

Revenge to Redemption



It was nineteen years ago in May 1998 when about twenty of us were sitting in a hotel meeting room in Jerusalem discussing partnership between the West and the Developing World. Part way into the meeting a note was passed into the room stating there had just been a suicide bomb blast on a bus downtown. Just fifteen minutes earlier, our wives had left to go into the city on a bus. Silently, we prayed.

N, a young Egyptian man, began sharing his story seemingly unperturbed by the trauma. In stark contrast, most of us from the West could not concentrate, focused on our fears for the safety of our families. Thankfully, another note soon arrived from our wives saying they were all fine.

Unlike most of us, the majority of our Bright Hope World partners from the Middle East and North Africa, including N, are very familiar with death and persecution. N was a six-year-old boy when he saw his father gunned down in the street outside their church in Karya Maghola in Northern Egypt by terrorists. He loved his father passionately and was devastated by the loss.

With vivid images of his father's vicious killers he grew up whispering fiercely: "someday I will have a gun, and when I do, I will kill you because you killed my Baba (father)."

As a result of his father's death, N's family were very poor. N, however, managed to get an education and went on to become a veterinary surgeon. He emigrated to Canada, but soon after arriving with his wife and two children he heard a still small voice whispering in his ear: "N, what are you doing here in Vancouver. Is this really your life and your people? What about the ministry I called you to? Have you forgotten that?"

So N and his family returned to Egypt, purely out of obedience to God.

Today, we are blessed to partner with N and his wife S in Cairo where they have a vibrant ministry to hundreds of students many from extreme Islamic families. It is hard work, and N and S - and all of Bright Hope World's partners - desperately need your prayers.

Egypt, with 98 million people, is overcome with extreme poverty. For nearly 2000 years, Christians have endured severe persecution, brutality and discrimination and yet our partners have amazing spiritual vitality and strength. The last twenty years have seen an intensification of suffering to the point where the church is known as "the Church of Martyrs"

We want to wish you a blessed Christmas as you celebrate Christ's birth and ask you to take time as a family to look at our website and especially pray for our Egypt partnerships. This is where the Lord Jesus spent 2 years or more of his life as an infant!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE TO THE NATIONS.

Rob Purdue
Executive Chairman

Bright Hope News

Bright Hope World has a team of volunteers from all over New Zealand. We are now nearly thirty strong, with quite a few more people in the process of joining our team. For most of these people, serving on the team requires considerable cost and sacrifice, and some do not often get to spend a lot of time with other team members.

In Nelson in January we have our annual 'Gathering' where our team comes together to share, pray and encourage one another. We only do this once a year so it's a pretty special time for us.

This Gathering will focus on hearing the highlights and challenges our team members have faced, spending some time talking about 'team care' and focusing on our strategic direction as a ministry - which is all about ensuring we are 'sustainable'. This doesn't just mean that we care about the environment (although we do!) but rather we want to make sure we can continue to support our partners for as long as we are needed.

To this end, we'll be focusing on ensuring our team is strong, ensuring our partners are strong and ensuring our support base is strong.

And (just quietly) we'll be enjoying the Nelson sun and having a good time as well!

Life Change Story – Mthombothemba, Zimbabwe



An email from our partner Gideon Chisamba:

“I have come from a meeting in Mthombothemba community whereby the community is celebrating a very good harvest they got from their fields this year.

The Vice-President of the Republic of Zimbabwe was invited to testify that the farmers in the community have enough food to push them to the next harvest or have enough food to feed their families for 52 weeks and therefore don't need food hand-outs from the government this year.

Thank you so much for helping us to introduce Foundations for Farming/Farming God's Way in this community and truly it is going a long way in lifting people out of the doldrums of poverty.

The community has been surviving on food hand-outs since 1981 but thank God that they have enough food for their families this year and this is because of the way that we have equipped them to practice the new way of farming.

Apart from celebrating a good maize harvest, our gardeners also had the opportunity of showcasing the produce from their gardens which is going a long way in improving the quality of life in the community.

The community deemed this celebration 'intwasa' which means the beginning of new things. They are looking forward to see God giving them new strength to work in their fields and therefore better harvests in the years to come.

Thank you so much Bright Hope World that you are part of what is happening in this community.”

Read about Mthombothemba Community Development (ZIM02a) at: <http://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=236>

Bright Hope World Office Christmas Closure Dates

The Bright Hope World office will be closed from 12.30pm on Friday 22 December and will reopen on Monday 8 January.

The last La Mai coffee orders for 2017 need to be in by lunchtime on Monday 18 December in order for them to be sent before Christmas. Normal coffee ordering will resume on 8 January 2018. Any standing orders that are due during this time will be sent out prior to Christmas.

The team at Bright Hope World greatly appreciate your support as we have sought to give hope to the poorest of the poor throughout 2017. We wish you a very happy Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Prayer and Praise

1. Pray for our partners and persecuted Christians in Egypt. Pray also that the political situation and severe poverty in Egypt would ease.
2. Praise for the community transformation that is occurring in Mthombothemba (and other communities in Zimbabwe) as a result of Foundations for Farming training.
3. Pray for all our partners over the upcoming Christmas period which often can add a lot of extra stress and pressure to already difficult situations.
4. Pray for wisdom for our team as we reflect over the last year and plan for the next at our team gathering in late January in Nelson.