

January 2015 Australia, Riga, Israel

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Matthew 13 and there are three MP3s about this chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/mt13.mp3> ,
<http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/mt13a.mp3> ,
<http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/mt13b.mp3>
You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://aletheiacollege.net/archives.html>

CARELINKS AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE

Just to remind you again that the rabbis due to engage with us in the planned debate have pulled out at the last minute. So instead we are holding a session about ISIS in Bible prophecy, at 3 p.m. this **Sunday 11 January** (God willing) at the Hurstville Ecclesial Hall, Sydney.

ISRAEL

We do believe that we should be making a special effort to appeal to Israel and Jewish people. This is one of many factors which may well hasten the Lord's return. We are planning a literature distribution campaign in Israel over the Summer God willing, whilst also looking into opportunities to provide welfare assistance to needy parts of Israeli society. Duncan & Cindy and their children will be coming so it would be accessible to those with children. The campaign would not be a time for sight seeing or tourist activities- any wishing to do this kind of thing would need to make their own arrangements before or afterwards. Let us know if you're interested.

RIGA

We need your prayers as our team of workers have been hit by the Noro virus , which means they cannot work in the kitchen for 4 days after recovery from this most unpleasant virus [projectile vomiting, diahorrea, chronic energy loss etc.]. The best thing about the arrival of Vanessa, Rob & Debbie was that they were healthy and unaffected by it!

Here are the latest reports. There is the possibility of continuing the feeding scheme throughout the year- if enough volunteer workers can be found. Hopefully these reports will help you understand the nature of the work:

"I have to admit to being intimidated by the prospect of functioning in a location where I could not speak or read the language. When I actually arrived I was faced with several situations on a regular basis. First challenge was the large supermarket where I had to purchase groceries for the feeding scheme at the Hall. In many ways it was much the same as any store in my home town. The produce department was familiar potatoes, carrots, onions, beets no problem. Canned goods like kidney beans all had pictures on the label ... no problem. Tomato paste, sour cream, seasonings were more of a challenge but with Duncan's help I managed. On future trips I found there some English on some labels, similar root words that were familiar and helpful store staff who spoke English or could find someone who did. My best resource was a helpful young man in the dairy aisle. The best discovery of all was an App for the iPhone that you speak in English and it would display the translation in Latvian. We could find all sorts of things after that. At the Hall I met brothers and sisters who had a variety of language skills. Sometimes I just couldn't make out what they wanted and turned to others for help. Sometimes gestures got the message across or someone was available to translate. All it took was some patience on both sides and some creativity- sort of like playing charades or pictionary. Many young Latvians learn English in school so they are usually the best ones to ask. I just wanted to share my experience

so that others considering coming to Riga won't let language hold them back. Some things just don't need translation they are universal. Ladies walking their dogs in the park, boys playing hockey on the ice, children making snowmen and parents walking with their children. The opportunity to meet brethren and sisters from all over the world is an added bonus".

Sis Anne Barton

Brother Jim and other speakers type out their talks into Google Translate and print them out or get them on the screen - and then a local brother or sister can read them out correcting the errors, in the local language. You can see how Jim and Maxim managed to thus give a series of talks on the letter of James, with neither of them understanding each others' language. The recording is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGL4zkD799I> . Here you can see how the screen looks on a smart phone with the app mentioned by sister Anne- you speak your words into the phone, and out comes the translation, either on the screen or by audio:



Sister Hannah, currently recovering from the Noro virus, describes her work:

"This week I had the chance to join Duncan, Maxim (a brother from Ukraine) and Jonatan (a brother from the UK) on a short drive through Riga to deliver firewood to Brigitta. Brigitta is a sister who regularly attends our meetings and feeding program at the hall. She also never fails to help with the cleaning up afterwards. The drive to Brigitta's was made a little longer by the darkness and heavy snowfall. I was excited, but a little nervous, as I'd heard it was a rough area of town and we had been told not to speak loudly when we reached her apartment as it might cause trouble for Brigitta if people living nearby knew she was getting help from foreigners. I felt a bit like an undercover agent as we quietly climbed the dark stairs with broken windows and no lighting carrying sacks of firewood, and swung through a broken window into her small room as the door couldn't be opened. There was snow on the stairs due to the broken windows. The room was lit by a few candles we had given her and she had even made it quite homely with a mattress; there was no electricity, water, sewage or toilet. Although she is alone and has next to nothing to her name, she is always so thankful for everything and so willing to serve and help us out at the hall.



Another sister, Tanya, who attends the meetings and often does the readings at the hall, fell on the ice and broke her arm this week. Duncan, Jonatan, Deb, Cardia and I visited her in the local hospital on New Year's Eve to encourage her and give her some company. She was in a lot of pain but very happy to see us as she has no family. Tanya and Brigitta have challenged me a lot with their content, thankful nature and truly live by the verses from Philipians 4:11-13 "...I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger,

abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me."



PRAYER POINTS:

- For the visitors suffering from the Noro virus in Riga
- For sisters Tanya and Brigitta and others like them
- For blessing and wisdom on our plans to witness to Jewish people and Israel
- Thankfulness to God for the good support for the Winter welfare program
- For more to volunteer to come to work in Riga for longer periods

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks