

Dear Brothers and Sisters at Harvest Baptist,

Living overseas we can easily lose track of the seasons at home. People will write to us about the snow, and we will think, "Oh yeah, it is winter." Here it is either rainy or dry. Mostly it is rainy. The rain stopped a few days ago though, so for the last few days it has been blazing hot. It is harvest season right now. The hot dry weather is great for harvesting. So, we are happy for the folks here, even as we melt in the heat. The village is only half full as many folks are living out in their garden houses so they don't have to walk back and forth each day.

There are two main things we are hoping to see happen before we leave here for good. One of them is to see the church here self-governing. That means leadership from among the fellowship here. For several years now we have had some folks who have been candidates for elders and deacons. The last couple of months, Bella and I have been visiting the church members to hear what they have to say about the leadership candidates. We are finished with doing that. So now we are going back to the candidates to talk to them about what people have said. In some cases, this has been very easy and encouraging. There are a number of candidates who no one said anything negative about. But then there are the others. Strong personalities tend to ruffle feathers. The visits with those strong personalities has not been as pleasant. But so far, the ones we have had to talk to about negative things have handled it really well. We still have two men to talk with. Both of them have some issues that came up over and over again as we talked with folks. We are trusting they will take these things as from the Lord and look to Him to see growth in these areas.

The second thing we want to see finished here is the translation of the New Testament. Bella and I have finished 74% of the New Testament, but only about 49% has been checked with a translation checker. This week we are supposed to begin another check. If we check all the books we are hoping to, we will be up to about 63%. If you are wondering why we don't just check everything we have finished, it is because we generally only have about 2 weeks of checking at a time. In that time we can usually do about 15% of the New Testament. We tried a 3 week check once, and it was brutal for everyone involved.

Our translation checker just wrote today to say that he is having some visa issues. So, he will be late arriving. At this point he is not even sure what day he will be able to come. We are hoping he will extend his time in here to make up for the time we will lose, but he may not want to do that. As you can see from the stats above, we really need to take advantage of all the opportunities we have to get the translation checked. So, we will wait and see.

Thank you so much for your prayers for us and the people here. We continually remind ourselves that this is the Lord's work. As much as we care that the church here will be equipped to do all they need to do, the Lord cares more. It is good to be able to leave it in his hands. Thank you too for the \$100 that you sent to us in January and February.

Yours in Christ,

Paul and Bella

Prayer requests.

1. That the translation checker will make it in here.
2. That the check will go well and communicate what it needs to.
3. That the folks here will continue to grow in the Lord, and that leadership will be able to be appointed.
4. For Bella who is dealing with a lot of back pain especially when she has to sit. Checking translation means sitting all day long.
5. Please pray for our organizations work permits to be granted. The work permits are needed in order to get visa renewals. Right now they are being held up over some untrue accusations. This is not unusual. It is always a battle to get these permits. There are people and forces that would love to see us all gone from here.

The pictures are from a couple of years ago. One is of Bella helping harvest. The other one is a translation check. I am part of the check too, but I am taking this picture.

