



Dear Supporters,

I ended last year's letter with the prayer that God would bless us all with His presence. I would like to start this year by saying that is exactly what He has done for me, and I thank Him. I thank Him because this world waxes worse and worse, and the days grow more evil! (II Tim. 3:12-15) I feel more each year that there is very little in this world for the one who desires the things of God, but our relationship with God is the evidence of the things we cannot yet see and the substance of the life we actually long for. (Heb. 11:1)

I know 2009 was a hard year for many, but I pray that your faith in God remains strong. We must all remember that this world is passing, but the promises of God are not about our prosperity in this world. Thanks be to God, His promises are about that which is everlasting. (Col. 3:1-4) This was brought home to me last year in a way I certainly would not have expected. In May, I suffered a sudden heart attack. My wife took me to the emergency room and I spent the next couple of days in the hospital. It turns out I had a single, but major blockage. It required me to have a stent placed, and over the next few months cardiac rehab took a good chunk of my time. It was a strange experience, especially at my age, but I thank The Lord that it was a singular blockage. We don't know why or how I ended up with this, but the doctors tell me the rest of my veins are clear. Through prayer and consideration for the actions I take (the old diet and exercise) I should be fine. Of course, it has always been my belief that I will be on this earth for as long as God wants to use me, and this incident has not changed that simple belief.

What this did mean for the ministry is that I lost some time I could have used to do more work for The Lord, but all things are in The Lord's hands. It is in these times we learn more about what it means to believe, "...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of host." Zechariah 4:6 Because these words are true, the ministry has done just fine this last year. *Shaqah* has had another good year of distribution. We have not seen the growth we would like to see, but we would always like to do more; so, I suppose this will always be true to some degree. The worst thing we have seen this last year is the loss of distribution locations. This has been due to the fact different Bible book stores have gone out of business. This is not a surprise as we have all seen the economy take a toll on our lives. However, I'm pleased to report that the two locations which do the best are still alive and well. This being true, we are still distributing about as many *Shaqah* as we ever have!

The website is still doing well, and we are making improvements as we go. We are also coming along on the process of changing our articles over to the printer friendly PDF format. We believe this will make the information far more accessible for people, and help those who would like to share the information with others. We have also been making progress in the booklet department. I know it has not shown up yet, but many of the articles we intend to make into booklets can now be done with greater ease. This is due to the fact we have been doing a lot of work on the formats and standards for all our publishing work. There are just a whole lot of things which need to be laid out before you can do publishing right and consistently which are two standards we want all our materials to adhere to. We thank The Lord for the progress we have made, and I believe the fruit of this labor will start to show more and more!

This is the part of the letter where I get to talk about something special we accomplished in the last year, and I'm very glad I get to do that again this year. I mentioned in last year's letter that we had been working on a new project which would teach people the Biblical calendar, and that project has turned out to be the marquee accomplishment for 2009! After making prototype calendars for 2009 which were well received by everyone who got a chance to see them, we were able to produce a 2010 calendar as a fully available product. These calendars have been sent out to all our subscribers, and anyone who wanted one. They have been made available for order on our website, and we have received orders for them. It is our hope that as the word spreads and more people get a chance to see what a great teaching

tool these are, we will see even more interest for the 2011 calendars. This project also includes a companion book which will have even more in depth teaching about the Biblical calendar, and we are working on putting the calendar into PDF format so that anyone who wants one can easily print out the pages from our website. This will give people the ability to have more instant access to the information as well as give people the chance to put it into any style cover or binding they want. This calendar has been a lot of work, but I believe the end result is worth the effort. Now that we have the format down, it should be something which we can produce far more easily for years to come.

2009 has shown us all, once again, that only The Lord knows what lies ahead. This is not the reason to get discouraged and turn from God, but the very reason we should seek to draw closer each day. 2009 has seen some of the worse moves our government has ever taken. New laws and regulations continually threaten the very freedom our forefathers died to give us in this country; and it seems just the very mention of this truth, especially, by ministers and ministries, strikes, at the very least, a feeling of uneasiness in the hearts of many. Why? Because more and more our freedom is being eroded by those who so oppose the true message of the Bible that they will do anything they can to stop it. It's sad to see that while our best and bravest are fighting overseas, here at home the very freedoms they are fighting to protect are being taken from us. However, no matter what nation we live in and no matter how the times may change against us, we must not allow the devil or man to stagger our efforts to share the Word with those around us. We must continue to stand for what we believe, and we will, because we love God's Word more than we love this life! (I Jn. 2:15)

Because of this, I can say thank you, once again, this year to all those who have labored in this ministry over the last year! I appreciate their continued effort and I pray The Lord will bless them daily as they do the work necessary to keep this ministry going! I can also say thank you to all of you, our supporters! We are encouraged each time we receive even the smallest of donations because we know what it represents, and that little is much in the hands of God! Whether you have given little or much to this ministry over the last year, I want you to know every penny has been greatly appreciated! It's man's decisions which currently guide this world, and when you support God's work, you are making a choice to affect this world in the most positive and needful way. I know times are tough, but don't look at how large or small you think your donation may be, the important part is that you give it joyfully and with the understanding that it's God who brings the increase. (I Cor. 3:5-7) I thank all of you for the fact you have chosen to entrust this ministry and the work we do with your contributions!

Here at Living Springs, we are looking, not at all the wrong man will do in this new year, but to all the things God desires to do. It's His will that we seek to accomplish, and we know that He is able even when we feel we are not. In fact, it's when we get out of the way and are without the ability to accomplish our thoughts that God can use us in the best ways. We pray God will use your life in this year and that you continue to grow the understanding that true joy and prosperity is not found in those things which the world seeks after. (Matt. 6:30-34)

Sincerely,
Philip E. Busby
Director
Living Springs
2009