

APRIL 2010

A REQUEST FOR PRAYER... FROM TONY CROOK



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*And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God,
to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul,
and to observe the Lord's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?"*
Deut.10:12,13

Dear Praying Friends,

God wants us to live in a way that pleases Him, and the Scriptures are vital .

MegaVoice Players in the Gulf Region of the Middle East

In January and February we conducted a small appeal to provide funds for MegaVoice players for migrants and illiterate people who live and work in the Gulf countries of the Middle East. (Places like Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen). The MegaVoice is like an i-pod but is solar-powered, very robust and can be listened to by individuals (earphones) or groups of up to 20+. It can be programmed in any one of several hundred languages.

Would you please pray that as we distribute the funds raised that they will be effectively used. I have several examples.

In the Gulf they are used mainly amongst those who are illiterate and migrants from other parts of the world. "Adel is from Egypt. He has the burning desire to reach Egyptian farmers who come to his church in the Gulf. Recently he took 100 MegaVoice players from the Bible Society in the Gulf, using them mainly for the illiterate. These men are either construction workers or farmers who work in the sun all day long. They take these solar-powered players to work and listen to God's Word. Initially, only ten audio players were given to Adel. The farmers had to fight to have their turn to use the MegaVoice players and now Adel is so pleased he is able to help many more. These men come from 21 labour camps, and they keep moving to different places as their projects demand. This provides the opportunity for many more to listen to the audio Scriptures".

Please pray for all the Bible Society staff in the Gulf - Hrayr Jebejian, General Secretary; Babu Ganta, Communication Officer; Ranjini Ganta, BSG Operation Manager; Yousef Sabri, Arabic Program Coordinator; Agnelo Dosuza, Accountant; Anup Patro, Bahrain Representative; James Christopher, Qatar Representative; Philip Nazareth, Kuwait Distribution Promoter; Cecil Pereira, Oman Distribution Promoter.

Also pray for all those who are directly involved in getting the MegaVoice players to those who most need them.

Please also pray for the witness of those who use the MegaVoice players, whether it's personal witness or whether they are able to have the listening sessions with the audio volume turned up for up to 20 others to listen in.

Kenya Project

Victoria has taken up special year long Kenya projects. Project materials have been sent out, including a DVD we've produced and both children's and adult materials for groups and individuals to use.

As part of this, we are involved in helping get the Bible into the Kapsiki language.

Many Kapsiki have never been to school. But once they have learned to read and write their own language, often only as adults, they are particularly proud of their achievement and are keen to read. These are the people who are probably most looking forward to having the Bible in Kapsiki, since the New Testament is at present the only Book available in this language.



Rachel Kwanyé, a member of the Lutheran Church in Mogodé, Mayo-Tsanaga district. Northern Cameroon,

“At school the children are taught in French, in church three languages are used during the services, but at home we only use our own language—Kapsiki!” (Rachel, a member of the Fraternal Lutheran Church in Mogodé). “As a family we read the New Testament in Kapsiki and are very much looking forward to having the publication of the whole Bible”.

Please pray for the translation which Bible Society Victoria is supporting, and for the literacy camps that are currently preparing people for the completed Bible in 2012.

Serbia



About two years ago I had the opportunity to visit Serbia and to meet Father Milan. He's a young priest, about 32 years of age, with a desire for his own people to read and engage with the Bible. He lives in Niš in Southern Serbia (very close to the area of Kosovo). It is a poor area of Serbia. Father Milan has taken the words of Paul in Corinthians to relate to local people in a way that they can understand and so that the Gospel can be shared. So he plays in a local soccer team and also has plans to build a small Bible School as part of their church. Like many people whose parents grew up under Communism, it was his grandmother who influenced his early Christian teaching most. She told him about the Bible with such fervour that owning his own copy became one of his greatest dreams. Now he is determined to encourage Bible reading in any way he can in his church. He is not lacking in ideas, but he does lack funds. He makes time to visit school religious education classes, using the Bible Society's new Children's Bible when he can, and he's introduced initiatives such as providing each member of the Sunday congregation with a leaflet called *Voice* which gives a brief explanation of the Bible passages of the day. It has proved so popular that he now emails between 300 and 500 copies a week so that people can share with family and friends.

Father Milan is one of those whose efforts the Bible Society is seeking to support and encourage in Serbia as so many Serbians struggle with changes resulting from war, the dismemberment of Yugoslavia, and most recently the loss of Kosovo.

Please pray for Father Milan and all those who, like him, seek to encourage Bible reading in all the churches in Serbia. Please too pray for Vera Mitic, the Bible Society Director in Serbia, who encourages, distributes Scriptures and works so tirelessly to make sure that people can really engage with God's Word.

Visit of United Bible Societies General Secretary

The UBS General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Miller Milloy, will be visiting Australia between the 21st and 24th April. Whilst in Australia he will be spending some time with the World Service Centre staff in Brisbane and then three days in Melbourne at the end of the month. He is here to speak with the National Board of the Bible Society in Australia and also visit a number of leaders within Victoria. Please pray for safety in travel and for all the contacts he will make.

Haiti and Chile

Since the devastating earthquake hit Haiti in January, *Faith Comes By Hearing* has been working with over 70 churches, ministries and disaster relief organizations to take *Proclaimer* audio Scripture units to minister to the emotional and spiritual needs of the people. Pastor Gregory is pastor for a community just outside Port-au-Prince. An orphanage which is normally home to 80 to 100 children is now home to over 1,000 families. He was presented with a *Proclaimer* - he could understand because it was in his native Creole language. The expression on his face was priceless and his excitement radiated from him. As a desperate, but faithful pastor of a devastated, overcrowded community, he now had a way to communicate to people who were not only thirsty for clean water, but thirsty for God's Word.



Scenes like this one, of timber houses reduced to matchwood by the earthquake and tsunami, greeted the Chilean Bible Society team assessing the impact of the disaster.

In Chile, over the three days of March 18-20, Bible Society staff from the different regions of Chilean Bible Society, together with Alfredho Altamirano, Grant Manager for the UBS Americas Region and Gonzalo Ibarra, the Americas Area Fundraising Consultant, undertook a trip to assess the impact of the earthquake and the resulting tsunami and the needs of people in towns and villages in three regions.

Please continue to pray for God's continued blessings on the work of the Bible Society amongst the survivors of these disasters.

Victorian Diary—April 2010

DATE	VENUE	SPEAKER
2-5	Belgrave Heights Easter Convention	Marcia Chaffer
10	Croatian Seventh Day Adventist Church, St. Albans	Tony Crook
11	Longwarry Uniting Church	Marcia Chaffer
12	Balmoral Gardens, Wantirna South	Jan Peddersen
17	Ashburton Uniting Church "Saturday Nighters"	Jan Peddersen
21-24	Visit from Rev. Dr. Miller Milloy, United Bible Societies	All Staff and National Board

Thank you for praying. This prayer letter now goes to over 100 people every month and I am encouraged when I hear back.

Tony Crook