

October 2018 UK, Germany, Iranians, Australia

The *Bible Companion* readings for this Sunday include Ephesians 5 and 6 and there is an MP3 file about this at <http://www.christadelphia.net/audio/eph56.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:

1 Chronicles: <http://n-e-v.info/1chroncomm.pdf>

Ezekiel: <http://n-e-v.info/EzekielNEVCommentary.pdf>

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

UK

Marcus's 2019 creation calendars are proving popular. A reminder that you can view it at <http://carelinks.net/creationcalendar.pdf> and buy them from Marcus for 30p. each + postage, his email is bible.basics2020@gmail.com

Last Saturday he took the calendars along to a fair in **Croydon**- and gave out around 400 of them. If he can do this- surely many more could be out there engaging people for the Lord Jesus Christ. They are clearly popular.



Brother Charles Abel and others have also been out on the streets with good response. Charles writes:

"Oh, we of little faith! Headed to **Crawley** today, to hand out free Bibles and Bible Calendars with Julie, Sam, Andrew Downton, Margaret Quaipe and Dawn Skinner - fearful the rain would dampen our efforts. How wrong we were! God, in His wisdom, ensured nearly every shopper walked right by us along the one covered walkway beside Queen's Square. Amazing how many people were interested and willing to take a copy - we ran out of Bibles and Calendars in under an hour! Bit too wet for lots of pics though. Same again next Saturday, in Worthing, God willing..."



Marcus has written to 50 prisons in the UK with a copy of the calendar, inquiring if chaplains would like to distribute them. The response has been incredible. At least 10 of those 50 replied wanting significant numbers, and the chaplain of Gloucester Prison phoned up wanting lots of them. He explained that he works in a short sentence prison, which releases about 200-250 prisoners / month. He gives each released prisoner a package when they leave, and he would like to put our calendar in the package. It includes a quite lengthy statement of our beliefs and also offers the *NEV Bible*. Other chaplains do the same thing and have asked for significant numbers likewise. This week, Marcus has mailed out several hundred calendars to the

chaplains. He's also written to the remaining 100 major prisons in the UK. We seem to have hit a hole in the market here; and prisoners leaving prison having ended their sentence would seem a really good group to target, in our aim to take Jesus Christ to secular, searching people in society. This is a really exciting situation and possibility which we seem to have 'stumbled upon', naturally under Divine guidance and the desire of the Lord Jesus to work with those who seek to serve Him. So please do pray this week for the further response from UK prison chaplains. Br John Thatcher plans to likewise offer it to prisons in **Australia**.

Here are some of the emailed responses from the chaplains:

From **Yorkshire**:

"Dear Marcus,

Thank you for your kind offer of 2019 Calendars for prisoners. Colour pictures are always appreciated in jails as they bring brightness into a place that can sometimes be gloomy. If at all possible 100 copies would be most appreciated. May God bless you in your ministry.

Thank you

Fr Ken"

From **Pentonville** Prison, London:

"Dear Marcus, is it possible to request about 300-400 calendars please? If you cannot manage that amount could you donate as many as you are able? Thank you Address below.

Chaplaincy dept., HMP Pentonville, Caledonian Road, London N78TT"

From **Leyland**, Lancashire:

"Dear Marcus

Thank you for the sample of you wonderful calendars. If you have 100 you can donate to us that would be much appreciated.

Regards,

Graham

Revd Graham Turner

Church of England Chaplain"

AUSTRALIA

Meanwhile in Ipswich Queensland, sister Katy [a well known local cyclist] has taken to wearing our visibility vest advertising free Bibles as she cycles around, and the Bibles are indeed going out in Australia



Let us know if you want to wear one too and get the word out there.

GERMANY

We made a visit this week to contacts in Germany. Two are in a camp which is dominated by Islamists, with hard core Muslims insisting others pray in the dormitories on the prayer mats facing Mecca. And they basically bullied our contacts and they have yet to find the strength to step forward with their faith. But MARLENA did, and was baptized. She is not an asylum seeker, but instead is married to a very controlling man who monitors her emails and associations. She

feels almost under house arrest in their own apartment. She in desperation turned to God and became interested in the Lord Jesus for the first time in her life. She requested and received the *NEV Bible* in English, which she reads all the time, and has learned to pray to God and built a relationship with Him and His Son. She says her husband complains that she loves her little green book [the *NEV Bible*] more than him... she's really in a very difficult situation, and the baptism was performed not without difficulty. Please pray for her, she is so isolated and cannot get out much. We're putting her in touch with some sisters who can appropriately be in contact with her via *WhatsApp* which is her preferred and most private means of communication.

IRANIANS

Brother Steve reports:

"3 years ago we reported the baptism of 9 Iranians who had come to Northern Cyprus to be baptised, and who returned a few days later to Iran to face life in that hostile environment. We have been able to keep in contact with several of them and some have left Iran to seek asylum in Europe. This article tells a little of their pilgrimages since that time.

At the second visit, there were 7 baptised. In this picture [taken after the breaking of bread] you can see (from left) Yasaman, Arezoo, Kiarash. Steve, Mitra, a friend (face covered). Daniel (standing), Samane, Ahmed, Mahshid, Melody, Mehran (standing), Pouyan and Farnoush. The four on the left who were baptised have all been able to make contact through another brother and sister and are known to be safe. We cannot underestimate the risks they take by converting from Islam to Christianity, and all who have been baptised know that they are risking imprisonment and death. We pray that brother Ahmed is safe, but we have had no contact with him. It is difficult to imagine how they manage in these circumstances. To own a Bible or Christian literature is to take a huge risk. Inevitably their knowledge is going to be limited, but their enthusiasm for Jesus as Son of God and the Christian hope motivates them to keep going in faith, trusting their Lord will bring them into his kingdom. We have been able to keep in touch from time to time with sister Mitra. When she returned, her ex-husband discovered she had converted and attacked her, breaking her nose. We were overjoyed 3 weeks ago to hear from her again after a 9 month gap. She wants us to send more Christian material to read, despite the risks. She has met a family who are all interested in Christianity and she meets with them and they talk about their faith.

Also there is Samane - sitting at the far end of the table. She returned to Iran and kept her baptism secret, though she shared the information with a trusted cousin. Then her cousin's father somehow discovered, and exploded. Breathing fire and thunder he stormed out of the house threatening to report Samane at the mosque. Her mother ordered her to pack her bags immediately and leave to stay with a friend 400 miles away. As Samane left, she looked back at the house only to see a government car pull up and two burly bearded men emerge and enter her home. We subsequently discovered that they came to the house 4 times and confiscated all her possessions. After a short time, her mother insisted Samane leave Iran and arranged for a safe passage to Europe. There is a regular underground network, and they are people smugglers. It is a strange situation that those who are working illegally in this way are being used by the Lord to provide safe(ish) passage out of Iran for his children. Samane had a traumatic journey and eventually arrived in UK. Many blessings followed included being placed in a hostel which was within walking distance of a Christadelphian ecclesia.

But the UK Home Office have taken a tough stance with her, and have formally refused her

asylum claim. On October 8th her case will be heard by an asylum judge at a tribunal. Some UK brothers will appear as witnesses to testify about the sincerity of her conversion based on what we have observed and discussed with her. The point at issue is whether or not her conversion to Christianity is genuine. It seems so obvious in many ways and we are surprised the Home Office has not 'seen the light'. She now has the unenviable task of persuading an intrinsically secular person (the tribunal judge) that her case is genuine. In this way she stands before the authorities to witness for 'My Lord', as Samane refers to him, so we ask for your prayers that a fair-minded judge is appointed and that Samane is given the words to speak, as the Lord has promised he will in these circumstances. Mark 13:9-10: Matt 10:18-19: Luke 21:12-19 (Particularly relevant as it was her uncle who betrayed her to the authorities in Iran.) The Home Office can be rather aggressive, so she, and those of us who are giving oral evidence all need the Lord's guidance and encouragement as we have read above.

We as fellow disciples are constantly encouraged by the enthusiasm of our Iranian brothers and sisters. Our prayer is for them and for all they bring to us as they respond to the truth that Jesus is truly the Son of God - the Saviour of the world, to the honour of our heavenly father. But these are not the only ones who struggle, and we often see that it is new converts who are thrust into situations that would cause great stress to the most experienced of believers. It is at these times that we turn to the Lord to intervene and provide the strength and guidance as only He can".



PRAYER POINTS

- For all the UK prisoners receiving their calendars
- For sister Samane and others who have tribunals this week
- For sister Marlena and others in difficult domestic situations, torn between loyalty to partner and to the Lord Jesus
- For all those receiving Bibles and literature

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks