gospel including much expended. May God bless brothers and sisters there. We may request them to remember other brothers and sisters in developing countries, especially those in French speaking countries. We are forgotten. We need lessons from how can one member preaches properly, several seminars and so on. We request them not to be selfish in the gospel. We have to be taught all so that we can spread the good news together. Your brother in Christ, Bro. Balenga, Chairman of Baraka centre ecclesia, From the DR Congo. Telephones: +243813409362 +243979311824 +243852928918.

The following reports of the situation in South Kivu are deeply disturbing, detailing mass sexual violence of the cruelest kind: <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/article/drc-mass-rape-south-kivu> <http://www.preventconnect.org/2012/09/recent-research-militarized-sexual-violence-in-south-kivu-democratic-republic-of-congo/> <http://www.msf.org.uk/article/drc-msf-assists-victims-of-violence-in-south-kivu> is an MSF communique from this month which includes the following: "More than 200 families had to flee their homes and take refuge in the forest in the Ziralo area, South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following heavy fighting between armed groups earlier this month. Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) launched an emergency operation to provide relief for the displaced people... After the fighting, the MSF team went to the village of Bunyangungu, where they found nothing but an empty site with almost every house burnt to ashes. "We all fled

to the bush when we saw the armed men coming down from the mountains," says the village chief, who fled during the attack... On the day of the fighting in Bohole, Lea Nandundo, a 25-year-old mother of four children, had gone to work in the fields. When she came back, all the houses were on fire and the village was empty. "Fortunately, a neighbour had taken my children and I managed to find them later," she says".

PRAYER POINTS:

- For Brother Martin
- For Taylor and his family in their loss
- For those wanting to be baptized but fearing the consequences
- For Brother Kourosch and the situation with his wife
- For Mehran and Azar in their difficult relationship
- For those recently baptized
- For the many isolated converts in places like Congo and other war torn areas

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks