

## August 2016 Italy, UK, Turkey, Latvia

The **Bible Companion** readings for this Sunday include Mark 16 and there is an MP3 file about this at <http://christadelphia.net/audio/risen.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>

Download the *NEV Bible* with commentary and *Bible Companion* bookmarks at <http://n-e-v.info/NEVBIBLE.pdf>

### UK

A few months ago we reported the baptism of Mojtaba, an Iranian asylum seeker who has been refused asylum but allowed to remain in the UK in indefinite limbo; and his wife Aisha, a former Moslem Bulgarian. Their lives have been radically transformed by coming to the Lord Jesus in spirit and truth; such spiritual success stories make all our labour worthwhile. They were living only on her income as a cleaner, and had to search for very cheap accommodation in Luton, a town largely taken over by immigrants and Moslems. At our previous house church meeting, they had asked us to pray that somehow, Mojtaba could find work- he was a barber in Iran. They were offered a disused shop to rent, where they could sleep in the back office section. They took it- and opened a barber's shop. They are open seven days / week from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and charge only 5 pounds for a cut, in order to build up a clientele. They've been doing this for over a month- and have bought mirrors, chairs and even a child chair in the shape of a racing car.

They are simply so happy. They have Bibles and *Bible Basics* for display and free copies for those who are interested. They now have several people seriously interested in baptism. We went to visit them one Saturday evening. After work we sat there and had fellowship, reading the Bible together. And they insisted on giving Duncan a hair cut. Truly the Spirit of Christ was there. Such joy, such transformation, from the empty lives of people with minimal income in a high cost society, to those with a definite aim in life and sense of journey towards the Kingdom, with the presence of the Lord Jesus now.

They spoke of problems they had experienced from Moslem customers, threats, people getting their hair cut and refusing to pay, complaining they were being religiously offended by their conversion to Christianity.

Here you can see our brother and sister in their shop [note the offer of 5 pound hair cuts], they sleep just at the back of it, and the *NEV Bibles* and *Bible Basics* in Farsi / Arabic for clients to take [bottom left]:



We ended our fellowship about midnight, having pulled the blinds down to avoid unwanted attention. This was Saturday, and Sunday was house church in Croydon. They have a direct train from Luton to East Croydon and were looking forward to coming, deciding to just work Sunday morning and then come down on the train in the afternoon. But on the Sunday morning, two men attacked them and smashed the double glass door of the shop. They spent most of the day with the Police, who said they could do little; and the landlord refuses to pay for the door to be replaced. In this picture you can see the entrance door which was smashed the morning after this late night hair cut; the Police say they cannot do anything as there was no camera recording the incident, and the landlord says they must pay for the repair. We gave them around 150

pounds [it was a double glass door] and are open to your contribution towards that.



Despite that, Mojtaba came to house church in Croydon, very shaken up, and was able to share his story with our visiting brother Leon Shuker. Aisha is still quite shaken. His testimony to the radical change that happened after his baptism is very inspirational, and part of it is recorded in an interview with brother Leon Shuker last Sunday

at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Zl2upan8VU>

All this is yet another reminder of the strength of Islamic opposition to the Gospel and attempts to convert Moslems to the Lord Jesus- even in the West.

We had a very spiritual meeting at our house church on Sunday, with brother Leon giving us a talk about the nature and possibilities in our life together as ecclesias or house groups. It is the fruit of a lifetime spent in Christ and in missionary work and worth listening to.

It's at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRYW0lbfZmc>

We were converts old and new, with folks born in so many countries- Iran, Poland, South Africa, Latvia, Estonia as well as the UK. We felt very much the presence of the Lord Jesus amongst us, and encourage all in the London area to get to be with us when we re-start our meetings in September God willing.

Here's Leon's report:

There is a profound joy in meeting brethren and sisters in Christ and breaking bread with them that can bring tears of joy to one's heart. This is particularly true when those brethren and sisters have a variety of backgrounds and have been called of our Father in a variety of circumstances. This was my experience when meeting brethren and sisters in Croydon, England, where I had travelled from Paris, my temporary home: Katrina, Wacek, Cardia, Debs & Jon, Hilary, Lucinda, Duncan & Cindy, Marcus & Gwladys, Sarah, April and Mojtaba .

That uniting family spirit ("all one in Christ Jesus" Gal 3:28) had united a sister Lucinda who had responded to a national advert in the Daily Mail for free Bibles and been baptized in that same home, Mojtaba a former Moslem from Iran, to a Polish family who were committed to preaching Jesus both in my adopted country of South Africa, and now their second adopted home of England.

It was a house meeting (common in the early days of preaching Christ recorded in the Epistles (Acts 2:46, Rom 16:5, Phm 1:2)). The institution of the Breaking of Bread service was because our Lord had declared "with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" and was matched with the disciples' desire to prepare that feast (Matt 26:17).

By contrast many of us have experienced and felt guilty of such meetings descending into ritual and formalism and as such destroy our joyful intimacy with our Lord and with His close fellowship. When it is so we need to seek our Lord's forgiveness.

It is an ultimate paradox to have great joy in celebrating the death of one who did not deserve it- and that with others one has never met before yet are my brethren and sisters and share an intimacy that is rarely, if ever, the experience of natural families.

Together we meditated on Paul's letter to the Romans and chapter 12, rediscovering how to dedicate ourselves to our God in our ordinary, everyday lives, and in so doing recognising that, like a finger or a toe, we are closely united members of His body. And so Paul then encourages to " take your everyday, ordinary life- your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around

life- and place it before God as an offering(12:1).

And so I returned to Paris, my exiled home for a while, having experienced a spiritual "holyday" in England. I had not thought it possible in my home country with its reputation for ungodliness. I wish I were nearer to help fan into flames the flickering light of the Gospel there. But maybe others will? I pray that this will be so.



### **LATVIA**

Cindy continues her outreach to secular women and their children in Latvia, and soon she will be holding her annual woman and kids camp at the housing project in northern Latvia. She has more women booked in than ever before. A number have been baptized and others are interested. These women are middle class secular Latvian women whom one by one Cindy has led or is leading to the Lord Jesus. She gave a talk about leading secular European women to Christ, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn0kvRieRIY> , and this is the practical outworking in practice. She is slowly getting the same kind of thing going in the UK as well. We are open to donations towards the cost of the camp and please do pray for her success in her aims of teaching the group from the Bible each day as well as teaching the children. Please bear in mind that the British pound has lost a lot of value recently due to Brexit, making our operations more expensive in pounds.

### **TURKEY**

Earlier this year we reported two visits to groups of refugees in southern Turkey, resulting in many baptisms. We're pleased to say this large group continue meeting together for fellowship and breaking of bread, often cramming in to small apartments. They sent us the following photos and ask for another visit to baptize more contacts and teach them all further. Let us know if any are interested in doing this. They also ask us to fund a meeting place.



### **ITALY**

We are going ahead with our migrant feeding scheme, aiming to feed the newly arrived migrants who are crawling up the beaches of Italy as we write this; and also support the outreach and teach further the group we are in contact with and some of whom we have baptized. We have booked a villa for 24-30 September God willing.

Let us know if you can come and join us then; do donate toward our work there if you can; and do pray for us.

### **PRAYER POINTS:**

- For brother Mojtaba and others facing difficulties in the Moslem areas of Western cities
- For the refugee brethren in Turkey, their contacts and need for a meeting place
- For Cindy's women and kids camp
- For the plans we have to feed migrants in Italy

**With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks**