

March 2015 Medical Appeal, Riga, Computers, App

Bible App

The *NEV Bible and commentary* is now available as an App for Android- it's on Google Play at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.appypie.appypieb09bbd403a83> .

We hope to soon be able to release it for iPhone and other platforms.

Each chapter of the Bible has its own unique page, with brief commentary. There are links to further deeper commentary on the chapter, and also links to audio and video resources about the chapter. A free hard copy is also offered. Please use it, and pray that the Word of God spreads and is honoured by this initiative.

Sister Ieva

All visitors to the *Riga Bible Center* will have met sister Ieva, daughter of sister Liga in northern **Latvia**, a young 20 year old so full of zeal for the Lord and His service. Our sister is well known to many and all have noticed her pale face and frequent sickness. Cindy, who is a medical doctor, writes: *"Ieva is having some health problems which need investigating fairly urgently. I just gave her 50 euros to see a specialist yesterday, and she needs another 45 for an echocardiogram (Investigation for her heart) next week, and then another 90 euros for an endoscopy (to check if she is celiac or has some other intestinal problem) in April, plus she will need intravenous iron supplements which are expensive [about 90 Euros a time]"*. So we would be looking to raise say 300 Euros for our very dear sister. You can PayPal to tiybible@yahoo.com or donate through the usual channels.

Ieva isn't one of those in the night shelters, but those who are, or who are homeless, often have wounds and infections which lead to gangrene and sometimes disablement. Your donations to Carelinks go towards paying for medical materials which are frequently in use at the feeding schemes:



Brother Steve reports on a trip made to the other end of Latvia from Riga:

Laptop to Skuki - beyond the Pale

There is an area of land on the western fringes of what was the Russian Empire which lies in what is now the East of Latvia and Lithuania. Although it fell within the Russian Empire, it was outside the central Russian territory which was known as the Pale. So to be sent there was to go *'beyond the Pale'*. When there was persecution of the Jews and they were expelled from the central territory, they were sent to these areas and settled there. Visiting the area it is possible to see plenty of evidence of the occupation of the area by Jews - synagogues, graveyards with Hebrew and Yiddish inscriptions and still many small Jewish communities. Brother Shurik, who is a Jew, lives out here in a care home in the tiny town of Skuki, close to the border with Belarus. It takes 5 hours to drive here and the roads near to him are unmade tracks. But his love for the Lord and for the truth is a life-line for him. There is no chance for him of what we in the west think of as normal fellowship with other believers for there are no others within travelling distance and he is not well enough to travel easily. The internet connection here is poor and even phone conversations are dependent on the signal being strong enough.

In order to assist him and give him more stimulating material in Russian, we made an appeal for old laptops a few months ago. The idea was to load hundreds of Bible talks and expositions of

each chapter of the Bible. This included seminars at Bible Schools as well as basic teaching materials. But here is the beautiful link in the story. We were given a laptop by another Jewish brother, Edward, who lives in Western Europe. There in his living room was an old laptop which was virtually useless to him. It's the sort of item which has no value in the west and was likely to be sold for parts for a few pounds. But Edward said we could have it if it was of any value so we brought it to UK, cleaned it up, and installed the necessary software to play the videos and audio recordings and prepared it to send to Shurik. Basic operating instructions were translated into Russian and we posted it beyond the Pale. This area is miles from anywhere and there was a good chance that it would be intercepted. Although it had little commercial value, it was clearly a laptop which was being sent, so we waited to see if the effort had been worthwhile until an excited phone call from Shurik confirmed it had arrived. Brother Edward, when you read this account, I'd like you to know that your small act of generosity has been a lifeline to Shurik and he sends his greetings to you.

As we travelled down to Shurik through endless deserted Soviet era collective farms and dull countryside we experienced the sense of isolation that our brother must feel down here beyond the Pale. The desolation and isolation is hard to reflect in photos. We finally came to a sign pointing to his care home:



The home was full of people whose life [or rather, existence] seemed to consist of watching a small TV and playing cards. It was a boring, meaningless existence for most of them who are forgotten by society and we were met with blank faces, until Shurik greeted us:



He was so excited to greet us and to share the precious emblems of bread and wine that mean so much to him. Unlike the others in the home he was animated and motivated. He proudly showed us the computer. 'I don't watch TV any more - I spend all my time listening to the talks on the computer'. Although Shurik had no previous understanding of computers a visiting technician helped him and by God's providence the internet was connected to the home two days after he received the computer. Although the computer isn't really up to it, he managed to connect with the weak signal in his room and has learned how to use it. The computer has radically changed his life. Here he is with his Hebrew New Testament and computer:



He has been sharing the videos with fellow residents who are pleased to have something a bit more stimulating to hear than the endless TV. He says they come to watch the videos like ants coming to honey. Shurik is disabled in body following a stroke but his mind is alive and he is just so keen to take the gospel to those who will hear. He has been using his phone to text old contacts and friends and hopes to be able to use Skype to communicate. His pension is 9 Euros a month and he spent a whole month's allowance on a net camera for the purpose of preaching.

Excitedly he contacted a friend in a nearby town with whom he has been sharing the gospel and he had arranged to go and spend the night there so he could teach him more- if we could take him there. He got permission to leave the care home for a day, and his friend said he could spend the night with him, and then get a lift back to the care home. So, off our brother set on his valiant missionary journey, rucksack with Bible and toothbrush on his back; it was an honour to help him on the first stages of it; you can see him here getting down the steps of the care home, getting into our car, and then coming to the door of the block of flats where his contact lived in the town about 30 minutes drive away:



What little missionary journeys can we undertake, to share the knowledge God has given us? We went and met his friend and heard how during a time in prison in the USSR period someone had smuggled a New Testament in for which he had been put in solitary confinement for 15 days. Undeterred friends smuggled in pages from the Bible hidden inside other books. The book of Ezekiel seems unlikely material to have received this way, but this is how the Lord works. We left him with a new Bible with commentary. Here is Shurik with his friend and his friend's son in their flat- notice the Soviet hammer and sickle slogans on the wall:



I think we sometimes fail to recognize how the Lord uses us. Who would have thought that a seriously disabled Jew living beyond the Pale would be a passionate preacher for the truth of God and Jesus. He thanked us for bringing the gospel to him, to be -as he perceived it- his teachers, but we pointed out that he was now the teacher to his new contacts. What he has learned he wants to share in this obscure corner of little known Baltic state, beyond the Pale. Can the same be said of us?

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks