

Dhan & Dolly Lalsee

Serving the Lord in Zimbabwe

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It's another beautiful morning in this 'House of Stone', Zimbabwe, as the songs of the birds amply testify. It seems like the rains have already come and gone in a Country still reeling from last year's prolonged and harsh drought. Although this season's showers have been adequate for the current crops like maize (a staple for most people), sorghum, beans, tobacco etc, many are still very hopeful that some late rains will provide much-needed water for the dams and lakes (necessary for irrigation and electricity generation) and boreholes/wells. In many places, the public supply of potable water is either non-existent or unsafe.

But there are other matters of great concern to the populace. Last May, the US dollar was worth \$4.50 of our local currency; today, it is over \$40! Consequently, prices of goods and services are steadily rising but salaries are not keeping pace with the rate of inflation. Many people still have fresh memories of the hyper-inflation days which ended in 2009 when the US dollar became legal tender; they fear a repeat. The petrol and diesel lines are longer than ever and an enormous number of man-hours are being lost in the process. Electricity is still being severely rationed, although it has improved somewhat. International agencies have reported that about half of the population is below the poverty benchmark and have described the current situation as a "man-made disaster". Added to all of this is the lurking Covid-19! Praise God, there are no confirmed cases.

Many lament over the present situation and hope for a change in the fortunes of this mineral-rich Country, once regarded as the bread-basket of Africa. Being a religious people, they also pray that its success would result in an improvement of their lot.

What an opportunity for the Gospel! We are convinced that only Jesus Christ can give them real hope in this time of crisis. So there is need for a fundamental shift in perspective to see that Christ is the Sovereign Lord whose promise in Matt. 6:33 still stands today and we must radically trust Him alone to provide all our needs. Sadly, though, the focus of many churches is on prosperity here and now. Every material lack is seen as a curse of some sort from which the follower is to be delivered. Consequently, there is a preoccupation with the sensational, the glamorous and the spectacular, all designed to grab the attention of the religious and immature.

When He sent us here in 2008, the Lord impressed upon our hearts the need to help people grow into an intimate relationship with Him. Our group meetings are therefore interactive and we share as people on a common journey. Over the years, we have proven this to be an effective approach.

So after reaching out to groups of Pastors/Leaders in several cities and townships, the Lord is now leading people to us - some new, some from a few years back. We use every opportunity He makes available to us to meet with them and others in small groups, and with couples and individuals here in Harare. We also continue to travel monthly to Gweru, four hours away, to meet with a very encouraging group there.

This is why dear friends your prayers for us and this ministry are so vital. We fully appreciate that nothing worthwhile in terms of the Lord's purposes can be accomplished through us unless we ourselves are fellowshiping with Him, seeking His heart and His ways and doing what He wants us to do. You provide for our material resources and this is extremely important. But your prayers for and with us are invaluable! So thank you for your faithfulness on both counts. May He continue to bless you and your families and keep you safe.

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“THE NEW NORMAL”

Many have been asking, “what would the new normal” look like after Covid-19? Some have ventured suggestions; others out of fear perhaps have hesitated to make predictions. But it is very probable countless believe the world as we knew it would be forever changed after this pandemic – whenever that is!

Whatever were our thoughts before, this past weekend has perhaps given us a taste of what it might look like here. Permit us to share.

As you know, we serve in Zimbabwe, Africa. This Country is rich in minerals, arable lands and many hard-working people. But its recent history shows serious political problems coupled with severe economic woes which have resulted, according to the UN, in more than half of its population of about fifteen million within the poverty range.

Zim has had a history of producing maize, soya and other grain and bean crops sufficient to feed her people and to export as well. But for this, much seasonal rain is necessary; and we have not had such rains for the last two years. Many farmers supplement the rains with irrigation but the water table has dropped so low that boreholes (motorized wells) have literally dried up. So they agonizingly continue to drill more and deeper wells. However, a reliable supply of electricity is necessary to keep the fields irrigated; and since this is often difficult to come by, farmers acquire generators or install elaborate solar systems to pump this precious liquid from deep within the earth onto the fields, if they are to expect a harvest at all.

Most homes, both urban and rural, also depend on these wells for domestic needs. For example, during the past five or so years, over a hundred new ones have been drilled within a two mile radius of our home.

We are one of three families on the property where we live, and have also experienced this scarcity of water which ended three weeks ago when the owners were able to drill well number five – the second in a year! We all met and gave thanks to God that we now had this liquid gold gushing through the ground and looked forward to nice hot baths and showers!

But this became a distant dream this past weekend as our power went and has been off for a few days. When there is a breakdown, a generator or a recently installed solar system is called into action but the following day the generator broke down in similar fashion. Okay, you say, “two down; one more to go”? This being our winter (and a brutal one at that!), we have become accustomed to very bright sunny days and rather cool evenings. Everyone looks forward to enjoying the sun in a country where buildings are not heated. However, this past week the sun has been hidden behind unseasonal and dark clouds and more weather of this kind is in the forecast. So, there goes the solar option! The public power supply was restored as we write but a part for the generator is still being sourced. Meanwhile, we continue under indefinite lock down.

The lack of electrical power also meant that we were without internet, our only means of maintaining contact with the persons we work with in our discipleship program.

Who would have thought these three sources of power would have failed us simultaneously? Could the lesson for us here be that we should not take things for granted, but must learn to live without what we would normally consider indispensable? May He grant us all grace to trust Him to live in resilience, one day at a time, in grateful submission to His will and purpose, whatever form the “new normal” takes – and all the more as we see the day of the Lord’s return approaching. And may we be daily encouraged by the knowledge that He is in perfect control and His timing flawless.

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Our hearts go out to all of you who have been affected by the fires, hurricanes and floods. Coping with these natural disasters in the middle of the pandemic makes for challenging times indeed. May our Heavenly Father comfort and provide for you and your loved ones.

Hurricanes are devastating and leave indelible memories. Sixty-five years ago, a very severe hurricane struck our Island of Grenada leaving over 120 dead. Most houses were either destroyed or severely damaged by the fierce winds or raging floods. It was lifechanging for many. As a young boy, the events of that night and the aftermath are forever etched in Dhan's memory.

In the same way, for as long as the Lord tarries, globally, people will be recalling the unprecedented horrors of the Covid-19 experience and its accompanying conspiracy theories. These too are as lifechanging as they are unforgettable.

We remind ourselves that our Heavenly Father is sovereign and completely trustworthy. He always acts with full knowledge and wisdom, makes no mistakes and is working everything out "according to the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11). Therefore, He deserves the unwavering confidence of His children. He tells us in His Word that "in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."; and what is that purpose? - "For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son..." (Rom. 8:28, 29). But it is difficult to hold on to these truths when we are in the middle of the battles. Our hope and prayer for us and for His Church is that we all remain focused so that we will all come out of this unique period in better spiritual shape and closer to what the Father has planned for us - Christlikeness.

One of our lasting memories from this experience would be what we have been seeing among some 'Churched' people, both young and old, who are no longer contented merely with being members of a church. They have chosen not to grumble about the restrictions imposed on them "under lockdown" but instead use the opportunities afforded by modern technology to meet with others, weekly, via What's App, Zoom or other platforms to engage in meaningful study of the Scriptures that they might come to truly know the Lord - and all that this means. During these virtual meetings, the Scriptures are read followed by great interaction, all subject to internet connectivity of course! One of the great things is that it often involves their family members in the diaspora. Wow! Additionally, some are also meeting in small groups while observing the health protocols. It is nice to see faces light up as they hear passages of Scripture explained - not necessarily along traditional lines, but in a way that draws them to the Lord in reverence and desire for Him. Yes, we see a new desire for that kind of activity - study, discussion, fellowship, breaking of bread - on a regular basis. And, oftentimes, this interest flows into service as well.

We are not yet seeing a great revival, but this is a welcome and encouraging start. Already, we have seen Him do great and mighty things. Alleluia! We welcome these new opportunities and are so blessed in helping people to know their Lord and their God in a new and meaningful way. We can honestly say that we are now busier than we were before last March. This for us, is another reason to remember Covid.

Thank you so much for the privilege of your partnership in this ministry, both by your faithful prayers and financial support. We also remember the great service being rendered to all of us missionaries by the Harvest Team, for the love of the Lord. We hope you all share our excitement and would join us in giving praise to the Lord for His excellent greatness. May His blessings rest upon you and yours.

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“Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress...the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...” ~ Isaiah 9: 1, 2, 6

In our recent re-reading of Genesis 1, we were again struck by the appearance of light at the Lord’s command (v. 3), and how this set into motion six days of action by the Lord which reversed the prevailing formlessness, emptiness and darkness, and brought into being the Creation. The emptiness was now filled by form and what remained of the darkness was exactly what the Lord wanted for His own purposes and the benefit of His Creation. It also seemed to us that “darkness” is a frequently used word in the Bible, as is “light”. But in John’s Gospel, we are assured (Jn. 1:5) that the light has been and still is shining. The darkness has not overcome it despite its best efforts. The Light has always and will always triumph.

We found a lesson here for us – that no matter how deep and persistent the darkness we may be facing, Jesus the Light is the Father’s provision for us; through Him, we do not give up but remain steadfast in faith and thereby have hope. Although the darkness may linger for a while, it cannot overcome the Light!

This year has been a most dark, difficult, and uncertain one for most and, although we Christians do not know when or how this global pandemic will end, we certainly know that God is, and Jesus Christ is still Light and forever will be. So, may we celebrate Him this Christmas more deeply, more meaningfully and more passionately than ever before.

Our deep appreciation to all of you who have been such an encouragement to us and our fellow missionaries. This year has also been a rather hectic one for us and so we look forward to some rest – both physical and spiritual – over the holidays in preparation for resuming our schedule in 2021. May you also find your Rest in Him alone.





June 2020

Dear Partnering Friends,

Greetings. We pray that you and yours are being spared the ravages of Covid-19 and have been enjoying great family times together with the Lord and each other. Praise God, we and our family both here and abroad are well, although a month ago Dhan lost two family members in New York to the virus.

Our thanks to all of you who have been keeping in touch via email, WhatsApp and face time. Thank you for taking time to do that in the midst of your own personal challenges. This is indeed a very trying period globally, for none of us has ever experienced anything like it. Our hope and prayer is that our Heavenly Father will draw many into a personal relationship with His Son through this crisis and will also draw those of us who already know Him into a deeper and more meaningful walk with Him.

Many are of the opinion that the world would never be the same after lockdown. Certainly, the Lord has put all mankind on notice of His imminent return, so it cannot be 'business as usual'. While Scripture tells us that only the Father knows the day and the hour of Christ's return, may we like the five wise virgins be prepared for the appointed time, whenever that is.

Here, in Zim, we are into our ninth week of lockdown. Our last extension was for an indefinite period but this will be reviewed fortnightly. Like many African countries, we have not seen the rate of infections/deaths as elsewhere. At this time, we have had 60 confirmed cases and ten deaths. Businesses are now allowed to reopen and everyone outside their homes must wear a mask and practice social distancing. Schools remain closed.

Naturally, our ministry here has changed, although our focus remains the same – helping believers to have a meaningful and growing relationship with the Lord that we might be “conformed to the image of His Son”; for it is out of such a relationship that all meaningful ministry flows. Although internet is

available (though not very reliable), not everyone has wifi at home and phone packages are expensive. This limits our contact with some of our folks. However, we praise God that we have been able to meet weekly, via “What’s App” - with a young man now completing his studies in Zambia; a young lady now in Dubai, and our Friday evening family including one in France. We are also able to maintain some contact with a few of the participants at our 2018 Retreat and a young man from Hwedza who now works in Harare. We last visited Gweru in mid-March. Although wifi is also a challenge for many of them, we are very grateful that we have been able to keep in touch with some. We are very blessed to be able to walk with these brothers and sisters on this journey. Although their level of maturity varies, we are very encouraged as we together learn Christ and the Father’s eternal plan and purpose.

We are amazed at how quickly these weeks have gone by. Between our email and phone contacts, wifi groups, our personal preparation and household chores, we find that the length of a day is the same whether or not on lockdown. So we try our best to make what is left of our time on this earth profitable and of glory to God. Your encouragement and continued support to us on the field remains invaluable.

As you are no doubt aware, our Missions organization publishes a quarterly online newsletter which includes articles by their missionaries. This can be found on their website at www.harvestinternational.org It is usually sent to everyone on all the missionaries’ e-mail lists. The next issue is due at the end of June and we trust you will have a look at our submission when you receive it.

Thanks again for your fellowship with us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. May God richly bless you and yours.

Dhan & Dolly Lalsee



August 2020

Dear Precious Friends,

So much has happened in all our lives during the past few months that perhaps if each of us would write our personal stories they could run into volumes. But through it all, as harrowing as our own experiences might be, we can surely testify as if with one voice that but for our Father's bountiful grace we would not have survived the ongoing epidemic and all that it involves. Surely, we can declare with the Psalmist (Ps. 149): *"If the Lord had not been on our side the flood would have engulfed us."*

Indeed our Lord is not at all limited by Covid 19. In fact we are assured that He is in the tempest and is rather using it to achieve His eternal purposes. For example, we have been hearing how thousands in Iran have been turning to the Lord since the onset of this virus despite the punishment or even death that await them upon discovery. The same must be happening elsewhere. Surely, the issue for each of us today is not whether we physically survive but whether we are faithful to the Lord; not losing sight of what He is doing, but allowing Him to prepare us for what must yet be ahead. As has been said before, life as we knew it is never going to be the same. Sadly though this experience seems to be bringing out the worst in some people, while others are anxious to resume their former ways of living.

Zimbabwe has been under lockdown since March 30th and for many this has been tantamount to imprisonment. But we thank God for giving us a right balance of ministry, rest, exercise and quiet times. In fact the time is going by so quickly that our lives continue its frantic pace. It seems as if God is "shortening the hours of the day". But we rejoice, and we know you will to, that during this period we have seen His powerful hand at work in so many wonderful ways - in our own lives and in the lives of others. Here are some examples:

- The Lord continues to open many doors of ministry via WhatsApp and Zoom. In fact, we have been able to maintain contact with all those with whom we had been working prior to lockdown (except Gweru), plus two other individuals and another group of nine young people recruited by one of the youths with whom we are working
- We are being blessed with frequent and encouraging phone calls, emails, smses and WhatsApp messages from individuals we have worked with over the years, as they continue to maintain contact
- We are excited at what the Father has been doing in the lives of two of our “Timothys”
- We have seen the love of God at work in the lives of the members of one of our groups as they risked their own lives early in the lockdown to give support to a Christian couple whose husband was dying of cancer
- He has brought full recovery to our missionary friend in a “closed country” who was struck with Covid
- He is using some with very little, to sell their possessions to feed the hungry in their communities
- We rejoice with Danny Thomas (Harvest Director), his family, friends and the Harvest Family over his successful surgery and recovery.

Our Heavenly Father has been keeping our own family safe and well. Our daughter in Texas did have the early symptoms of Covid but she is over that and now continues to work from her home.

Please pray for:

- A great work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the individuals and groups that we are currently meeting with online
- Those whom we have not been able to meet with (for example Gweru) that the Lord would keep His flame burning
- The training session on Wednesday 19th with three OM missionary recruits
- Reliable/uninterrupted internet service during our online sessions
- Our family, friends and supporters as we all navigate through the continuing challenges brought on by Covid
- Our Harvest Head Office staff as they keep things running while our Director is out on sick leave

Our hearts have been greatly touched by your generosity, faithfulness, and continuing financial support for this ministry. You also must be feeling the impact of the downturn in your own economy. So your deep commitment to the Lord and to this much-needed discipling ministry greatly encourages us. The eternal destinies of many are at stake and so we are overflowing with praise to God for your partnership.

May He protect and keep you and your families.

Blessings,

Dhan & Dolly Lalsee

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November 2020

Dear Partnering Friends,

Greetings from Zimbabwe where the seasonal rains are being anxiously awaited and which we hope will bring an end to two successive drought years. We thank God for the few light showers we have had this past month and pray for many more as it is still quite dry. Not only would the rains replenish the rivers, dams and water table which supply the innumerable wells, but we would begin to see many busying themselves in planting maize and other staples so they can feed themselves in the months ahead.

In 1 Thess. 5:18, we are enjoined to “.....give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus”. We know that God is fully aware of what has prevailed world-wide during these last eight months. Indeed, mankind is still trying to understand and to deal with the Corona virus. It is probably quite true to say that people’s lives, if not the world, have been changed forever. This, plus the plethora of natural and manmade disasters have many asking themselves, “so what is there to give thanks for?”

Truth be told, we all have very much to be grateful for. It has however been said that ‘an atheist is one who has a deep sense of gratitude but has no one to express it to.’ As followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can express our thanks to our Heavenly Father because He not only hears us but also answers our prayers. In just a few days, those of you in the US will be marking Thanksgiving Day. Despite the tragedies, challenges and disappointments many of you have experienced, may each family unit find loads to be thankful to God for. These are very critical days for us who are known by His Name. Perhaps, as never before, the world is being called to take note that the Lord is drawing mankind’s attention to His agenda and He is inviting all of us to a walk that is more consistent with His character. We can be quite certain that He is less concerned about our (intellectually) knowing Truth, than He is about our living and being that Truth.

Here, we do have much to be thankful for! The Lord has been opening some absolutely amazing doors of ministry. Since COVID 19, we have not been travelling out of Harare but have been meeting online with many, some of whom we have never met in person. Additionally, we have been quite active with a rather large, English-speaking Harare church that has not yet resumed regular services. In mid-September, Dhan was invited to speak to their men’s group at their resumed Breakfast meeting. The following day, he spoke to thirty-plus persons (including some leadership) who had in the meantime formed themselves into a home group. Not long afterwards, there was an invitation to bring a fifteen-minute message for their virtual service. Since then, he has spoken four more times at the home group, including last week when, at their invitation, he began a “From the Beginning” series. We have also been asked to record the material in 15-minute segments ‘so the entire church can hear it.’ This is a very attentive and encouraging group some of whom seem to be hearing, for the first time, much of what is being shared. All of this is so exciting but, we confess, also scary, as things seem to be moving so quickly.

Friends, please join us in praying urgently and consistently for:

- Our continuing relationship and ministry with this Church.
- Wholly submissive hearts on our part, that we speak only what the Lord has given to us; and in the power of His Spirit.
- Prepared and responsive hearts of those to whom we minister.
- A three day retreat in mid-December which we are planning for about 20 young persons, some of whom we have never met physically – for a suitable and affordable venue and for the necessary funds; (we are asking participants to provide for their transportation costs and a small contribution towards food costs).

Thanks for your invaluable part in this ministry. ‘How can we thank God enough for you....?’ (1 Thess. 3:9). Blessings.

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December 2020

Dear Partnering Friends,

CHRISTMAS 2020

“Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress...the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...” ~ Isaiah 9: 1, 2, 6

In our recent re-reading of Genesis 1, we were again struck by the appearance of light at the Lord’s command (v. 3), and how this set into motion six days of action by the Lord which reversed the prevailing formlessness, emptiness and darkness, and brought into being the Creation. The emptiness was now filled by form and what remained of the darkness was exactly what the Lord wanted for His own purposes and the benefit of His Creation. It also seemed to us that “darkness” is a frequently used word in the Bible, as is “light”. But in John’s Gospel, we are assured (Jn. 1:5) that the light has been and still is shining. The darkness has not overcome it despite its best efforts. The Light has always and will always triumph.

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Have A Blessed Christmas,

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