

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE JESUS ARE
POURING IN FROM AROUND THE WORLD!

Your past support has helped us respond quickly. But there's still lots of ways to make a difference!

ITMI
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"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them." - Matthew 6:26

INDIA



PROVIDING FOOD. SHARING THE GOSPEL.

On March 5th, ITMI's **David and Taru** received the news that their state was mandating their small preschool close. This was in effort to stymie the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Their school is located in and serves families living in an impoverished and marginalized Muslim slum. The children who attend Deepam School - which simply means, "the lamp" - depend on the school for two meals a day.

David and Taru were immediately worried about their students and how they would fare.

Then, these impoverished families were ordered to stay at home. Quickly, the situation grew desperate.

These are not families who have pantries full of supplies from Costco. These are people who leave their homes each morning in hopes that they will earn a few cents to purchase food for that day.

Not being able to leave means not being able to eat.

Sanjana's father is a daily laborer, so the stay-at-home mandate put a swift halt to any income he might have the opportunity to earn.

Like many men in this slum, a lifetime of degradation and hardship has driven him to an alcohol addiction. Often, those funds never make it into the plastic bowls

and scavenged dishes the family eats from.

Sanjana is one of about 35 children who attended Deepam school daily, where she had the chance to learn that Jesus cares about her and his family.

Through daily lessons and David and Taru's example, she absorbed the message that she needs a Savior, and that she can call on Jesus to help her. She also gets two healthy meals on school days, so even when her father drinks the family's food money, Sanjana gets to eat.

But all that changed when Deepam had to close to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

One of David and Taru's supporters understood the desperation of the situation for these families and acted fast.

"Helping with these basic needs is vital and shows God's loving and gracious hand," shared this donor.

They helped David and Taru purchase bulk quantities of rice, lentils, oil and salt to help these downtrodden families eat.

On Good Friday, just days after the order to stay at home was made, David and Taru distributed 61 bags of food that would feed families for at least two weeks.

Sanjana's mother arrived with another mother to pick up food bags. They were about to witness proof that what David and Taru have been sharing with them about this Jesus who cares deeply about them and their needs - isn't just an empty claim.

All of the recipients, including Sanjana's mother, were steeped in gratitude.

In response to their sincere thanks, Taru said, "It is not me who brought you this help but Jesus who knows you has sent this help... thank Jesus and believe in Him."

"Yes, ma'am it is true," the two mothers agreed. But they didn't just stop there. "Ma'am," she said, "can you please pray for us?"

"It was a great opportunity for Taru to

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share about how God is concerned and cares for everyone, irrespective of who we are, but you need to believe Him and pray to Him for all your needs,” David reflects. That was the birth of **Project Joseph**. Through initiatives like this, God is giving opportunities to David and Taru to scatter seeds of God’s truth and hope in hearts darkened by hurt, poverty and a religion of hopelessness.

ZAMBIA



PROJECT JOSEPH GAINS MOMENTUM

RUBEN MWALE LIVES IN A SMALL, RURAL village in Zambia. ITMI’s **Timothy Keller** has been making discipleship visits to Ruben’s village regularly for over a decade.

Over the course of his partnership with Ruben, Timothy has watched him mature into a godly shepherd who knows the Bible and is a leader in his village.

Last month, Ruben and his wife were praying. Their village was hungry.

The Lord has blessed Ruben’s faithfulness and he has a piece of land that yielded well this year.

Ruben and his wife had been wise, followed Joseph’s Biblical example and saved a portion of their surplus.

But what they had wouldn’t feed the whole village. “How do we decide who to give our extra to?” they prayed.

Tim had given Ruben a cell phone, but as of the day prior, Ruben’s phone had been completely broken and unusable.

Then something unexplainable happened.

The phone was lying next to Ruben when it caught his eye because it lit up. To test it, Ruben posted, “Hi, how are you?” on Facebook.

He didn’t know that on the other side of the world, ITMI’s **Steve Evers** was trying to make contact with him, but didn’t have Ruben’s phone number. With a pandemic taking the globe by storm, Steve wanted to see how Ruben’s family and village was faring.

But he had hit a wall trying to locate Ruben’s contact information.

Ruben’s test Facebook post appeared just as Steve was unsuccessfully trying to locate Ruben on Facebook. Steve responded right away to Ruben’s post. Steve and Ruben had a 30-40 minute conversation on a “dead” phone, which resulted in Ruben being one of the first to join what Steve is calling “The Joseph Project”.

Steve is calling ITMI partners to follow Joseph’s example during what is becoming for many in third world places, a quarantine-induced famine.

He is asking them to store up and accumulate any supplies they can and use them to sustain God’s people and others in need for the advancement of the Gospel.

Steve is also asking God’s people here to help by sharing some of what is in our storehouses, too.

We were blessed to be able to respond quickly to the needs in Ruben’s village, enabling Ruben to show this village that the Lord alone is their provider and that He cares and is capable of providing from places our limited view can’t predict. He can use a broken cell phone and He can use broken people to move forward His mission to redeem and restore what was severed by the rebellion of mankind.

SOUTH SUDAN



A HUNGRY WIDOW SHEDS TEARS OF GRATITUDE

IN THE UNSTABLE ECONOMY OF SOUTH SUDAN, it didn’t take long for the global pandemic to inflate the prices of food and other commodities.

Our partners there report many are fearful of the Coronavirus, so they remain at home. Perhaps their fear isn’t all that irrational. There are 4 ventilators and 24 ICU beds in the whole country.

But for many, remaining at home means a day away from any income producing activities, and that means an immediate lack of food for their families. For others, their income is dependent on foot traffic, and most of that has dried up.

ITMI’s **Lazarus Yezinai**’s ministry has long consisted of visits and provision of food for widows and their families. But it is even more crucial for these vulnerable families than ever.

One widow Lazarus visited had been without food for several days. When he arrived unexpectedly with food and supplies, her tears of relief and gratitude mingled with her sincere expressions of thanks to Lazarus' partners who made this provision possible.

Now there are many more in need than ever before. Single mothers who observed the interaction from their straw huts approached Lazarus, expressing their equally dire needs.

Lazarus expressed his own gratitude to ITMI and the partners who have joined him in his ministry in the destitute country, and for the help that has been provided to him as he "focuses to evangelize and disciple people for Christ."

SOUTH AFRICA



OUR PARTNERS LEAD THE WAY WITH GIVING

ITMI'S **CHARL AND SONJA VAN WYK** quickly realized what stay-at-home orders would mean for many of their brothers and sisters living in informal settlements whose income would severely limit their ability to "stock up" for needing to stay at home for weeks.

It would mean immediate hunger.

These are faithful and dedicated believers, many of whom have come to the Lord through ministries the van Wyks, ITMI's **Mark and Cyndi Parris** and Bradley and Sonja Kuhn are involved with among the impoverished living in informal settlements like **Stone Hill**.

Starting mid-April, with money from their own pockets, Charl and Sonja provided 50 children in one settlement, Khayelitsha, and 10 families (40 persons) in Gugulethu, another settlement, with food for two weeks.

"We have a great opportunity in spreading the message of Christ's sacrifice, salvation and promise of eternal life to people around the world, as the Lord calls each of us to do," Charl says.

Charl also sent his supporters an email offering them the same opportunity he and Sonja had seized in Khayelitsha and Gugulethu. He offered them the opportunity to bless 1200 needy families in Stone Hill with enough food to last for a month.

"This is a massive endeavor," Charl wrote. "Blessing

1,200 families sheltering in shacks with a 10kg (22lb) bag each of maize meal, prayer and Gospel literature commands dedicated volunteers (which thankfully, we have in abundance), logistical coordination (which we're refining) and resources well beyond our traditional means. Thankfully, we can rely on a Mighty God, and the family of believers who share our mandate to disciple the nations. We are not only hopeful that God will hear our prayers and bless our efforts - we anticipate it!"

The amount needed to accomplish Charl's massive endeavor of purchasing 2100 bags of food at \$4.95 each, was USD 5,940.

Charl's supporters responded immediately, sending a combined total of over \$17,000 so that the Gospel could be shared with the needy in South Africa through the provision of food! What isn't used in Stone Hill will be shared among Charl's other projects, who also work with people in great need. As for the hungry, their physical needs are being met and their spiritual need for Jesus is made known.

But that's not all.

The people in Stone Hill who will benefit from this endeavor of Charl's aren't random hungry people. They are people Charl and other believers have been reaching and disciplining for over a decade. And while one-off feedings may or may not yield individual salvations in and of themselves, this outreach has a long-term proven track record of effectiveness. Now there are growing Christians living in Stone Hill, leading with godly lives while reaching their neighbors and friends with the love of Jesus and the Good News of the Bible.

INDIA



GIVE US YOUR FAMILY'S FOOD!

ITMI'S **PAUL AND MOLLY** are quarantined at their village home with all their children. They are overwhelmingly thankful for this time to be all together after a year spent in multiple homes, though it isn't permanent. It has been a much-needed time of discipleship and healing. But it hasn't been without its challenges.

Local authorities stopped by to demand that Paul share his food with the locals from nearby villages. Though they were already finding it difficult to feed their family

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ZAMBIA



Johan's emergency shuttle helps rural community deal with flooding while seizing unique opportunity to share the Gospel.

Believe it or not, the Coronavirus pandemic isn't the highest priority threat in Chavuma, Zambia.

But that doesn't mean they aren't preparing for it. ITMI's **Johan and Lesley Leach** are working with local volunteer nurses to equip their tiny rural mission clinic with 1000 masks. Last week they completed and delivered 300 masks.

Meanwhile, an entirely different local crisis created a unique opportunity.

In early April, the Zambezi River's waters flooded over its banks and onto the adjacent plains, where Johan and his teams travel to bring the Gospel to these isolated villages.

As the water encroached, entire villages had to move to higher ground, but they had to cross the dangerously full river for supplies.

Because of our partnership with the Leaches, they have been equipped with canoes and a motor boat, which they quickly made use of to reach people with the Gospel in a new way.

They positioned the canoes near flooded local roads so that locals could use them to pass through.

Using the motorboat, they began ferrying people across the river and back.

But this isn't your typical ferry.

Before the crossing begins, Johan prays with the passengers. Then, one of the local pastors he works with presents the Gospel as they cross the river. The ride ends with another prayer before passengers exit the boat!

POLAND

3 EXCITING NUMBERS FROM PIOTR ZAREMBA

In sharing this, I would like to thank you, ITMI, and thank all our supporters for ongoing prayers and ongoing support. -Piotr

21 MILLION

times, users of the YouVersion Bible application opened a chapter of Piotr's translation of the Bible from its original languages to Polish.

134 THOUSAND

people read Piotr's translation of the Bible in the YouVersion Bible application on a regular basis.

25 THOUSAND

people downloaded Piotr's Polish translation of the Bible

From the Director



DEAR TEAM: "THE WORLD IS PRETTY MUCH SHUT DOWN FOR FOREIGN MISSIONARIES." OR IS IT?

I can not go to Poland. I am not allowed to minister in Romania. I would not be allowed to get on a plane to most any of the countries that ITMI has obediently ministered in for almost 40 years. The world is pretty much shut down for foreign missionaries.

Unless you are embedded in one of these countries, you are pretty much not getting in. There are a couple of countries that will allow you to enter via a specific airport, then mandate a 14 day self-funded quarantine, before you do anything in their communities.

With all the human decisions and health issues blocking, or seemingly blocking us from carrying out our 'great commission', we had to stop and first of all, be grateful for where God has sovereignly placed us. We then needed to seek His face for what He would have us do in this unique and unprecedented situation. Thirdly, we needed to then accept, in faith, that He would make a way. Thus **Project Joseph** was launched – feeding the believers and the lost who are caught up in this worldwide shut down.



PROJECT JOSEPH LAUNCHES!

Charl van Wyk reminded me last week via Whatsapp as we discussed the results of Project Joseph that Proverbs 18:16 says this, "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." Charl is getting reports and seeing it first hand that these gifts of food and sanitary supplies are opening doors that were previously closed. Community officials are noticing the help that is being given during these times, the willingness to serve at their own expense and possible peril. God is speaking through our partners to those that now are really listening and wanting to know about the "hope that is within us."

"A Christian is a keyhole... through which other folk see God", we are reminded by Robert E. Gibson.

We all are a keyhole to our own families, our own neighbors, our own church, our own community. God has given us an amazing opportunity to display His love and truth and His hope during these times. How are we doing? How would others say we are doing? What more does God want us to accept His help to accomplish for His glory?

Joseph told his brothers when they feared for their lives, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?" (Gen. 50:19). He knew he was where God had placed him.

Joseph then said those very famous and often repeated words, "...you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive...." (Gen. 50:20) God clearly had a plan in Joseph's up and down life.

I love these last two verses, "do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for GOD sent me before you to preserve life." (Gen. 45:5)

"So it was not you who sent me here, but God." (Gen. 45:8)

God is giving us a special opportunity to be Joseph to our families, communities and our brothers and sisters across the world. May we first, be truly grateful for this opportunity, then ask Him how He would have us to stretch outside our comfort zone. Next, we need to by faith step out and allow Him to do so much more than we can possibly conceive. We are here, ready to partner with you and our Polish, Romania, African, and Indian brothers and sisters...may we all be found faithful.

Blessings on each of you!

PS. We love you all dearly and so appreciate your partnership and sacrifice. You are in our prayers!

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of 25 during this time, Paul graciously complied, leaving his own family with even greater challenges.

It is also a challenge to be separated from their church who looks to them for desperately needed encouragement from God's Word. Without their shepherd, many new believers feel lost and unable to access spiritual truth through God's Word on their own. Paul regularly teaches them that as believers, they can read their Bibles and have been given access to the Father through Jesus' work on the cross. But this countercultural idea takes years to unravel, and many aren't there yet.

Paul has been teaching via the internet in place of Sunday gatherings and other meetings, but many of these impoverished believers don't have access to the internet.

Like the other places mentioned, this pandemic has opened new doors in India, too. Paul and Molly, have already delivered food to widows from their church who were in need. Although Molly was concerned that riots might ensue, because they of course wouldn't have enough for everyone who was in need, members of Paul's church staff were able to accomplish their mission without any unrest.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters and the wisdom of ITMI's leaders to keep funds available, ITMI was able to respond quickly to the needs of our partners and help Paul and Molly share Jesus through the provision of food in the "untouchables" village.

POLAND



CATCHING THE LAST FLIGHT TO THE US.

"GET MAX BACK TO THE US" was the advice ITMI's **Richard and Brooke Nungesser** were given early last month. Since birth, their middle son, **Max**, has struggled with his respiratory system, which puts him at the highest of risk for a case of COVID-19 with complications. The missionary family was able to get on the US Embassy's last flight out of Poland and have arrived in Arizona.

Richard continues to shepherd his church online as he was doing before leaving Poland. **Bread of Life** continues safely delivering food to impoverished families that come to the **New Life Center** regularly to pick up food. This gives them regular interaction with the believers who are there to offer love and the Gospel.

The Lord is at work behind these difficult times. We are honored and blessed to be alongside Him, reaching and loving His people, and those who will be His soon. If you haven't had the chance to get in on this unique opportunity to demonstrate and declare the Good News, it's not too late! Now is a great time to join the **Project Joseph** cause.

Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

FOR PRAISE

1. Poland - Piotr Zaremba - Many using Piotr's Bible translation and learning the truth about the Lord!
2. India - David and Taru Kumar - The Gospel declared and demonstrated to the needy through an ITMI supporter's gift.
3. Zambia - Johan Leach - Unique window to teach Gospel truth during flooding using equipment ITMI donors have supplied.
4. All - Opportunities unique to this unusual time in the world to demonstrate and declare the Good News.

FOR PRAYER

1. South Africa - van Wyk - Provision of funds to feed 1200 families in Stone Hill.
2. Zambia - Leach - Provision of supplies to complete 1000 masks for the local mission hospital.
3. India - Paul and Molly - Following lockdown, continued protection for their girls and guidance to physically safe homes.
4. Poland - Andrew Gorski - Peter Gorski (12) recovering from surgery on broken bones in his hand.
5. All - Wisdom, humility and selflessness for leaders around the world making decisions during this crucial time.
6. All - Safety, health and wisdom as we seek to be His hands and feet during this pandemic.



*A higher standard.
A higher purpose.*

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