

Dear Supporters,

Well, another year has simply passed us by, and we continue to see constant change in our world. Many of the changes we see are both good and bad. They are certainly bad, as many events show us what Jesus was talking about when He said the love of many would wax cold. (Matt. 24:3-14) We also see what the Bible means about tribulation, for we live in a day of ever increasing tribulation as men continually believe the answer, which is listening to and following God's ways, is the problem instead of the cure. However, the fact God's Word also told us all these things would happen is the one way this is good news. As true believers in The God Who created us all, our hope does not lay in the idea we will be able to save or change the entire world. Our work is to reach those who have ears to hear and hearts hungry for the truth, and our hope lays in the fact that as we see the gleaning part of the harvest is upon us, we know we are so much closer to the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, than when we first began! (Luke 21:25-28)

On that note, I can say we must be doing something right, because we have had another year of the devil fighting us very hard! One example is that this summer we had a failure in the office heating system, which we had just gotten up and running the prior fall. This was a big problem, because the more we grow the more we are dependent on the office and our ability to heat it so we do not see any of our supplies freeze in the winter, along with the simple ability to not freezing ourselves. The failure turned out to be the motor for the fan. Because we are pressed for time on so many issues, we tried to get it repaired by hiring the work done. However, we found the system we have is kind of a special unit and one that, of course, is no longer manufactured or supported. The techs that came out were unable to fix it, and that left us with no options other than to take the time to figure out what to do ourselves. Praise be to God, we did find a company that sells all kinds of electric motors, and they were able, not only to sell us a new motor close enough to the original that it would do the job, but they did the modifications to it so it would fit, which I'm not sure we could have done ourselves. With God's help, we were able to get the unit apart, the new motor mounted, and everything back together in working order!

Going very appropriately along with that, again this past year much of our time, energy, and resources have gone into things aimed at increasing our capacity to provide materials and the quality of those items. While each year we would love to see the completion of new materials, it is certainly a good thing to see such an increase in the demand for those things we already produce! One of the main items we have worked on this year is a database system that can greatly help us receive orders, get them out the door, and keep track of customer information. As the years have gone by, it has been hard not to see this work as an unnecessary luxury we simply shouldn't take the time to complete; but as the volume of orders goes up - and we are seeing exactly that - it is necessary to our ability to handle the demand that we have this new database. It is our prayer we have gained the right knowledge and set up the right system to provide both current needs as well as the needs for much of whatever time might lay ahead!

As to improving the quality of our materials, that covers a whole lot of both large and small projects throughout the year. One item most of you already know about is the quality of paper the interior pages of our calendar is made from. I certainly have been enjoying the better quality in using my 2013 calendar, and we hope you have as well! We have also been working on more of what we started in the way we run our website. For quite awhile now it has been my vision to make the website not just a place to interact with us by ordering materials, asking questions, and reading teaching, but a portal for obtaining teaching you would like to print and share at will with others, many of which may not have a computer or access to the internet. As you may know, we have been doing this work by putting our articles into PDF, and this has been great. However, we have needed to make improvements to these PDFs so we keep the file sizes low for downloading in the first place, but improve their quality so they are very presentable when printed. I'm happy to say we have made some very good strides in that area this past year!

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Going back to the calendar project: I'm happy to report it has grown again. We found the number of 2013 calendars sent out as part of our initial release approaching the number of 2012 calendars sent out altogether! The greatest part of all this is that we are not just seeing an increase in calendar numbers because we give them out as a way to let people know about them, but people are requesting them because they believe the calendar is a good teaching tool. We pray God will give us the ability to continue producing these, as well as expand the materials that compliment this calendar, which has been a goal of ours from the start!

As is the case each year, we thank God for *Shaqah*! It has been, and Lord willing will continue to be, the heart of what we do; and it has had a very good year, once again. One obvious example of *Shaqah*'s improvement is that at times in the past *Shaqah* has consisted of 12 full pages - for an issue, maybe two - but for the first time we can say *Shaqah* has been published for an entire year at the 12 page size. This may still seem small to many people; but as a small ministry, which is trying to produce teaching material that will have more long term value than just to share news and/or encouraging thoughts, this is a good amount of work to get published 6 times a year! Now, I said in last year's letter we had seen a rise in the number of *Shaqahs* taken from the distribution locations, and that was not a passing thing. We have even seen an increase over what I was talking about last year. We have also seen a continual rise in the number of subscribers again this year; and while the growth is not explosive, it continues to encourage us that there are those out there benefiting from the work this ministry does. Again this year, we are blessed to know it is touching hearts and lives in many places, even outside the United States!

As to our goals for 2013, I can only say again we will keep on keeping on, and continually seek The Lord's will about what to put our time and energy into as the days and months of 2013 pass by. Thus, as is the case every year, I would be remiss if I did not say thank you to everyone who has been directly involved in the physical work of this ministry! Not only did you survive this year of direct ministry work, but also the wonderful sale you put on this past summer, which helped us turn many things we no longer needed into funds that could be used for those things we do! I know we each do what we do, not because we think we are big, but because we all know even a little is much in the hands of our God!

Of course, a great big thank you goes out to all those who have provided financial support and prayer support to this ministry! You have literally sent Bibles and teaching materials around the world! We are continually hearing how souls are being won with the materials your prayers and financial support enables us to send; and we have found the demand in some places is far greater than we could ever fill. Let us continue to provide the Word of God to those who desire it the most, and work to bring people into a walk with God that they can sustain for all eternity!

I want to leave you this year with one of the memory verses my son has recently learned, for they are the words of our Lord, which He left for just such a time as we live in today, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33 May God's Word lead and guide each of you throughout this new year, and may you find His presence ever closer each passing day! Thank You again, and Shalom!

Sincerely,
Philip E. Busby
Director
Living Springs
2012