

Winter Bible School, Egypt February 2011

This Sunday's readings from the *Bible Companion* include Exodus 14, and there's an MP3 about this chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/ex1415.mp3>

EGYPT

We've received several enquiries about the ecclesia in Cairo, given the huge unrest at the moment in Egypt. Whilst internet and mobile phone connections are slowly returning, it's hard to account for all members there due to communication problems, but so far as we know, there have been no casualties, although the economic cost and difficulty sustained by the suspension of employment and trading is a significant item.

WINTER BIBLE SCHOOL

You really have to come to the Eastern European Winter Bible School to feel it all; words and reports can't really capture the spirit there. It seems the unique spirit there is partly as a result of the fact that brothers and sisters from all over the former USSR travel many hours and days in some cases to be together. Most attendees have been baptized many years and only get a chance to see each other once / year. So it really is a foretaste of the Kingdom for them, for many of them their only chance to be "in ecclesia" for the year. Brother Pavel at 84 years old travelled 3 days to be with us, bringing his pack of bread and cheese with him to nibble on throughout the journey; and as usual participated in the concert at the end of the school. This year we had some strong cotton bags printed with the promise of Rev. 21 "God shall wipe away all tears from their faces", a drawing illustrating this, an advert for *Bible Basics* and our website. Pavel and many others were thrilled with the bags- here he is with his: Photo: Brother Pavel



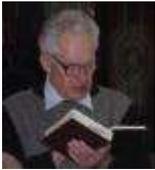
The spirit of love and joy in Christ was so noticeable and shone through the language barriers to our visiting brethren from England and America. The use of the *Bible Companion* reading system is very popular amongst our brothers and sisters and there was an unashamed interest in discussing Biblical and spiritual matters with each other: Photos: Spiritual, joyful discussions



In the above photos you can see several old sisters whose attendance was enabled by a last minute sponsorship received from a kind sister in Canada. They so appreciated coming. Old Sister Raisa travelled for a day to get there on the train and sat many hours in various railway stations patiently waiting, talking to fellow travellers about the Truth.

There were some present who you will have read of in previous carelink messages; brother Anton, whose cataract operation was funded by Carelink appeals, was present and able again

to lead us in the Bible readings: Photo: Brother Anton



Young sister Veronika, whose baptism we reported at last year's school, was again present with her parents: Photo: Sister Veronika



We hadn't heard from our brother Valerij in the very far north of Russia, and it was a joyful surprise when he turned up a day late, as usual participating in the discussion of the Bible readings and getting to share with us his various reflections from the last year whilst he's not seen any brother or sister in Christ. He travels with a stick and backpack, and found the -20 temperatures in Poltava, Ukraine to be warm compared to what he's been used to near the Arctic Circle where he lives. Photo: Brother Valerij



The highlight of the School was the baptism of brothers PIOTR and VALERIJ from Ukraine, sister ALEKSANDRA from Moldova, and brother ALEXEI from Russia.

Each have an interesting story as do all of us, but Alexei's story is especially motivating. Brother Andrej Boldetsov has read Bible Basics in Russian onto disk and produced it as an audio book. He took copies to his local centre for the blind. One blind woman listened to it and was impressed, but felt she couldn't leave the Russian Orthodox church. However, she gave the CD to her husband, who is sighted, and he enthusiastically accepted the Truth. He has been meeting with the ecclesia in Rostov Obl. for 6 months. Again we note how God loves to work indirectly as it were to bring people to Him. Photo: Brother Andrej with our new brother Alexei [right]



We concluded with a celebration evening, featuring hymns, poems written during the Bible School by some sisters as response to the profound series of talks on Forgiveness; and some skits, featuring some brethren in their 70s and 80s enthusiastically falling to the floor as Samson brought the house down:



As usual we distributed Winter welfare, and in this connection we have two appeals to make:

1) Two of our sisters who have very little material support will be giving birth to their first babies quite soon, and we'd appreciate if anyone could send them baby clothes. Please contact us for their addresses.

We are all so very grateful that your donations enabled the school to take place. Really really really, we all so very much appreciate it.

Please continue your support for such gatherings, and any speaking brethren or interested visitors are welcome to contact us at this stage to arrange to visit future such gatherings.

Finally, a reminder of the *Carelinks UK conference* to be held at the end of February, God willing- see <http://www.carelinks.net/doc/events>

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks