

May 2014 Ukraine, France, Belgium, Riga

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Hebrews 6 and 7 and there is an MP3 about these chapters at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/heb67.mp3> . You can see the archives of our MP3 files at <http://aletheiacollege.net/archives.html> ; Carelinks Bible Radio is at <http://r-b-c.org/listen.php>

UKRAINE

The situation in Eastern Ukraine is seriously deteriorating, and looking similar to the scenes from the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The Western media are promoting a position very pro the Kiev regime, and not reporting much on the huge loss of life and damage to civilians which is ongoing. We have a family of baptized believers in Slovyansk itself, which is currently being shelled and bombed by the Ukrainian army. They have been faithful attenders at *Bible Schools* in the past and great preachers of the word, being ex-JWs. Over 100 people have been killed in Donetsk over the last few days and a number of civilians in Slovyansk and other areas. You can see at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E8l9ixhjEMc> how in Slovyansk a pensioner with her shopping bag and handbag over her arm was struck down by a shell; apartment blocks and private houses are being hit by shells as the following pictures make clear:



According to rt.com [and there are many other sources in the Russian speaking media]: "Residential blocks [in Slovyansk] were ruined as a result of the assault by Kiev's forces on Monday... at least two apartment blocks were damaged and at least two people – a man and a woman – were killed," the reporter said. "We came up to look at the man but he was already dead. A shell had fallen right next to a 9-storey apartment block, all the glass was out. The man's head was bleeding, his arms and legs were broken. When we went further, we found a dead woman near a teachers college, a shell hit there too," a local told RT, adding that after that a third man was found nearby. "For the first time in a month and a half of my staying in the south-east [of Ukraine], I see real panic among the people. They've been running out of their homes in Slavyansk with their children, half-dressed" ... Roman, a witness who was at the site, told RT that there were "around six or eight shell craters" near the college where the woman's body was found. "There were many wounded. About ten people," he added. RIA Novosti reports of gunfights on the outskirts of Slavyansk, in the villages of Vostochny, Semyonovka and Slavkurort [we baptized 2 people in this latter village 2 years ago]. Ukrainian army launched several artillery salvos from the mountain of Karachun near the town".

As we send this message out, news has come in of a preschool and hospital in Slavyansk being hit by shells, with more deaths and injuries to children and civilians.

Although mobile communication is often down, we have contacted the family there, and they say that the shelling and gun fights are going on every night and often in the day time, with Ukrainian air force planes flying sorties directly over their apartment block. We have managed to get funds through to our brothers and sisters in the area and our sister Irina sent very grateful text messages: *"I thank God for you... we received what you sent, very huge thanks from us... we are praying all the time and can only trust in God"*.



Although the military are blockading the town, some civilians are being allowed out. We are in process of arranging alternative accommodation for this family and others in the area, in another part of Ukraine. Please do pray for the safety of all our brethren in the towns and cities of Eastern Ukraine- they are present in many of the flashpoints, not only Slovyansk but also Donetsk and Lugansk.

FRANCE AND BELGIUM

We're pleased to report the baptisms of SARA, FARSIOO and his wife RAHELE in **Belgium**, and KINGSLEY near Paris, **France**. We were pleased to have visitors from the UK and br Paul & sis Beatrice Jones, who are from the UK but live in Calais, France. Here is Paul's report and impressions:

"It was a privilege for Beatrice and I to witness the confessions of faith and tears of joy at the joint baptisms of our new brother and sisters into Christ's name. I suppose like many in the brotherhood when I was invited to this baptismal event of Iranian immigrants I had preconceived ideas. The difference with reality was immediately apparent. From the warm, loving, enthusiastic welcome and hospitality we received, to meeting serious believers who have spent two years studying the Bible to elicit the real Truths, guided by Bible Basics, which is now becoming the indispensable help to conversion of so many. You can't imagine the danger these new members and their families in Iran face, execution with or without torture being the minimum sentence for rejecting Islam. When I asked why they were willing to renounce both the tenets of Islam and the fanatical authorities there, despite the risks involved, their unanimous reply was for me heart moving, because they said they found our beliefs showed love whereas Islam is a religion of hate totally bereft of love. With the knowledge of the serious downturn in the numbers of new believers, both in my own ecclesia and nationwide, it was uplifting to see the results of the stalwart work of Duncan bearing such wonderful fruits of the spirit. These new children of God are not the commonly perceived type of outcasts, of no fixed abode, or without resources. They are by contrast intelligent, well-integrated with a fervent desire to spread the word in Belgium. I anticipate numerous future baptisms which I would love to attend".

You can see Paul and Bea in the photos:



It's likely that some friends and relations of those baptized will also be baptized this Summer, God willing; let us know if you'd like to join us in fellowship in the English Channel for this happy event.

A visit was made to the ecclesia in Paris and brother Edgar and family are strong in the faith. They have been accepted as refugees in **France**- Edgar had refused to do military service for conscience sake and faced a prison sentence for this. They continue to live in incredibly poor circumstances- a tiny room of around 10 square meters, where they must also cook. They have no chairs, just one bunk bed, on which they and their 2 children must sleep. In the photo below you can see the children playing with some toys we provided. But from that cramped and tiny space, Edgar [a professional media producer] has produced at least 20 movies for us, including

The Real Devil subtitled in many languages, and the movie about baptism, and now is working on producing some *Bible Basics* movies. He does this work from an old laptop with keys missing and which is about to die, often losing his work. He passed us a disk with the Armenian and Macedonian versions of *The Real Devil* movie. It's amazing what can still be done for the Lord when you have so very little. He could really do with a new laptop, and anyone able to assist him with this could meet up with him in Paris and pass it over to him as they have no reliable mail delivery address.



We also baptized KINGSLEY, and look forward to his wife being baptized some time soon too. Our new brother is very zealous to spread the Gospel and is already a very spiritually minded and devoted disciple:



RIGA

The season for doing baptisms in the Baltic has opened once more in Riga. We baptized VLADIMIR and ALEXEI, two seamen with many tales to tell of how God led them around the world and back to the sea in the bay of Riga from which they first set sail. And, of course, through it all, He brought them to the Lord Jesus and baptism into Him. Alexei has spent time in cities such as Brisbane and Sydney in Australia, lived for a while in Cape Town, South Africa... and yet the hand of providence led both these men to the Truth in God's own good time and way.

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks