



A quarterly
Newsletter of
Zena Wengel
Ministry

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NEW HOPE

Message from the founder

The hardships and challenges faced by the blind and visually impaired persons in Ethiopia are of various types and varying degrees.

Some are kept in seclusion and hidden from the outside world because of misconceptions and unfounded superstitious beliefs of parents or the surrounding community in general. Such persons could be underfed and poorly dressed. This means they are subjected to a miserable life. Others are left in the open to cater for themselves. In such a case, persons with visual impairment are exposed to all sorts of hardships. Most of them have to resort to beggary for their subsistence, among these are employed to bring income by able-bodied criminals who could have deliberately caused loss of sight of their victims. Such exploiting criminals treat them like useless animals.

Even those visually impaired persons who manage to join schools are faced with different obstacles and constraints. Lack or shortage of learning equipment and materials, inability to satisfy even basic necessities of food, clothing, shelter, medical service, etc. They often lack reading and writing assistance as well as

have other pressing problems.

Under such circumstances, persons with visual impairment are likely to become demoralized and fall into a degrading state. What is worse, persons with visual impairment, particularly, women fall victims to all sorts of sex related crimes and exploitation.

Zena Wengel Ministry intends to give priority to working hard for disentangling persons with visual impairment from such devastating social evils. In this regard, the Ministry needs the cooperation of all stakeholders, interested individuals and institutions.

The Ministry has accomplished a number of important tasks in 2015 and 2016 although it could not cover most of its planned activities mainly because of lack of office facilities.

The Ministry was able to continue its biblical teaching and fellowship services at the Misrach Center and the premises made available by the General Manager of the Ministry at his house in Kolfie Keranio Sub-City Woreda 1. In the meantime the number of beneficiaries has increased considerably.



On the basis of steps taken to raise awareness of the problems faced by people with visual impairment due to the shortage of guide canes, Zena Wengel Ministry was able to acquire – white canes from Ethiopian and foreign benefactors living abroad. The canes were distributed to visually impaired users that urgently needed them.

Although it was not possible to start the intended Braille literacy program and the library service, important devices and materials, Braille writing, Braille embossing machines, recorders and CD players, Braille paper and Braille books, which will be used for both purposes, have been obtained from philanthropic and benevolent donors for the future.

Berhanu Belay
Founder

Life Testimony – Bizunesh Gammie



I was born in 1956 EC [1963] in the Eastern part of Ethiopia. While I still was young, first I became partially blind, and then I became totally sightless.

I joined the Sebeta Boarding School for the Blind in 1965 [EC] where I completed my elementary education. Then I joined a regular high school to further my education.

In 1987 EC, I was employed by the Ethiopian National Association of the Blind where I have been working ever since.

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Psalms 91.1

During my childhood, when I was in boarding school, I used to learn spiritual songs by listening when they were sung by others. After learning them I used to sing them for myself or in unison with others. This was pleasing to me. As a small girl, I also tried to sing secular songs while listening to them. But such songs did not please me.

I still sing the songs that I enjoyed to sing from childhood. As God, without my awareness, had given me his protection, I do not remember committing any serious sin while I was leading a worldly life. However, the fact that I did not accept the Lord as my personal Savior and did not live in his ways was in itself, a very serious evil. This is because it is God’s will that we believe in His Son, Jesus Christ and live for His glory doing His work until the end.

Moses, whether we know it or not, teach us that God’s word is living and everlasting. It was in this way, that God protected me until the day I decided to accept Jesus as my Lord. There were also times where Satan appeared in my life to intimidate me. In such instances, I used to say, “in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, in the name of the Holy Spirit, amen.” and Satan used to vanish away. At other times, Satan appeared to me and showed me some coffee and butter, perhaps wishing me to worship him with such things. But I made him vanish by repeating the phrases I mentioned earlier. He repeated this, very many times before I decided to live in the Lord.

After I decided to become the Lord’s, Satan continued harassing me with more vigor and tactical ways. But, I drove him away by rebuking him in the name of Jesus and His holy word.

One day, while I was in my place of prayer, as I was bowing to worship my God through Jesus, Satan uttered his very ugly frightening voice, and then raised up by force my bowing head. But as I rebuked him in the name of Jesus and the word of God desperately, he vanished.

The Lord has kept me walking in his path, by revealing himself to me through Psalms 91 and His words in other scriptures, multiplying His spirit within me and enabling me to become victorious. This is why I quoted Psalms 91 at the beginning.

As I have come to know through my experience, Although, Satan’s temptations have been besetting my life repeatedly so many times, the verses I quoted and other scriptures have served me as my daily bread, sanctuary, armor and other means of strength. Thus, it is because of all this that I decided to follow Him to the end and am determined to reach Zion.

One day, while I was traveling by a taxi and sitting in the front seat beside the driver, the enemy snatched the steering wheel from his hand, instantly, he said with astonishment “oh my! He took the steering wheel from my hand!” As I was engaged in fierce battle with the devil at the time, instantly, I knew who it was. But, contrary to what he intended, I reached my destination safely.

Another time, while I was going home by a taxi, the driver, thinking that a big truck in front of us was not moving, drove towards it, but realized that the truck was coming to us and averted a serious accident at the last moment saying “oh my! I thought the truck

Many years have passed since I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. During these years, the devil and his servants, revealing themselves to me day and night, have caused me to experience greatly harrowing and horrifying days and nights which I was able to pass with the power of God.

But, as Paul said, we have not been subjected to them not even for one day. Again he said, we do not mistake the intention off Satan.

The rule of Satan is never comfortable; even if it may appear so, it has nothing comfortable.

The intention of the devil is: separating people from God, causing deviation from God's way, spoiling His work, etc.

When the Devil is about to approach me in order to kill and destroy me, God's spirit comes with power, touches and gives me strength and comforts me, then shows me a sign.

Only God knows the struggle I have with the ruler of the dark world. As the Lord defeated Satan on the cross of Calvary, I will be victorious in my fight against him and his followers by thinking of the victory on the Cross and using God's words.

One thing that I have not mentioned but that has been a factor in my coming to the Lord is the fact that previously one of my eyes had partial sight which later I lost for an unknown cause. This loss left me confused, hopeless

and helpless, putting me in despair, detesting everything regarding myself. I passed about four years in this condition.

One thing that I still remember is, amid the horrifying and excruciating time of temptation, now and then I used to feel happy. When now I think of that feeling of happiness, it reminds me of what St. Paul said:

"Be joyful and I say again, be joyful. I feel that Jesus was giving me happiness despite the plight I was in at the time.

Somewhere in Psalms, it says God punishes us for the sake of our benefit. I praise God that my punishment turned out to be for my good. As our hope in God is not subjected to despair, I will find my healing in Him. Whether God does act or not, He is still God and His praises are many. In all these ups and downs as well as other similar situations, God will not trouble His chosen seriously. He troubled me so that I may learn His precepts for my own good. What makes me most happy is the fact that my name is written in the book of God in heaven. The world is filled with evil, isn't it? The Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has not taken away his mercy from us that are in a besieged city, be blessed. May He also make us a means of salvation and a blessing for many. May the power and grace of the Holy Spirit leave us not even for a second.

"Amen."