

March 2022 Israel, UK, Turkey, Ukraine

We strongly recommend you download the "*Bible Companion*" app, from where you can access *Carelinks* messages, daily Bible readings, *Bible Basics*, commentary on every verse of the Bible and audio exhortations on every chapter of the Bible. For Android / Google Play at

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.carelinks.bc>

and on the App Store for Apple / iOS at

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bible-companion/id1475914490>

You can break bread live online as follows:

Saturday mornings 09:00 a.m.UK time; on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6697401754?pwd=K0VWNDlScGwzaThPM2tiU0didmNyUT09>

Meeting ID: 669 740 1754 Passcode: XPb9Sz.

Sundays at 3:00 PM New Zealand time. That's 1 PM in Sydney Australia; 10 PM in New York, USA on Saturday evening [run by Br John Aldersley in New Zealand] on

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87934245299?pwd=WmVDdGdPaG9JU0RTTnFtcW1VNk1pdz09>

Meeting ID: 879 3424 5299 Passcode: 411793

Sundays at 10am North American Eastern Time [3 PM UK GMT time, 11 PM Sydney Australia time]. Run by Br Jim Barton in Canada.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9123758179>

Meeting ID: 912 375 8179 . Also, Bible class on Wednesdays at 7 PM North American Eastern Time

ISRAEL

Your kind support in obtaining warm clothing for our African migrant brethren in northern Israel continues to bring forth fruit to His glory. Here's brother Bosco wearing one of the jackets and beanies supplied, holding a Malawian flag in Israel. Our African brethren in Israel faithfully attend and contribute to our meetings on Saturday mornings and we hope to get to see them in May , Lord willing.



UK

Amidst all the trauma going on with the war, men and women continue to turn to their creator in spirit and in truth. We baptized MOHAMMADREZA at a hostel in London, and then later NASER also in London.



TURKEY

We baptized MOHAMMAD online in Turkey this week, in the midst of being very occupied with

the issues with the Ukrainians:



UKRAINE

Brother Sergej and his wife in western Ukraine continue to take in refugees, and he has just baptized SVETLANA who fled from bombing around Kiev with her tiny baby. We are sending funds to help him support her and the orphan children you can see praying in the video he took and sent us, at

https://youtu.be/oEfN_Ml4Lis

You can see them dressed in their jackets at his home, which is very cold- it's below zero [freezing] where they are.



We have over 40 brothers and sisters living in Russian occupied areas. Two elderly sisters in particular, in different areas, tell the same story- of having run out of critically important medication, the chemists either closed, looted or with empty shelves. They fear to go out as the soldiers are patrolling all the time and they say they are aggressive to them. They have little food also. As ever, those who need help the most are the hardest to get it too. Yet there is constant reference to prayer and trust in God in all messages received.

We're currently making a trip visiting our brethren and contacts who have made it out of Ukraine, visiting them in Germany, Hungary and Poland. The fact they are out of Ukraine means they are not under the threat of bombardment any more; but they still need lots of support.

Sister Anna, her 4 year old child and her sister in law Tanya and her two children, aged 2 and 5, had a terrible journey from near Kharkiv to the Polish border, which they crossed by foot with those little children- true refugees and children of war. They were shunted onwards to Germany. They were met by volunteers in Germany who immediately whisked them off to a volunteer who had offered accommodation in a house of a recently deceased relative. But we have had to send them money for food and they say they really do need food. This is a recurring issue for those who have left Ukraine- they get accommodation from volunteers but food is not provided by the Government.

When we asked Anna what she needed she said "Food!" and so we did a super shop for them in an Aldi supermarket; you can see part of it in the photo. They are in a very difficult situation. Tanya's husband was called up and taken to training yesterday and will be sent to fight soon. She often cries and only wants to go back to Ukraine, definitely doesn't want to go further away from where she is and just desperately hopes all this will be over soon. We talked about medium term options, their greatest hope at the moment is to get a job in a factory so one of them can work and the other mind the children. Tanya is considering baptism but feels too traumatized at this moment to do it. We prayed together and clearly the things of the Kingdom and the Lord Jesus are very much in their thinking.



It should be understood that the Ukrainians who get out are not treated as asylum seekers. They are not therefore given free accommodation, food and allowances. They are treated as migrants, with no state support. Their accommodation and food support in many European countries is currently totally met by those who volunteer to look after refugees. And this is not stable and many of the volunteers who opened their homes clearly had no idea of what it means in terms of arranging child care, schooling, clothing etc. And it is already clear many are not intending to provide such help beyond the next few weeks. This is why we are being asked to provide funds for basic food for many who did get out of Ukraine:



In Hungary we were able to meet the group of brother Alfred baptized some time ago. We had sent him boxes of *NEV Bibles* in calmer days, and he had built up a group of fellow students whom he baptized before leaving Ukraine, and we were now able to baptize more of them, making a total of 8 baptisms. In war and refugee situations, it's always minority groups who suffer, and Africans in Ukraine are an example of that.



The racism they experience is awful. This is well documented by the media too, see e.g.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/black-ukraine-refugees-racism-discrimination-russian-invasion/>

Brother Emmanuel explained how they were told that seats on the evacuation trains would be better given to dogs and cats than to black people; and in the properties where they are housed in Hungary, the Ultras have placed their graffiti. This is an extreme right wing group who beat up black people. Our brother explained how he stood for 13 hours on the train because the seat intended for him was taken by white refugees who placed their feet on it and told him to stand. War brings out the best and the worst in people.



The sisters described some of their experiences under bombardment, and parts of it are on our video at

<https://youtu.be/pYhZlznzW9U>

Running to Ukrainian soldiers for help under shelling, with the soldiers yelling at them to keep away from them as it was them who were being shelled, even firing into the air to warn them to keep away from them for their own safety. Shells landing nearby, not getting on the evacuation bus... "So what did you do?". "WE RAN!!!" they all burst out. And many mentions of God's grace.



They are all fifth or final year medical students, whose parents sacrificed a lot for them to study medicine in Ukraine as the tuition and living costs are the cheapest in Europe. And now they have had to flee and have no chance of completing. They are stuck in Hungary, where provision for them is minimal. They were given a small room in a hostel with two beds for six of them. Others were taken in by volunteers. They get food and clothes from the help points and food banks. Their outlook is very bleak. And racism is everywhere. We gave them major financial support, as they have suddenly been plunged into a desperate situation. We prayed together at the end after the baptisms and it was a wonderful moment, where truly "there am I in the midst of you". You can hear the prayer at the end of the video at

<https://youtu.be/pYhZlznzW9U>

It was real on your knees prayer from the heart and we ask you too pray for them.



In Poland we met with sister Tanya and her daughter Svetlana and her three young children. We have been supporting them financially and with clothing. They had a traumatic escape from near Mariupol. Tanya nearly passed out in the many hours spent waiting in the huge crowds trying to board the evacuation trains, which are crowded and with people packed onto each other for up to 23 hours:



Svetlana is a neurologist, and before her baptism she wrote some lovely messages with a great attitude. We didn't suggest baptism to her she came to it from talking with her mum and using the app during their recent traumatic times: "Yes we are so looking forward to your visit, and I personally am so looking forward to the baptism. God has His own path for us all. For me it's clear I had to go through this war to come to baptism. I'm sure God is going to open Himself up to me a new life after my baptism. I really want the promised newness of life". What better attitude could we look for in a baptismal candidate. We'll share more about her baptism next message God willing.

One interesting feature of the war in Ukraine has been the placards throughout Ukraine urging people to turn to God. And the aliyah of Jews from Ukraine to Israel. This turning to God is reflected in the huge number of people using the Bible Companion app throughout Ukraine- in both Ukrainian and Russian. There can be up to 100 people in Ukraine using our app at any one time- that's how widely downloaded and used it is there. The following stats reflect some of this- cities like Kiev and Lviv are currently some of the most intense spots for usage of our app in the whole of Europe. And amazingly, whilst Irpen is under terrible bombardment and humanitarian suffering- one person there is using our app. It might of course be a Russian soldier. So through all the suffering we see God appealing to people and people responding to Him in some way and on some level. Clearly for those who have suffered the loss of all things and the lives of loved ones, it seems no cloud has a silver lining. But these statistics clearly give shall we say

another window onto the overall scene in this terrible war.



PRAYER POINTS

- For our African brethren facing such racism
- That our African brethren will be able to find universities willing to let them study and complete their degrees for free
- For wisdom in trying to help so many
- For those who are traumatized and in very unstable situations now outside of Ukraine
- For our elderly brothers and sisters in Russian occupied areas
- For yet more to come to the Lord Jesus and baptism into Him as a result of the war

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks