

## June 2016 Cyprus, Germany, Turkey

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include 1 Peter 2 and there is an MP3 file about this chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/1pet2.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>

### GERMANY

The Lord said to Ezekiel: "*Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel.*" So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat. Then he said to me, "*Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.*" So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.

There is a sense in this account that something, that is at first sight inedible, becomes the most beautiful taste in the life of the person who eats it.

Sue and Steve Gretton write:

"We have been rather slow to get started, and perhaps reluctant to take the gospel to those who call for it, yet now that we have 'taken the plunge' we have been filled with a joy that makes other holiday trips seem rather tasteless in comparison. Instead of merely enjoying the beauties of nature, or great human constructions, or exotic foods and cultures or exercising our bodies in pleasant surroundings, we have found the joy of bringing the gospel and the waters of baptism to those who hunger and thirst for something of real value. I met POUYAN and his wife FARNOUSH last August in Northern Cyprus where they were on holiday with a group who were baptised. After their return to Iran, the government became suspicious of their interest in Christianity and they fled the country. Since then their house was raided and computers and literature seized as incriminating evidence of their interest in Christianity.

We asked them whether or not the laws on conversion to Christianity were implemented, or whether it was just a threat. They told us that despite what you might read on Wikipedia on the internet, there are secret courts and after arrest, people just 'disappear'. They personally know people to whom this has happened. This is the expected outcome of conversion. And coming to the west has not been without great difficulties and even dangers to them in the hostel where they have to stay. There is no privacy and they have to share a dormitory with 6 other people, some of whom are Muslims. Farnoush spoke of her childhood in which she became aware of the huge gulf between what she was taught about Allah, with the fears and threats that were instilled in her by her teachers, and what she perceived as the truth of God in nature all around her. The impact of Romans 1:20 is very true to her: 'the invisible things of Him, since the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made' even His everlasting power and divinity.





Pouyan asked us baptise his parents who are on holiday this week. The circumstances were unpromising, but we prayed and the Lord made a way! Duncan was in Northern **Cyprus** baptizing a contact and was going on from there to **Italy** to baptize more, and had to pass through **Istanbul**, as most flights to Nicosia are through Istanbul. Pouyan's parents, MOHSEN and ESMAT, were in Istanbul at the same time, and Duncan was able to meet and baptize them. Having seen the fate of their son, it was not surprising that they were extremely fearful, especially as the rest of their tour group were Muslims, and they had to give them the slip in order to meet up with Duncan. There are no coincidences in the lives of God's children; clearly this meeting in Istanbul was meant to be. They need our prayers as they return to Iran.

It was with joy that they entered the waters of baptism and became committed followers of our Lord Jesus Christ and children of God. Their hunger for the scriptures cannot be described and we long to spend more time with them as they feel like our own children. And in central Germany we were invited to the home of another refugee from Iran. Her own sister was baptised last year and has since escaped to UK where she has been introducing the gospel to her family and to all who will hear and regularly attends an ecclesia. Never have I seen anyone in such a state of excitement and anticipation of her baptism. Her replies to the questions about her beliefs as she stood in the water waiting for her immersion were given with conviction and sincerity that made the whole effort and cost of going there worthwhile just to hear her. And so SABA becomes a new sister in Christ. Now both sisters and their cousin have accepted the Truth that Jesus is the Son of God. But please join with us in prayer for the one who is stranded in Iran, unable to leave, unable to practice her faith openly and afraid to contact us by internet for fear the communication is overheard.

Sue and I have tasted the joy of bringing some to saving grace. We have joined the company of those who have decide to eat the scroll and we can assure you it does taste of honey, and the taste does not fade, like earthly things. *Carelinks* now needs others to pick up the scroll and eat for the need is great. "If you abide in me and my words abide in you," says the Lord, " you shall ask whatever you will and it shall be done to you. Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit." Saba immediately spoke to her friend in another part of Germany about her baptism. There was an enthusiastic response that has yet to be followed up as soon as time allows. Please think about your holiday plans. They don't need to be abandoned, but surely a day or two could be spent visiting those who are hungry and thirsty for the things we have been given? Please think and pray about it and let us know if you can join us for a trip or even trust the Lord and go alone,(but with Him, of course). We are very happy to share our experiences with you and give advice about some of the practical aspects of the work."

## **CYPRUS**

The Lord continues to use our outreach to connect with serious seekers after truth who are often in unusual situations. This week on a quiet beach in northern Cyprus, we baptized ALL; but what a story. He is the son of the local Imam at the mosque in a village, the mosque is a previous Greek Orthodox church that the Muslims have taken over- a telling indicator of the decline of Christianity and growth of Islam. His father sings the prayer call. Like any young man, Ali wondered whether his upbringing was correct. He started to look around online and was attracted to Christianity, but found it too much to accept that Jesus was "God the Son". But Ali recognized that the Lord Jesus was also no ordinary man, and searched for someone,

somewhere who knew what he was saying and felt how he felt about this. And so he came to us on YouTube and then read our literature. He's a very smart man, now studying aerospace engineering at university, but funded by his parents. So it was after much struggle that he came to the decision to be baptized into the Lord Jesus, and he needs our prayers as he continues in his lonely path to the Kingdom. One could not wish for a man more devoted to God's word. Being able to read literature online and on his phone has been a huge blessing.

We have also received news that there may be a group of Iranians coming to northern Cyprus for baptism in late July. In view of Steve & Sue's appeal... would anyone like to go and meet them and do this? Cyprus is of course a holiday destination so it could easily be mixed with holiday. Do let us know.

**PRAYER POINTS:**

- For more workers to come forward in this great work
- For the safety of our brother and sister who have now returned to Iran
- For the safety of all our brethren living in hostels in Europe populated by Muslims
- For the spiritual progress of all those recently baptized

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