

Dear Brothers and Sister,

I know I sent a Prayer Update recently, so I apologise for this one.

Some of you have been asking about the situation in Pakistan, and it is easier to send everyone an update rather than respond to a series of emails.

The situation is quite dire again. The monsoon rains have come early. The summer monsoon between June and September brings 70-80% of South Asia's annual rainfall. It is vital for the livelihoods of millions of farmers and food security in a region of about 2 billion people – but it also triggers landslides and floods. Due to last year's flooding being so severe, a significant amount of the infrastructure was damaged, and a year later, much of that has not been repaired – thus making this year's damage equally as bad.

Thankfully, many of the properties that were repaired last year have withstood the flooding, and where flood barriers have been erected (by the believers, not the authorities), these villages have been preserved. Sohail, Saul, Qasar, Tahir, Nadeem and many other brethren have been working hard to rescue people and provide food, shelter and medical aid. They have hired a boat and have managed to rescue significant numbers of people (believers and unbelievers).

Despite all of this devastation, people are still being saved – Sohail led 10 Hindus to the Lord last week, and he has been asked to go and visit another group this week. That being said, the present conditions have severely restricted assembly gatherings and taken up a lot of time that would have been spent on evangelism and bible teaching.

Many people have lost their lives; one family of seven was killed when their house collapsed in the rains, and a number of believers have drowned. There is now a need to rebuild homes, provide medication and provide support for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones. As the number of believers and assemblies grow (24 assemblies the last time I asked Sohail), so do the needs. There are more people every year who have come to Christ, and that in itself brings demands on those who are leading them. Your prayers for the believers and those who are guiding and shepherding them would be appreciated.

When the flooding started, we were just at the tail end of the process of translating and printing book number four. These books have been very helpful in getting Bible Teaching into the hands of younger believers who can read and men/young men who are developing gift to preach and teach. Please pray that the Lord will continue to develop gift among His people. Some of the books to date were written by Jack Hay and Bert Cargill, to whom we are very grateful.

The persecution of believers by those of the national religion is still a big problem. It is unlikely that I will be able to visit this year as my presence could further endanger the believers. Sohail wants to hold off making a decision for another month – your prayers for wisdom would be appreciated.

I am still looking into the possibility of Sohail visiting the UK at the end of 2023 into 2024. Please pray about this.

Finally, I have added a general note from Sohail at the end of this email.

Yours through Grace,

Stephen

Note from Sohail

Grace and peace to you from God our Father!

Dear brothers and sisters I am good and my wife and children are good too. We hope that you and your family will also be great and good in the name of Jesus Christ. I am very excited to write you once again how God is changing the lives of pagans, Hindus and non believers with his mighty hand. I am overjoyed to say that God has changed the lives of 9 Hindu men and women in pakpattan assembly. Some believers were listening audio bible under the tree and there were some Hindus listening it. When they heard 1 Kings 18:38 then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

It shook their soul and they got interested to listen all the story that touched their heart . They showed their desire to learn from bible and we taught them how God send his only begotten son to lay down his life for us. After one month learning from bible they all gave their lives to Christ that is amazing.

There was Muslim woman nabeela that repented and came to Jesus Christ. We sent her to another city to protect her life . After long time she came back to doctorwala to meet her family that killed her because she was Christian now. We are thankful to God that enemy cannot destroy soul that belong Jesus . There are lots of good news how God protected people .

I am so sorry to share that piece again we got terrible heavy rains that brought heavy floods and flood water is also coming to pakistan through rives . Rivers and rains are destroying every village that come in front of it. 11 old men and women died in 79 village assembly . We have rescued lots of men and women and sent them to our shelter camps . 5 children and 6 men and women died in village ravi. Dirreah and gastro has broke out because people are drinking dirty water . There are hundreds of people that are starving. Women and children are very frightened to see the huge and fast waves of water . Brother qasar and saul and shakab and many others are doing rescue work . We got a boat on rent and we shall get one more boat for other assembly to protect people. One of our elder Zafir lost his old mother because she could not cross heavy flow of water .

Last year we built boundaries around our three big assemblies and they are safe but many new believers and some of new assemblies are being hit by floods again. I am very thankful to God who always work great and through your love gifts we are saving lives and we are providing food and milk to infant and medicine to poor sick people .

All believers and elders are very very thankful to you for your love support and prayers . We are praying for you too .

We love you elders from assemblies saying hi to you .

God bless you

Sohail +family+ elders and believers from all assemblies .

Stephen G Baker
Mobile 07747 101352

'Preaching peace through Jesus Christ' (Acts 10:36 -the Bible)