

“And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.”

Exodus 2:24-25

ITMI
Monthly

1 SEPTEMBER 2021

intouchmission.org

“I NEVER THOUGHT I’D OWN A BLANKET!”



Silvia Buwa holds the first blanket she’s ever owned, provided by ITMI supporters and Lazarus Yezinai.



Mama City Ali never thought she’d own a blanket, but she was blessed with one by ITMI supporters!

SOUTH SUDAN

Blankets are commonplace for many of us. We have extras hiding in our closets and attics. They aren’t difficult to come by here in America. But for the impoverished in South Sudan, where inflation drives the price of this “luxury” out of reach for most of the population, a blanket is something they never imagined they could own.

Last year, ITMI supporters provided blankets for needy families through our Christmas Giving Catalog. Mama City Ali and her husband were one of the needy families that received a blanket provided by ITMI supporters through our partner in South Sudan, [Lazarus Yezinai](#). Lazarus also provided Mama City Ali and her

husband with 2 buckets of maize.

“God knows and sees my situation from heaven,” said Ali, “I never thought that one day I am going to have a blanket. So today my husband will be covered with a blanket and will have food today. Let the name of God be glorified!” She went on to ask for prayer for her sick husband, who lay in their shack in Juba, South Sudan. “Thanks to God and thanks to those of ITMI for what they did to me. Let God bless them all,” she said.

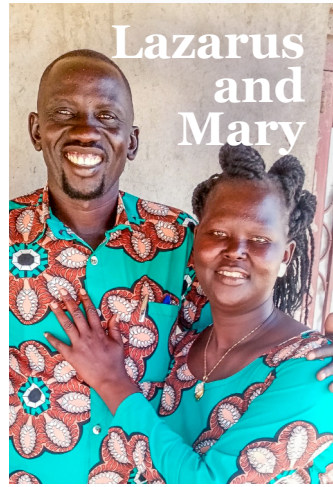
Silvia Buwa was another woman who was blessed with a blanket and maize. “It is the first time in history for me to have a blanket,” she said gratefully, “I

am suffering from coldness but God never forgets me. I give thanks to God and also to those that remember me from afar. I have nothing to give but let God remember you (ITMI supporters) and your children.”

Whether he is visiting with gifts of physical provision or just to encourage the suffering, Lazarus’s visits are Christ-focused. He listens to their struggles, speaks God’s Word into their lives and prays with them.

Some told Lazarus it was the first time they’d seen the church reach out with God’s love and care for the elderly.

(Continued on p.2)



(Continued from p.1)

Some gave their lives to Jesus and others returned to the Lord because of the church's faithful witness carried out through Lazarus and his team.

Using Their Home to Reach People with God's Love

Lazarus has a full ministry schedule. He is a leader in his church. He visits orphans and widows, organizing relief deliveries when funds are available. He makes [evangelistic home visits](#) and follows up with those families to provide discipleship. He runs a grassroots outreach where teachers volunteer to tutor classes of students of all ages, even adults, who were not able to finish school or take exams, usually due to displacement or some kind of crisis.

He regularly reaches out to gangs, youth who were [displaced by violence and have no where to go](#). He is working to start a sports outreach for these youth in great need of the Word of God and discipleship relationships. Lazarus also travels to equip church leaders to lead biblically and teach God's Word faithfully. After full days of hard work in the unrelenting South Sudan heat, it would be understandable if he sought the quiet of his home.

But Lazarus is so impassioned to reach people with God's Word that he and his wife, Mary, have opened their home to many in need.

All together, Lazarus and Mary have 17 people in their household. These are people Lazarus shares his meager income and personal resources with. As part of his household, they participate in daily family devotions and outreaches in the neighborhood. Lazarus and Mary live on a small plot of land in Juba. The 17 members of his household share two small, mud structures.

In a recent conversation with Kent, Lazarus revealed that the one-room structure where the children sleep is

(Continued on p.3)

Above: Lazarus sharing the Word of God with the family of a widow who received a blanket and maize.



Above: Lazarus and the many that have been welcomed into his home and family.



Left: Lazarus equips pastors with truth from God's Word. Right: Gang members listen to Lazarus' teaching from God's Word.

(Continued from p.2)

falling down. The mud walls are literally melting away every time it rains. During the rainy season (April to November), the chance of rain is greater than 36% on any given day. The structure is at a point that it cannot be repaired. It must be demolished and rebuilt. To reduce the amount of time that they are without a bed during construction, Lazarus is waiting until he has all of the materials purchased before beginning demolition.

The replacement building will be made of brick and slightly larger to accommodate the family which is

now much larger than it was when the structure was built.



The walls of the room where the children sleep are melting away. The structure needs to be rebuilt.

The great news? Helping Lazarus reach these needy children and

youth right in his own home can be done for less than five thousand dollars.

In fact, Lazarus just needs \$3,300 to purchase the remaining materials.

ITMI family, we can do this. We can help this faithful family with livable conditions to share with those in need.

Together, we can enable Lazarus and Mary to continue using their personal resources to help the vulnerable and in need, while continuing to reach out to gangs, widows, the elderly and the hurting.

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

The Phone Call that Changed our Lives



By Ema Ban

At the recommendation of our eldest son, my husband and I started watching *The Chosen*, a brand new series on the life of Jesus.

The episodes of Season One have been completed, and it's quite refreshing to watch, even though equally thought provoking. The director and screenwriter have decided to look at the narrative from a different perspective than what we have been used to so far, and it opened up conversation among those who have been watching it.

It's interesting how in following the main story line Bible readers are so familiar with, they "mixed in" what we know of that culture from history books and archeological explorations.

One episode caught my attention in particular. It's the one where Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the Jewish Ruling Council, who

has been already shown as watching Jesus and his ministry "from a close distance", gets to finally sit down with Him, and have a longer one-on-one discussion - as we read in John 3.

Nicodemus was a great man, had influence and was revered, and we see him now genuinely trying to understand Jesus' mission. Their meeting ends with Jesus' invitation to Nicodemus to follow him, and to join him and his traveling companions as they set out for ministry.

Jesus also tells him the place where they will all meet, in Capernaum. The scene ends but not before the viewers are allowed to see how Nicodemus is trying to make sense of it all.

"This all leads to the most haunting and tragic moment of the series thus far," says author Rozann Lee in a recent blogpost.

"Episode 8 follows the Apostles as

they gather, preparing to leave Capernaum on their way to Samaria—the public ministry of Jesus on its first tour. And as you hear the Apostles count heads, you can see Nicodemus around the corner in agony, knowing the invitation has been offered . . . and knowing he won't take it. Peter then finds a purple bag of gold coins that was tossed by Nicodemus toward the group, a recognition of Jesus and his invitation, but a meager and somewhat sad response to that summons to an adventurous, self-forgetful new life. Jesus' face betrays his disappointment as he laments under his breath, 'You came so close.' "

How My Dad Did More Than "Come Close"

Even though it was many years ago -

(Continued on p.4)



Dr. Nick left his practice to become a pastor in Communist Romania.

(Continued from p.3)

38, to be exact - I still have vivid memories of that period of my life like it was yesterday.

I was blessed to be born and raised in a God-loving and God-fearing family, with parents who loved me and my two siblings dearly, and were always looking out for our good, praying for us. I had a pretty uneventful childhood, aside from some health issues, but since my father was a medical doctor, things were kept under control with treatment and frequent check-ups.

This was Communist Romania, prior to the Revolution in December 1989, and things were pretty good for those who had respected jobs. Doctors were highly respected in general, and since we lived in a fairly small town, many people knew my dad, and so I enjoyed the benefits which came with that.

The World As I Knew It Was About to Change

But the world as I knew it was about to change, and rather dramatically - at least that's how I, as a 10-year-old, perceived it.

It was the fall of 1981 when my dad [[Dr. Nick Gheorghita](#)] received a phone call from the Elder's Board of a Baptist Church in Oradea, some 200 miles away from my birth town. As I am sure you can imagine, Baptists (and all Evangelicals) were not appreciated by the Communist regime who had proclaimed the "death of God," among other things.

Dr. Nick answered the call of God and stepped forward in faith to become the pastor of a baptist church in Oradea, Romania. My dad and my mother took time to pray, and to my disbelief, they decided to answer the call of God and step forward in faith. That meant dad had to resign being a medical doctor, and we had to move away from the town and the loving people I held most dear to my heart.

The image of my dad saying "yes" and starting ministry under



Dr. Nicholas and Cornelia Gheorghita, Romania

such uncertain circumstances stands in stark contrast to Nicodemus' agony presented in The Chosen (indeed, fictionalized, but still presented to make an overall point in the story).

My dad said "yes" and though months and years which followed were very hard, there was never regret over it, nor the agony of "being so close, yet so far." My dad had everything going for him as a doctor: he was respected, loved and appreciated. He got to "mingle" with the town's high officials, and his advice was listened to.

Many of His Friends Thought He'd "Lost His Mind"

The same people who respected and appreciated him today, could not understand my dad tomorrow, as he took the decision to give up his job - and leave his comfort zone. Many of his doctor friends thought he had "lost his mind". Still, a very few told him they admired his decision.

"I envy you: you KNOW what you are living for," one even told him. Though the following years were hard for me - the move, the new city, the new school and having to make new friends, and constant hassle from the Communist authorities - I have no regrets.

What seemed like my greatest loss became my greatest blessing.

My dad's commitment to the Lord and ministry had a strong impact on me during my formative years, and that shaped the "story of my life" as I am currently serving in family ministry in our church, and have been doing this for the past twenty years.

And even though following the Lord comes with a price (and in some countries and circumstances that price is much higher than in others), it never comes with regrets. God always sustains and upholds those who serve Him, and blesses those who trust Him and put their future in His hands.

-Ema Ban

Even though following the Lord comes with a price (and in some countries and circumstances that price is much higher than in others), it never comes with regrets.

FAMILY NEWS

The ITMI family celebrated two weddings this month!

ROMANIA

It was a big month for the Ban family.



The Ban Family, Romania

Andy, the eldest son of ITMI's [Adi and Ema Ban](#) got married on August 6th in Romania.

The week before, Andy posted on Facebook:

All smiles because mom got her Doctor of Ministry!

But let me tell you a bit about how it went and why Mom is a superwoman.

Her presentation was scheduled for this past Friday. But Friday was also when our family hosted Thomas' [youngest Ban son] "goodbye" party (as he goes off to Wheaton College [first year away at University] in a few days). So my mom worked on prepping the house, cooked delicious food for the guests, and then proceeded to defend her thesis (while our backyard was full of rowdy college kids).

I don't think I'd be able to pull that off, but Mom did. And by doing so, she showed us once again how her passion for ministry, manifested in her diligent work over these past few months, and a hospitable heart go hand in hand when your goal is to worship Jesus in all you do.

Thank you for these lessons, Mom. Love you and super proud of you!!

Congratulations to Ema on her Doctor of Ministry and to Andy and his new wife, also named Ema.

POLAND

ITMI's [Richard Nungesser](#), founder of ITMI's [Bread of Life Foundation](#), returned to Poland to officiate the wedding of Bread of Life staff member, [Monika Bacik](#). Monika is also active in [Poznan International Church \(PIC\)](#), the church Richard has shepherded for 20 years. Richard, ITMI's [Tomek Jezyk](#) and a few other key Bread of Life people met with the Mayor and Vice Mayor of a city Bread of Life is expanding into. That was all in addition to prepping and squeezing in as many church events and outreaches as time would allow!



Richard performs the wedding ceremony.



Richard Nungesser with Monika and Tomek.

ROMANIA

PRAISE THE LORD! Casa Dorca's urgent need for a large amount of firewood was met in full last month!

A local business man donated a portion, though business has slowed for him during the pandemic, and ITMI donors stepped up to join him in helping keep our [Casa Dorca](#) children warm during the coming winter months.

We're grateful for those of you who demonstrated the Gospel to the entire community of Prilipet, Romania by making sure the orphaned were cared for.

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction..."

James 1:27

OUR FORM HAS A NEW LOOK!

You may notice the enclosed response form has changed. For one thing, it now has two sides! As ITMI is growing and able to introduce new opportunities to impact God's Kingdom around the world, our form had to expand, too. Praise the Lord!

The ITMI staff is here for you!

PLEASE contact us with any questions this brings up as you make your donation!

TRAVEL UPDATE: STEVE EVERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

In August, ITMI's [Steve Evers](#) made it to South Africa despite numerous travel restriction and challenges! His first Sunday there, Steve preached the Word, encouraging the believers at the church pastored by ITMI's [Mark Parris](#) and an inner township congregation.

Starting the next afternoon, he and Ron Kronz, a pastor from Virginia, helped equip South African pastors at a four-day conference put on by ITMI's [Charl van Wyk](#). Next, Steve headed to the Northern Cape area to visit our partners at [Onseepkans Mission](#), and by the time this newsletter is in your hands, if all goes as planned, he will have visited with the [Smiths](#) in KwaZulu Natal and will be heading to Zambia.

Continue to pray for the health and protection of Steve and our South African and Zambian partners as they continue ministering as the Lord leads.



Above:
Pastors and
leaders enjoy
hearing from
Steve. Right:
ITMI's Charl
van Wyk.



FOR PRAISE

1. South Africa - Steve Evers - Opportunities to encourage South African pastors and ITMI partners.
2. Romania - Casa Dorca Children's Home - Provision of firewood for the upcoming winter!
3. Poland - Nungessers - God's blessings on meetings and weddings during recent ministry trip to Poland.
4. Romania - Bans - God's goodness: Andy's wedding and Ema's Doctor of Ministry!

FOR PRAYER

1. India - Continued protection for our partners and their families during difficult times in India.
2. Zambia - Steve Evers - Travel mercies, provision and protection while visiting ITMI partners.
3. Poland - Piotr Zaremba - Enrollment is open for Piotr's Bible course. Piotr and team are praying for 100 students.
4. Zambia - ECA - Student learning while schools are still closed in Zambia.
5. South Sudan - Continued provision for Lazarus and his family.



PO Box 7575, Tempe, AZ 85281 (480) 968-4100 (888) 918-4100
intouchmission@intouchmission.org | fb.com/intouchmission
@intouchmission | instagram.com/intouchmissioninternational



A higher standard.
A higher purpose.



Scan to Donate