

June 2019 Sicily, UK

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Isaiah 40 and there is an MP3 file about this at <http://www.christadelphia.net/audio/is40.mp3>

You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://christadelphia.net/audio.htm> 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>

Helps for the *Bible Companion* readings this week:

Judges <http://n-e-v.info/judgescomm.pdf>

Isaiah <http://n-e-v.info/NEVIsaiah.pdf>

1 John <http://n-e-v.info/NEV1JohnCommentary.pdf>

SICILY

For some years now we've supported the work of brother Godson in Sicily. He and a few other settled migrants from **Africa** [he's been an Italian citizen for 15 years] are doing what they can to help the huge mass of African migrants who are all over Sicily now. They typically come from West Africa across the Sahara, where many die; then they are typically kidnapped in **Libya**, where they are often tortured by the people smugglers until they call home and get funds transferred to the smugglers. Then, they risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean to the shores of Sicily. Those who make it are therefore all traumatized. And very open to the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and the simple love of God in giving His Son, as our representative, who knows all our sufferings. They find Sicily unwelcoming; the nationalist Government has closed most of the refugee camps, and large masses of Africans are just on the streets with absolutely no state support, unable to work and often without documents to return home. Despite denials from the Italian government, this is a huge scale humanitarian crisis, particularly acute in Sicily. The island is famed for its brutally high temperatures and dry weather over the Summer months, with global warming contributing to a severe water crisis on the island. So distribution of water was quite a theme, with two of the sisters [one of whom is herself a long settled migrant and not an asylum seeker] showing great strength as they lugged 30 litre water containers around, sometimes on their heads. One litre of water = one kilogram, so 30 litres of water is 30 kg. Temperatures were over 40 C. with very bright, intense sunshine



We assist brother Godson in renting a small room, a former shop, where at least the migrants can come out of the oppressive heat and get water, clothing and some food. Here it is being opened by rolling up the shutters over the door:



And most importantly, the good news of the Kingdom. Many copies of *NEV Bibles* and *Bible Basics* have been provided, and they are well used by these sad and desperate folks.

Photo: Gratefully receiving *NEV Bibles* in the room



We spent some intense days there, providing water, food and clothing to the needy, twice visiting a refugee camp which is still open, far out in the badlands of central Sicily; and then as usual teaching people. We rejoiced to baptize five people, sisters EDITH, SARAH and JUSTICE and brothers GIDEON and PROSPER. One had had much of their toenails burnt off by a cigarette lighter whilst being tortured in Libya. The volcanic rocks, not far from the mount Etna volcano, make for a very sharp and difficult seabed at this place:



We gave financial support towards the continued rental of the room, and further provision of food and water. Despite the dire situation, they sung a lovely hymn in the rented room, with such passion. And vowed to continue "*in the spirit of this baptism*" as one sister put it.

You can see a video of all this at <https://youtu.be/fzGaoLYTyF0> including a description of the situation by brother Godson.

To provide appropriate support and do this work does require your donations, so please do by all means donate and encourage others to. And of course, we do need your prayers for this work to spiritually prosper as it has done so far. We have several groups of brethren and contacts in **Italy**, and we would ideally like to spend say 3000 GBP on this work over the Summer. As you will see from the video, there really are some very desperate brothers and sisters and contacts caught up in this crisis in Italy and Sicily.

UK

Transiting through UK on the way to Sicily, we were able to help brother Morteza in his asylum case, and to meet and baptize a work colleague of brother Naghi, a 19 year old Bulgarian called AHMED. Our asylum seeker brethren have a really hard life, working black market jobs which just manage to pay the rent. They mainly work in fast food production and delivery, opening up for us the existence of the whole murky world of food preparation in unhygienic basements, to feed the huge number of people in London who now order their fast food on apps and have it delivered to their homes. But even in that environment, they are preaching and sharing the *NEV Bibles* and *Bible Basics*, with great results. We also tried to assist brother Morteza in his asylum meeting, and brother Naghi asks us to pray for his upcoming meeting with the Home Office. So do pray for them all in their truly hard lives- into which we have been led through their response to the Gospel.

PRAYER POINTS:

- For those recently baptized
- For our asylum seeker brethren in their various appeals to the authorities
- For those surviving hand to mouth in western Europe, working on the black market and unable to get any state support
- For special blessing upon the ongoing work in Sicily and the resources to do it