

## Iranian Refugee, Haiti February 2010

Carelinks encourage the daily reading of the Bible according to the /Bible Companion/, and this weekend the readings are Exodus 14 and 15 about the crossing of the Red Sea. There's an MP3 based around these chapters at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/ex1415.mp3> for any interested.

### HAITI

Here's a report from brother **Nick Cox** about his recent visit. We are deeply grateful to our brother for making such an extraordinary trip and showing at first hand the grace of true fellowship to our brethren in Haiti.

*"It was two weeks since the earthquake ('the event' as Bro Esmath and Absolu referred to it), but as I set off I still didn't know exactly what the purpose of my trip to Haiti was. I wanted to provide spiritual support to the brothers there and I hoped to show by my visit that the worldwide Christadelphian community loved them and cared for them. It was still unclear whether money transfers to Haiti were working yet so my visit would provide an opportunity to pass on some of the donated funds to be used by the brothers to help in their difficult situation. But despite all this what practical help was I going to be? Well, it was in God's hands and thankfully my wife Rachel not only supported me but also reminded me how Abraham had had to rely on faith when God told him to up sticks and go into the unknown.*

*There were no commercial flights to Haiti so my plan was to fly to the Dominican Republic which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. I would then hire a car, pick up funds via a money transfer and then drive to the border crossing at Jimani where Bro Esmath would be waiting.*

*Twenty four hours later and the plan had worked. God must have been helping because it was a ten hour drive on the worst roads and dirt tracks I've driven on. With few or none existent road signs I quite literally had to drive by faith. I arrived safely at the border, parked the car, walked through the gates, past the armed guards and just there on the other side was Bro Esmath and Nixon (who is due to be baptised but due to 'the event' it's been put on hold). After hugging and greetings I asked what the plan was now. Esmath had it all planned, as far as he was concerned the purpose of my visit was to show to the brethren and the many visitors to their church just how much our community cares and the best way for them to see this would be by my presence at Night Prayers which they hold every Wednesday (it just happened to be Wednesday) and also to be there at the service on Sunday morning which would give me a chance to meet some of the brothers who had left the Port Au Prince after the earthquake.*

*My worries about leaving the hire car behind soon vanished as our first taxi was riding pillion on motorcycles (no helmets and the driving was extreme on roads that were worse than in Dominican Republic). I had thought that maybe I'd be able use the hire car to ferry much needed provisions from Dominican Republic to Haiti but as we approached the capital it became clear from the street markets and shops that food and drink was available (there's a stream of refuse running through this market). Even where we were heading to in the Carrefour district, which was quite badly affected by the quake, the markets were open and busy, but even so there was no clean water and no electricity so Esmath had used some of the money that had been sent to purchase a generator which came in very useful at night prayers and the evening bible classes that the church hold.*

*What became very apparent as we drove through Port Au Prince to the Carrefour district was that one of the main issues facing thousands (including our brethren) is the need for somewhere*

*to live and sleep. Many houses that weren't destroyed by 'the event' are not safe to live in, so people are living and sleeping outside under makeshift tents in the road or wherever they can find a space. The sheer number of tents I saw made me think of what the Exodus would have looked like. Esmath is one of the more fortunate ones in that he's living and sleeping in his cousins yard. The same yard where the church services are held is now doubling as an open air home.*

*There's a kitchen area:*



*a sleeping area:*



*and a shower area (bucket of water for washing):*



*A hole has been dug for a toilet.*

*Despite these circumstances a hearty meal was awaiting when I arrived. Night prayers began at 9pm, it would have been sooner but the generator was too noisy so it was used to charge up some batteries and then these were used to provide quiet electricity for the lighting. The 30 plus brothers and visitors and a few children carried on in prayer, worship, exhortation and preaching until after 1am and then found whatever they could to sleep on (doors, board or chairs). I hope the person whose bed it was that I slept on didn't mind too much.*

*The following day I let brother Charlie Klennert know that tents would be a useful aid in the short term and that a proper toilet in the yard is probably essential as I fear disease could become a major issue. Because of the conditions in the yard Esmath didn't want me staying there and to be honest with 30 mosquito bites swelling up I was relieved when the 3rd hotel we went to was open and had vacancies, although maybe God was trying to tell me something when I got food poisoning after my first and only meal there.*

*Saturday morning was children's time at the church, some of whom are orphaned. They enjoyed games, singing, quizzes and rice and peas (with a bit of goat thrown in). It's hard to know what lies ahead for these children (it would have been hard enough for them before 'the event') but at least they are getting a little earthly and spiritual food thanks to the brothers.*

*Photo: Orphans with food and clothing provided:*



*Sunday morning was the church service and the spiritual choir of young men and women (including Bro Williere) sang beautifully and movingly, even though I couldn't understand French Absolu told me the gist of what they were singing.*



*Esmath had asked me to give a talk as it would mean so much to them and I just hope that it did help in some small way the 50 plus people that were there. It feels like I ended up doing so little to help and that I have been the one that has received so much by this visit rather than me being the one doing the giving. Absolu, Esmath and Nixon dropped me back at the border in Esmath's cousins car and we said our good byes.*

*I'd like to thank God and Jesus who has preserved our brothers lives and blessed me with the chance to witness their strength in faith and their zeal and love for the one God of the Bible. I'd also like to thank the brothers in Haiti for making my stay so memorable.*

*May we all as one body share their pain but as members in Christ let us find a means of sharing in their joy and helping them to rebuild until Christ comes.*

Bro Nick

## **IRANIAN REFUGEE**

Details about a baptism and case for prayer will be found in the email message, we can't put these details on the web at this time.

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