

Dhan & Dolly Lalsee

Serving the Lord in Zimbabwe

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THE CROSS – A BEACON OF HOPE

In just a few days after you receive this edition of Harvest International's Newsletter many, in most parts of the world, would be marking Good Friday and Easter Sunday - days that commemorate the Crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ and His glorious Resurrection three days later.

Undoubtedly, these two days are extremely significant for all of humanity. Many choose to attend a Good Friday service, but others are concerned that the suffering, agony, and inhumanity to which our Lord was subjected are all too often forgotten. Some attempt to re-enact our Lord's experiences on that day by trying to replicate scenes designed to lead followers into feelings of sorrow, pity, or contrition. To them, this is what the Crucifixion is all about – sorrow, sadness, suffering, everything negative and dark. But is it?

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he traversed his way up a very great many things from Adam's first sin, tracing all its consequences through all the generations, up to Christ. Then, he places at the end of all of that, the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. From that point, he opens up an entirely new prospect and future – the Cross being the terminal point up to which everything leads, and from which everything takes a new rise. He comes at length to 'The God of Hope' in Rom. 15:13 – "Now, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit".

"The God of hope fill you that you may abound in hope!" It is well-nigh impossible to trace the development of the teachings of this great letter and not be faced with a strange paradox through which over the entire course of history God has written the meaning of the Cross - and it is this, the answer of God to sin, evil, disobedience and to all its fruits and results, is travail, despair, and death. But, notwithstanding that, He is the God of Hope and travail. Passion, despair, and death are the only way of Hope.

Let us take a moment to think about that, for this truth is written deeply in the entire history of God's dealings with humanity. The Cross has been implicit in all His dealings with man and, not only in general, but particularly with His own people.

For if God really cares about His people and His thoughts toward us are good (and they undoubtedly are) this is the only way to find meaning and purpose in everything He allows His children to go through. For, He always has in view His eternal purposes for mankind, and from that, He never deviates. And this is our hope! Morbid? Depressing? Read Romans again.

Late last year, many of you joined in with several others in praying for God's healing for Dhan as he underwent surgery for a spinal decompression. He has never had that pain again, praise God. However, on February 11th, he tripped at a Church breakfast while rising from his chair. Thank God, he does not seem to have sustained any damaged bones but the muscles in his left leg – from hip to knee – became swollen and quite painful. He's been having twice-weekly physio sessions with some success, but it seems to be a longer process than anticipated. He struggled a bit to find context for this accident, and here it is – the Cross.

And this gives us hope, for Christ and His work for and in us is our Hope. We have no other, we need no other.

A few days ago, one of the participants in our last two Retreats, brought us a huge bag of fruits, nuts, and some indigenous vegetables. Our hearts overflowed with joy and gratitude – Joy at this fine gesture, the first such blessing received from one of our disciples in almost fifteen years here; and gratitude for the thought, the abundance which he bestowed upon us, and the length to which he went to bring them to us. Yes, God is good!



African Horned Cucumber



Fruits, nuts & veggies



Dhan & Dolly Lalsee

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February 2023

Dear Partnering Friends,

We trust that 2023 has begun well for you and pray that as the days roll on, may we all grow in total abandonment, trusting our resurrected Lord as our Sufficiency, our Victory, our Sustenance, and our Rest. The days of Covid lockdown are over but the memories of those days still linger on, even as some of the symptoms and positive cases of the virus continue to make their appearance, not only here but also in other parts of the world. May the lessons which we learnt from those three years continue to grow and develop in us so that our faith becomes purer, and our lives more firmly rooted in Him.

We have many memories from this past year. Our most severe challenges included Dolly's bout of Covid pneumonia in January and Dhan's back problem which manifested itself during most of the year with growing pains down both legs. After consultations with two specialists in the field and many sessions with physiotherapists, convinced that the only certain route was the Lord's will, He showed us that He wanted us to agree on the less invasive surgical intervention. Dhan testifies that, not for one moment since the day of the surgery on October 21, has he experienced those gnawing pains again. *Oh, the goodness of our Father!* Knowing that many of you were praying for us certainly buoyed us up during that time, and we are so very grateful to all of you who surrounded us with your prayers. This is a very memorable experience which we can never forget.

Since the first lockdown here, we have not travelled out to our groups. Instead, we have met exclusively with individuals and groups here in Harare, or via What's App (WAP) and Zoom. This worked well except for those who had no access to the internet and using their phone packages would involve increased costs. Despite our own challenges, however, the Lord led us last August to organize a Retreat with some of the key leaders with whom we had been meeting. It was such a time of refreshing for all of us. Since then, we have been meeting on WAP with participants from which some lively discussions have ensued. Recently, the Lord has again laid it on our hearts to bring these men together for a follow-up Retreat. So, we are agreed on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19th February – only two weeks away!

Eleven participants are expected, seven of whom are from remote areas. They will be over-nighting. The rest are from Harare. The venue has already been secured and we are all excited about meeting again. Please join us in praying for this event – for each attendee, prepared hearts, for reliable and safe transportation for attendees; for Dhan's heart as he prepares to share and for the preparation of meals, etc.

We are also contemplating a furlough this year. Additionally, a special niece of Dhan's will be getting married on April 7th and we would really like to attend as well as sort out some personal issues back home, that need our attention. However, there are some hindrances – first Dolly's US visa has expired and although she applied for renewal since 2021, and two weeks ago she was allowed to visit the Embassy to pay the fee, there are some hiccups regarding the prepaid receipt and return envelope sent to the Embassy by the Couriers. Please pray that this gets resolved soon so the passport could be returned to us. Also, up for renewal is our Temporary Residence Permit (TEP) for Zimbabwe which expires next month. The application for renewal has been sent in. Please pray that the renewed permit would soon be issued.

Thank you so much for partnering with us in this ministry and for your faithful prayers for us and the work here.

Because our Lord cares

Dhan & Dolly

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Thank you.

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March 2023

Dear Partnering Friends,

Recently we hosted a conference attended by some of those to whom we have been ministering over the years. We were expecting 10 participants, but only seven were able to attend. Participation was good and we were certain we did the right thing by inviting back only those who were at the Retreat last August.



Lennard, Dhan & Theodore



Rafuro, Baba Frank, Dhan

"Baba Frank" (means Father of Frank, which in Shona is one of the cultural ways of showing respect to elders), is a retired school principal. He attended the 2018 retreat but missed last year's and was determined not to miss out this time. He decided to take a long-distance bus from Bulawayo when it passed thru Gweru on its way to Harare at 8:00 am. In order to catch the bus at Gweru at 4:00 am, he had to wake up at 2:00 am.

Because of heavy rains, the bus had to slow down considerably and was running very late so at 4:30 am, he and his grandson were driving around Gweru, looking for a kombi (they drive at breakneck speeds and are always jam packed). He made it to Harare; made contact with Joyson, who was helping us ferry people from the City to the venue, and arrived at the Retreat venue just as we were about to start. The poor guy turned down breakfast, placed his bag in his room and went straight into the morning session. He was so happy that he had made it! We were too. He was attentive throughout the event and his participation was priceless.



Dhan & Theodore



**Lennard, Pastor Pencil
& Pastor Fifteen**



Dolly, Lennard, Rufaro, & Baba Frank

Lennard and Theodore told us yesterday that in or about 2013, while still in their teens, they sometimes came to our group meetings at a place called Hwedza, but neither of us remembered them. One of them remarked yesterday as we drove them into the city to get their bus, "Imagine first meeting you then and catching up with you again after 10 or so years later."

Since Covid, we have not travelled out, so a retreat gives us the opportunity to continue meeting with some of those Church leaders and pastors with whom we met pre covid. The next thing we do is the set up a WAP chat group where we can ask questions or post an extract from a statement or article to stimulate discussion. That is usually very challenging mostly because of internet issues. The object of our meetings is to help them grow and develop into maturity so they can be better able to equip other believers. That really sums up what we've been doing these past 14+ years; it's only the modus operandi that has changed since Covid.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our ministry.

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April 2023

Dear Partnering Friends,

Thank you for your many greetings through Easter Cards, WhatsApp messages and phone calls. We trust you had a meaningful and well-celebrated Easter weekend and that the thrill of our risen Lord is still ringing afresh in your hearts. Oh, that all of us who go by His name, would daily yearn for the fulness of our Heavenly Father's provision for us in our Lord's death, His resurrection and ascension into glory!

Indeed, there is a lot more to Good Friday and Easter than mere days of celebration; but sadly, their eternal significance is very often lost in the melee and uncertainty of this world. So let us pray for each other that we remain focused. Pray also that we be not deceived into thinking that the pursuit of the things of our earthly existence is all there is to Life.



On another note, as you are no doubt aware, we have not had a furlough since 2019 and we are really looking forward to this year's. Dhan's Neurosurgeon and Neuro Physio have given him the go-ahead to travel next month. So, we have scheduled the first part of our trip as follows:

May 8th: Leave Harare for New York (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut)

May 23rd: Leave New York for Grenada and Dominica

July 25th: Leave Grenada for Florida and Texas

August 28th: Leave Texas (via New York) for Harare

This is a long trip, but much has taken place during the past four years and there are many persons and families we need to visit. There are also some personal, overdue matters that need our attention. Please pray with us for all aspects of our furlough and travels.

Thank you so much, Dear Friend, for your invaluable support in your prayers and finances over the years. We are still here because the Lord has been using you to supply our needs for which we are ever grateful to Him and to you.

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"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace".

Christmas greetings to you! While many of you are trying to keep warm, we in Zimbabwe are battling with temperatures of 87 to 105.8F. Whatever our climatic or personal challenges, we thank God for the privilege that we as believers have to remember, marvel at and celebrate, with deepest meaning, the coming into this world of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Indeed, "unto us, a Child is born, unto us a Son is given". He is God's incredible Gift to mankind! May this truth not be minimized as we celebrate.

The question has been asked, how do folks celebrate Christmas in Zimbabwe? Well, culturally, it is a family time. So, most businesses begin to close by the 15th of December and reopen the first week of January. This gives employees a chance to travel to their family homes (their Kumusha) for the holiday and be back to work in January. Non-indigenous folk would generally travel abroad or go to the local lakes, safari lodges or other holiday resorts. Few of the more affluent folk celebrate Christmas at home.

Some of the City churches sing carols on the Sundays preceding Christmas, have a candlelight service during Christmas week as well as a Christmas morning service. Some private schools have Christmas programs or allow their premises to be used for Christmas plays. Many of the shops also play Christmas carols. Few trees graced our local shopping areas this year, no doubt due to the increased power cuts.



Last week, we had the privilege of visiting Georgina, one of our young missionary friends, who has recently moved into a two-bedroomed traditional roundhouse which she has been building in phases, as finances allowed. There is still a lot to be done. But despite the many challenges she has faced as a single woman building in a male-dominated society, she is unfazed. Georgina gets water from neighbors and uses a single solar lamp for lighting, but she is totally at peace and thankful to God for His provision. She has named her little house "Bethel" – God's lighthouse in a community that is riddled with syncretism, witchcraft, ancestral worship, and the like. Few in the community would guess that this young lady has a master's degree, speaks 7 languages, interprets at international conferences for her mission's organization, and holds a responsible position at their offices in Harare. We thank our Lord for her love and commitment to Him who 2000 years ago, left the splendor of heaven to come and live among us so He could reveal the Father to us that we might have eternal life.

REJOICE WITH US! Even as we end this letter, our Heavenly Father is showering His blessings on us with the first long-awaited rain shower! How much we pray for more!!

May we all celebrate Jesus, the Gift of God, with thanksgiving in our hearts this Christmas and always.



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November 2023

Dear Partnering Friends,

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

“Let them give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for mankind, for He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things” (Ps107:8-9)

We join you in giving thanks to our Heavenly Father for His bountiful blessings on us, His children. Indeed, every good and perfect gift comes from Him who has lavished on us His love in the gift of His Son.

We are certain that, like us, you can remember some of the blessings you received from His hand these past months. Among ours are:

Safety during our 4 months of travel, adjusting to different time zones, four continents, different countries, four US States and a couple of Caribbean islands.

The joy of celebrating our 50th wedding anniversary, with our daughter Paula and her family in Dominica followed by a celebration with Anna, our second daughter in Texas, a few weeks later.

Quality time with family, extended family, friends, and fellow believers at every stop.

God's miraculous provision, including our health, during each step of this long journey.

Keeping our home safe in our absence and

Grace to pick up where we left off and re-establish contacts as we got back into the flow of ministry.

But do we only give thanks for the nice and pleasant things? Scripture tells us “***In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you***” - 1 Thess 5:18.

The Lord in His wisdom has allowed and continues to allow us to face challenges that we have never experienced since our arrival here 15 years ago. He is also giving us the grace to trust Him to work them out for His honour and glory and for our good, as He conforms us to His Son's image.

We thank Him for your love and continued prayer and financial support for and to us. He is truly faithful and can be depended upon to meet the needs of all of us His children. We consider you among our Lord's gifts to us for which we thank Him. Since it is not His desire that any should perish but that all should come into a saving knowledge of His dear Son, please join us in praying that He would draw many to Himself through the natural and man-made situations facing our world today.

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