

Mahon Home Dispatch #14 03.08.08 Coming Home...

Pictures

1 After a long bus ride and passage through customs we arrive in our southern country and met by our host. We began with 7 - 70lb bags. We now are down to 2 - 50lbs bags and are still distributing your gifts and supplies.

2 & 3 Please excuse the cropped nature of the pictures. We wanted you to know we faithfully were teaching the holy, inerrant, eternal, written Word of God.

4 A myth exposed. Everywhere we go we hear that in Russia and this country churches are filled with children and old women. Nothing could be further from the truth. We found ministry filled with and lead by strong men of God.

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Dear Prayer Warriors,

Update on El

Thank you for your prayers concerning Eleanor and her father. The latest news we have is that he is in a comma and expected to die in the next day or so. We are pushing the envelope for El to be home and by his side in the hospital before he goes to be with the Lord. Right now we are scheduled to fly out of Vilnius on Saturday, spend the night at the Heathrow, Ibis motel and then fly out the next morning (Sunday) for Houston arriving at HIA at 5:30 p.m. Our daughter Megan will pick us up, we will drop things off at the house and then go straight of her father's side, or mother's depending on the will of God. British Air has been very compassionate and worked diligently to make this possible, they are simply charging a small administrative fee on each ticket. Air Baltic, our flight to London is another matter and they are charging us both full "walk on" price on a second ticket to the switch to departing two days earlier than scheduled. We place all this in God's hands. The most important thing for me is to get Eleanor home as soon as possible.

Blessed time to the south east

Our time in the south east was especially blessed. Both pastor's and staff said the miracle of our visa was a great encouragement. Although public meetings with Americans has been outlawed we were able to meet in small groups with pastors and ministry leaders who then passed the teachings on to their key people who in turn taught it in their Bible studies. My brother in law, Jon Bucher, who works for Focus on the Family and serves on our board of directors made 200 GCI CD's for this trip. These CD's filled with GCI messages with Russian Translations and GCI Bible Studies translated into Russian were left behind. One staff actually was moved to tears when we shared that all CD's, Bible Studies and downloads from our website were free.

When God Opens A Door: Lessons from Peter

Acts 12:1-16

1 Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church, in order to mistreat them.

2 And he had James the brother of John put to death with a sword.

3 And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. Now it was during the days of Unleavened Bread.

4 And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out before the people.

5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.

6 And on the very night when Herod was about to bring him forward, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards in front of the door were watching over the prison.

7 And behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared, and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and roused him, saying, "Get up quickly." And his chains fell off his hands.

8 And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me."

9 And he went out and continued to follow, and he did not know that what was being done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision.

10 And when they had passed the first and second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened for them by itself; and they went out and went along one street; and immediately the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

12 And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

13 *And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant-girl named Rhoda came to answer.*

14 *And when she recognized Peter's voice, because of her joy she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter was standing in front of the gate.*

15 *And they said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. And they kept saying, "It is his angel."*

16 *But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed.*

Our visa into this country was a miracle in and of itself. Pastor after pastor, staff after staff emphasized to us the encouragement and faith that such a work of God had brought. On both sides of the border staff confided in us that although they had admired our faith and determination that had prepared for our visa not to be granted and arranged for ministry activities in Vilnius on the one hand and cautioned those expecting us to the south on the other. There reaction was somewhat like the church praying for Peter in that on more than one occasion we had to repeat the fact that our visa was granted in less than 24 hours after application. How we praise God for your prayers that opened this door.

(Continuing expulsions only highlight this miracle)

When God Closes A Door: Lessons from Paul

Romans 1:13

And I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented thus far) in order that I might obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

In the course of events doors are opened and closed in the ministry. On the one hand God the Holy Spirit speaks of satan seeking to close doors. On the other, as in Acts 16:6 God the Holy Spirit speaks of His closing doors. How do we know which is which?

Acts 16:6

And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

In this case there is no question. God the Holy Spirit clearly teaches that our days are numbered. That life and death are His alone. Thus our return, mandated by a decision of God takes all the doubt out of God's timing. God miraculously sent us south and God now is by His same sovereign will bringing us home.

Psalms 139:16

Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Thy book they were all written, the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.

The significance of the timing of our departure is highlighted by the fact that during our bus ride north, unbeknown to us, the U.S. Ambassador was being expelled at the same time.

Now we turn our eyes and hearts homeward

Now though it is time to turn our hearts homeward and our ministry to Eleanor's grieving family. Some are believers and some are not. We are dependent for you to sustain us as we return, not to a time of rest and rejuvenation but an even more trying emotional time of laying to rest Eleanor's beloved father and seeking to minister to those who need the comfort of the Lord. Only after this will we be able to lay our heads to rest and reflect on the great and exciting things God has done these last three months in Russia, Finland, Lithuania and points south.

Dependence upon your prayers:

As Always we are sustained and we minister by
The grace of God
and
Your faithful and sacrificial prayers

By His mercy,
II Corinthians 4:1
John and Eleanor Mahon
Vilnius, Lithuania: Eyes and hearts pointing westward...



Picture One



Picture Two



Picture Three