

May 2011 Sister Judite, Bishkek Ecclesia Kyrgyzstan

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Colossians 2, and there's an MP3 on this chapter at <http://aletheiacollege.net/audio/col2.mp3>

SISTER JUDITE

The work of the Riga Bible Center continues with amazing blessing. This week we were blessed with two baptisms. Brother SLAVIK works on the huge building site where the Latvian National Library is being built. After attendance at the meetings and studying Bible Basics he decided on Sunday for baptism after hearing the Song of Solomon discussed at the Sunday meeting and the very heartfelt talks from our brethren Armands and Yuri; he wants to be part of the bride of Christ.

Photos: Our new brothers giving their talks on Sunday



After discussions with him on Monday, we arranged the baptism for Tuesday, and he asked the foreman to let him have some hours off- and also got permission to bring a co-worker with him from the building site to witness his baptism, which he took ever so seriously. We also baptized sister JUDITE at the same time. Judite has been terribly abused and lives in a deserted shell of a house, taking her few personal belongings with her in bags [which include a large Latvian Bible] . You can see her with her large Bible and the bags in the photo. She is four months pregnant and has been deeply traumatized. Judite studied with us to be baptized, and this finally came to pass on Tuesday. Judite has very few clothes, and those she has are almost rags, although she has tailored what she has quite nicely as best she can. She was really nervous about being immersed in water due to various previous traumas. Her joy afterwards was... amazing to behold. Brother Vlad cooked a special meal for her and Slavik- the first time in her life she had been served at table and been told she could eat whatever was on the table as much as she wanted. Yet again we see the triumph of God's truth and His grace outstretched to yet another person, and warmly accepted with tears of gratitude.

This series of photos speak for themselves; you can see Judite very nervous, increasingly so as she approached the immersion, at one point she gripped the bath taps tightly and had to be persuaded to let go of them; and then being congratulated by the social worker, and then finally busting into a smile; and then looking rather confused at brother Vlad serving her at table with the meal he had made in her honour and being told she could eat what she wanted:





In the red T shirt you can see brother Slavik, with his coworker behind him.

Judite is going to need ongoing medical assistance especially in connection with her pregnancy and all the issues associated with having a child when you have nothing and nowhere to live.

BISHKEK ECCLESIA, KYRGYZSTAN

We've reported in earlier Carelinks the wonderful witness of brother Anvar and his family in Bishkek. We visited them this week and were greatly encouraged by their love of the Truth as it is in Jesus and yet again touched by the utter poverty of so many here. The unrest after the recent revolution has calmed down but the economy has collapsed, militant Islam is on the rise, law and order have almost vanished in practice and street crime is a major threat. Photopies of the following notice were posted throughout the hotel:



Br Anvar and his daughter Sis Dilara are both now without work and somehow have to provide for her three children. Dilara lost her job in the factory and resigned from her job as a waitress because the whole scene where she worked was really impossible for a sister in Christ to continue in. Because of rising debts they exchanged their apartment for a tumbledown house in a village plus some cash, in order to become debt free. We're pleased to tell you of the baptism of LUDMILA and her daughter MARINA. Ludmila doesn't move much from her bed, where surrounded by broken furniture, a few clothes and a heater she simply sits and reads her Bible, whilst fighting cancer [with God but no more than aspirin to humanly help her, all health care must be paid for].



We're pleased to say that Marina and Anvar have announced their engagement, despite the age difference they both love the Truth and on that basis, each other.



But the spirit of romance in the ecclesia has gone further. Sis. Dilara turned down many an Islamic suitor at the cafe she worked at and has been dating Bro. Boris [right in the photo], whom we baptized last time. We had a humble engagement party for them all. Although she's

dressed up nicely for our little celebration, they really have nothing hardly to eat.



Again, these relationships show a very deep appreciation of the colossal difference between the believer and the world, and how those who have become in Christ are bound together by the unique things we have in common in Him. The idea is that the two couples will marry once they have the house ready to live in. It's a large property with some land, which they have already cleared and planted. But the house is in a pretty bad state. One tap and sink to serve as kitchen and bathroom, no cooking facilities, collapsed floorboards, some window panes missing. Winters in Bishkek can go down to -20 so it will have to be fixed before then. In any case Dilara and her 3 children and her dad Anvar can't go on living at sister Ludmila's apartment indefinitely.



Some days they really don't have food, we were literally able to put 'bread on the table' for them:



Our sisters who run the NGO caring for women in difficulties are just thriving and rejoicing in the knowledge of the Gospel. They are distributing Introducing Bible Basics and other literature to the women they assist. There's no social welfare for these women and their work is really a life saver for them. But they say that now it all has so much meaning, because no matter how much you help a person, they are still going to die eternally- they said they now appreciate as they never did before that the greatest thing you can do for someone is to show them the way to the Kingdom and help them abide in Christ once they have decided for Him. So the fact they have come to the Truth has meant that so many women in difficulties are now being given the opportunity to likewise do so. All the work and expense of printing and sending literature down there is bearing fruit wonderfully. They are a great example of where good works alone will not save anyone, but as with the feeding miracles of Jesus, our kindness to others must be integrated with the clearly stated, up front message of the true Gospel. Meeting them and some of the women they had been teaching was such a joy. We were able to baptize sisters ANYA [left] and NATALYA [center], picture here with sister Irina, one of the sisters working for the NGO. Their stories are quite awful. They live in the shelter run by our sisters, where they have been giving her good solid counselling for the last 3 years, but once they came to the Truth they were able to tell her in more detail about the true Gospel. One said that nobody wants her, apart, she says, from God, Jesus and us. Really and truly, to the poor [in whatever sense] the Gospel is preached and accepted.



We reflect that these are indeed the last days. The Gospel is being preached to those in the highways and byways, with an ever increasing intensity. The parable could suggest that this last minute urgent response to the Truth by the most desperate of society is in fact a proof that Christ's return is very near.

God seems to have a pattern to how He works. The work in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan is similar to that in Riga, Latvia: A group of faithful believers who had been baptized and studying the word a long time already were joined by more humanitarian minded converts who had access to a whole world of contacts amongst the severely disadvantaged of society; and between them and our supplying of resources and teaching literature, dramatic growth occurs, to the glory of God, the Lord Jesus and their coming Kingdom.

With love and joy from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks