



the REAPER

VOL. 69, NO. 1 | Spring 2024

**FOR SUCH A
TIME AS THIS**

ESTHER 4:14

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SOURCE OF LIGHT INTERNATIONAL MADISON, GA

Source of Light Ministries International is an independent, faith mission that exists to bring people of every nation, language, and ethnicity into a mature relationship with Jesus Christ and into fellowship with a local church family.

SLM is a world-wide, disciple making, church planting ministry that uses the medium of Bible lessons for all ages in both printed and electronic format to achieve its goals. The International Headquarters in Madison, Georgia, its Discipleship Training Branches (DTB), and Associate Discipleship Schools (ADS), distribute lessons throughout the world.

Representatives and Missionaries of SLM are available to present the ministry to churches, missionary conferences, and other groups. Contact the **SLM PR OFFICE** for scheduling.

For information visit us at:
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the REAPER

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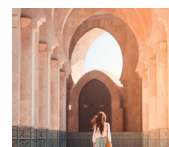
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Taryn Elliot
For Such a Time As This
Esther 4:14

Corrections & Clarifications

For the latest version of **the Reaper** go to sourcelight.org/reaper



Erd Baptist Church — Photo by Ron Barnes

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

By Ron Barnes
A letter from the Editor

It was a difficult time in the history of the Jews. Mordecai refused to show reverence to Haman in spite of King Ahasuerus' edict to do so. Haman despised the Jews and convinced the king to grant permission for him to rid his kingdom of the Jews, and his request was granted and sealed with the king's own ring.

But in the background, there was a providential act of God whereby King Ahasuerus married Esther, making her his beloved queen, with unfettered influence upon and access to the king. She had just earned even more trust of the king by exposing information of two traitors in the king's employ, with information provided by Mordecai.

This made her extremely loved and trusted by the king, which would put her in the right place at the right time in history to save the Jews, her own heritage, for she herself was an orphaned Jew during the captivity from Jerusalem.

It was Mordecai who reminded her, despite her trials and troubles through her past, she was the one, perhaps the only one at this time in history, who could be in a position to save her Jewish people from annihilation.

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them

return Mordecai this answer; Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:14–16).

Those words of Mordecai, paraphrased, "who knows if you have come to this place of prominence in the king's family, for such a time as this." No one else could influence the king to spare the Jews like his queen. But not knowing the outcome of her request, she was willing to lay her life down for her calling "If I perish, I perish."

As I read the passage, I was reminded of the many men and women around the Source of Light world that God has put into place "for such a time as this." God has brought the right people into place at the right time throughout our ministry, throughout our history, over and over again. Each time, I am amazed to hear of these stories, even though I shouldn't be, but God continues to amaze me.

Pastor Zsolt of Erd Baptist Church in Erd, Hungary, sat at the crossroads for refugees of the conflict in Ukraine who needed temporary food and shelter. He had no way to prepare but acted when he was presented with a need. I recently had the opportunity to go see first-hand my old friend and partner in the ministry from the days my family served there. Zsolt and the church in Erd are just such an example of responding to the call when the opportunity came and



The Compound of Containers Used for Ukrainian Refugees — Photo by Ron Barnes

how God used the meager resources of that small church combined with the resources God provided to SLM.

I experienced another example just a short time ago when I walked the streets of Centelles, Spain, where our missionaries, the Vecchiarellis, have started a new church plant. They asked me to visit the shopkeeper who was the first person they met there. As they had walked towards the store, the Lord impressed on Olga's heart to walk into a specific clothing store and strike up a conversation. That conversation led to her being the point person for finding a place to meet, making introductions into the town and its leadership, and they pray that she will be the first convert. Things came together quickly for this ministry due to the "chance encounter" with this shopkeeper that our missionaries acted immediately on, *"for such a time as this."*

This **Reaper** will be dedicated to telling the stories of similar opportunities seized, because the door was opened, the timing was right, and our missionaries responded to the call. In my 35 years of ministry, I have never seen more unintentional opportunities



Freezer Containing Donations to Address Community Needs — Photo by Ron Barnes

afforded to a ministry like I have seen at Source of Light. At times, I have to ask God, “Do I need to ‘bring in the reins’ on these opportunities?”

The ministry continues to burst at the seams of what our resources will allow us to accept, but we have to believe that the God who brings the opportunities will also provide the resources to provide for them. As you read these stories, please consider if God would have you help these ministry opportunities through the Global Outreach Fund, Paper Partners, or through the individual Branch project funds.

But more than funds, we need prayer! Pray through this **Reaper**, asking the Lord of the harvest to provide even more laborers who can assist us in Madison and throughout the globe. Pray for each of the individuals who will be mentioned in each story. They will be tried and persecuted, and even though they have adopted the same mindset as Esther, we pray that God would grant them safety and much fruit.

And finally, pray for the continued effectiveness of the SLM “Paper Missionaries.” whether in print or



One of the Containers Where Food Was Stored — Photo by Ron Barnes

electronically, that end up in the hands of people around the globe, beyond the reach of our own missionaries, that open the doors and pave the way for future expansion of SLM and the Gospel.

It’s our hope and prayer that the stories contained in this edition of the **Reaper** will inspire you to participate with Source of Light International or someplace nearby in what God brings your way that you in particular are specially equipped to do, **“for such a time as this.”** 🌿



Gateway to Centelles — Photo by Jorge and Olga Vecchiarelli



After years of serving as a church planting missionary, **Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.** now serves as the President & CEO for SLM.

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Ron Barnes



For over six years, ministries throughout Zambia have contacted SLM about getting access to our resources. Most of them had come into contact with an American missionary outside Zambia, but not a Source of Light missionary who purchased, stocked, then supplied these Zambian churches and ministries with the resources. Over the years, these missionaries moved on or back to the States, leaving them without the resources.

There was such interest expressed, SLM even made an exploratory trip at the invitation of one of those interested, two and a half years ago, to see if we could find the right person from among a network of churches who would be a clear choice to lead a new branch. But with no clear candidate and no clear direction, we returned, to wait on the Lord. We heard nothing for nearly two years, neither from Africa nor the Lord.

Until ... a partner of SLM, Gospelink, who we have an excellent working relationship with, contacted us to also ask how their ministries could take advantage of the SLM resources. After a series of Zoom meetings and emails, Gospelink not only committed to help SLM locate a suitable director but also asked if we

would consider housing our office at Ambassador International University (AIU), which they started over ten years ago to train pastors. Having an office there would allow SLM the facilities needed to house an office, print shop, and storage, as well as have access to their students to train them to use the resources and to fulfill the scholarship requirements of AIU for their students’ tuition by working in the SLM offices.

In a meeting with the senior leadership of Gospelink, I had to pinch myself and ask if it was really real, if they were in a position to offer all of that at no cost to us. They told me they are that committed to having SLM resources available, that it was a win/win for both of us.

Within a few months, we found a few candidates who were recommended to



Dreaming of an Office Here One Day — Photo by Ben Doomy



Future Home of SLM Zambia
— Photo by Ben Doomy

us and began to review their references and narrowed down our choice to one, Kelvin Chisiza.

Ben Doomy, our International Director for Children and Youth, a board member, Doug Truax, and I went to meet with AIU, its leadership, and our potential director to get a better idea if Kelvin was the one God was leading us to and if AIU was who we could work with.

God far exceeded our expectations as we met with Kelvin. He is a bright, articulate man, a recent graduate of the school. His initial Bachelor's degree is in business, which will be extremely useful in our vision for SLM Zambia. But Kelvin isn't just a graduate, he's a respected part of the school as its Valedictorian and former student body President. We knew he came highly recommended, but he far exceeded our expectations, and the three of us concurred as we met, explained the vision of SLM, and got to know him personally, that Kelvin and his soon-to-be wife were definitively who God is leading us to for direction of SLM Zambia.

Having that settled firmly in our minds, we then talked logistics with AIU, and we

are looking at having an office in the AIU and Gospelink offices, as we are being offered an uncompleted structure on the campus that we believe we can renovate and turn into a print shop and storage facility for about \$20,000.

The school itself is beginning to invest in a trade school so that the pastors who graduate can also learn a trade to support their families, given that most churches cannot fully support their own pastor. Our print shop can contribute to that vision by training some of the AIM students in the print shop environment and the skills to start their own. This print shop will also help meet the needs the school has to print their own textbooks, which we would be able to do at a fraction of the normal costs for printing. This was just another example and reminder to us of the win/win element of this plan God has clearly put together.

The students of AIU have come from around Zambia and are a part of the vast network of churches partnered with Gospelink. Eventually we will work with Gospelink and this network of churches (and beyond) to train these pastors and church planters to effectively evangelize and disciple their communities and



Time of Prayer With AIU Staff — Photo by Ben Doomy

churches, as well as the current and future graduates, while studying at AIU.

Already, students from Mozambique, Tanzania, Malawi, and Zimbabwe have inquired about taking the materials and training to their countries after they graduate. AIU brings in students from all around Africa, and this relationship has great potential for seeing SLM and our vision for disciple-making expand around southern Africa.

They say, "Fools rush in," and we are glad that we waited upon the Lord for His direction and timing. It's so perfectly clear the time wasn't then; the time is NOW! We are asking God to raise up partners to help SLM Zambia start off quickly and strong as we build the team and the resources needed to start a full-service Branch complete with print shop. Would you join us in praying in the team and resources for Source of Light Zambia? The time to help has come... the time is now! 🌿



Kelvin with the New SLM Resource "99 Adventures"
— Photo by Ben Doomy

SLM Zambia Startup Costs:

\$20,000

Renovation and construction of Print Shop

\$10,000

Print Shop equipment, training, and installation

\$10,000

Paper and supplies per year

**\$500 monthly
\$6,000 yearly**

Missionary support and ministry funds



After years of serving as a church planting missionary, **Dr. Ronald J. Barnes Jr.** now serves as the President & CEO for SLM.

Follow me [@RonBarnesJr](https://twitter.com/RonBarnesJr)

"These Books Are Very Good."
— Photo by K.



THE CROSSING POINT BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH

By Kimberly Thigpen

On and on they come, millions toward the river to wash their sins away. Men and women travel on foot under the hot Indian sun, a visual trail of faith or need or desperation that stretches beyond the horizon.

Their destination is the Ganges River. They are Hindus, some years over one hundred million of them, on a pilgrimage claimed as the largest human gathering in history.

They see the Ganges as a tirtha, a crossing point between Heaven and Earth, a place where the faithful are most likely to get the gods' attention with their offerings and their prayers and receive blessings from whichever of the three million gods grant them favor.

The reality of this river, however, this place believed to offer cleansing of body and soul, is that the Ganges is a flowing trash dump for the hundreds of millions of people who live along its borders. The water drunk in faith of healing is the toilet of millions.

The human waste mixed with ashes of the cremated saturate the water with not life, but death. Washing in it will not cleanse but contaminate,

the corrupting of the soul being even worse than the filth brought on and into the body.

The good fortune sought will not be found. It is not a crossing point between Heaven and Earth, but between Earth and Hell.

C. T. Studd once said, "Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of Hell." This same passion must have been felt by Branch Director K. and his team of national missionaries, for this year they did not avoid the Hindus flooding the Ganges River, but rather went straight to them.

This year, of all years, was a dangerous choice. Persecution of Christians has been on the rise in India for some time. Many would consider it wise to lie low, wait until things were less risky. But K. and his wife had prayed about reaching the pilgrims for years, and now they were ready. So, after fasting and praying, the team packed up materials, traveled to the migration of people seeking cleansing from sin, and offered that cleansing to them. "Our courage is our Lord Jesus," K. shares. "We know we are doing this work to tell people the truth that their sins can only be washed away by the blood of Christ."



This 1903 Image States, "Who Dies in the Waters of the Ganges Obtains Heaven."
— Photo by Public Domain

Why now? Because Jesus is returning soon, and they wanted to use "every single opportunity to proclaim Christ." K., who was saved after reading an SLM lesson many years ago, said that they could tell the Hindu pilgrims to read the material because "everything that is happening in the world was predicted by the Lord Jesus Christ."

The team split into groups and, using an assembly-line method, handed out Gideon-provided Bibles and some Source of Light "Who is Jesus Christ?" booklets to those exiting through the gate. His motivation for targeting this event was strategic. "If we can reach out to those highly honored Hindu religious leaders and monks, it will be easy to reach out to the common people," he surmised. "It is not possible to find these large numbers of monks in one place except this Ganga Sagar pilgrimage. So, we reach out to these Hindu monks with those materials, so they will be saved, and they can tell people what these books say."

Unlike cultures flooded with literature to the point of ignoring or tossing material offered by strangers, these people, K.



The Practice of Cremating Hindus and Pouring Their Ashes in the Ganges Continues Today.
— Photo by Public Domain

says, "don't move until they get the materials in their hands. They believe ... everything is god. So, for them the Bible is a holy book, and they receive it with the right hand and place the Bible on their forehead with honor to God."

The seekers may want the materials, but officials are not as open to K. and his team. "Some policemen tried to disperse the crowd" at one point, K. said, and objected to their presence. The team had to run, but they did not run away, merely outside the barricade to hand out materials from there instead.

In another location, the monks themselves helped protect them from opposition, saying, "These books are very good."



Assembling Materials — Photo by K.



Giving Bibles to Thousands on Pilgrimage, Hoping to Wash Their Sins Away — Photo by K.

At one spot, religious Hindus caught their team. K. remembers that “They forced our brothers and dragged them and pushed them to the police camp. While they were trying to harm our brothers physically, some other Hindu religious ladies stopped them and protected our brothers shouting that, ‘This book is of Jesus Christ, who is a great true God. Don’t dare to harm them. We want these holy books!’”

K. says, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” Logically speaking, now would not be the time to do what they did, but God not only protected them, but even gave them encouragement through one police officer who watched the team and said to them, “I have seen many Christians, but they don’t give such good books freely to the people. You are doing this great work in a disciplined way without hindering anyone or forcing anyone. I am impressed by your love for the people.”

It is not always so easy. Another time, K. shares, “Some fundamental radical groups opposed us and stopped our distribution and forced the pilgrims to throw away the materials. They also did a police complaint that Christian

materials were being distributed in the Hindu pilgrimage. Police also stopped us and took all our team to the police camp. They finally released our team after the prayer of many believers in many places. We moved our distribution place to another part since this pilgrimage is a huge crowded one, and then again we started distributing. We know our Lord is with us.”

The door is open right now, and God has prepared His people and equipped them for such a time as this. Pilgrims seeking to be washed of their sins will not find cleansing in a filthy river, but they might find it from going there, thanks to a group of courageous and faithful believers willing to pray, fast, distribute, and be imprisoned or worse, so a group of weary pilgrims may encounter Jesus Christ, the true and only Crossing Point between Heaven and Earth. 🌸



“Let us show His Word since a door is opened; we cannot work when the door is closed. The Word of God will save the lost souls.” — Photo by K.



Kimberly Thigpen is a homeschool mom, teacher, and author. She serves as SLM’s Literature Coordinator.

BLOSSOMS OF GRACE IN KENYA

By Danielle Dare

One night in the crowded and noisy airport of Nairobi, Kenya, an airport employee was distracted by the sight of a foreigner passing through the security area. Such a sight is not uncommon in this city where the nations converge for business, but this particular man was wearing a shirt with an emblem the young man instantly recognized: Source of Light. With an expression of joy that comes from familiarity, the man greeted Ron Barnes, sharing that he had studied Source of Light lessons as a teenager, and they were influential in shaping his life.

The young man in the airport is representative of many students studying Source of Light lessons

in over 500 schools around Kenya, where God has granted favor and open doors to share the Gospel and distribute lessons. The relationship of Source of Light with the school officials and staff members is built with intentionality, patience, and a commitment to the truth. Great care is given to the training of believing teachers and student leaders who will disciple students through the materials. Often the directors of the schools are not professing believers, but God has still opened wide the doors for Source of Light to offer Bible lessons.

At times, the work is rewarding and exciting when God works in unexpected and spectacular ways. Such a story



Students in a New School That Was Established by a Staff Member in the Central Province. — Photo by Timothy Kyuli



The Gospel Being Shared at a Secondary School in a Largely Islamic Region of Kenya. — Photo by Timothy Kyuli

is told by Timothy Kyuli, Director of SLM Kenya, about the Islamic leader of a school who has given his blessing on his three daughters who trusted in Christ, even encouraging their discipleship through the Bible lessons. Timothy shares, “We thank God, because all these things have happened through the power of God.” Truly, it is His work and as His followers we rejoice to be part of His plan. Perhaps these situations, where God has softened hearts to provide opportunities that would be otherwise humanly impossible, serve to propel these ministers through other difficult times when the consistent work and training of an often-rotating leadership can be mundane, discouraging, or even dangerous to the progress of the ministry. Increasing Islamic influence along with a growing infiltration of

cultish beliefs are challenges that must be met with steadfast faith and practical action to enable the continuation of healthy relationships with the school leadership and the students. Source of Light staff offers specialized training to contacts in their zones to equip them to effectively communicate the lessons and encourage more students to complete whole courses. The need for lessons is great, with a population of around 57,000 students in the schools already reached, as well as the need for logistical resources in order to provide good quality materials in a safe and timely way. Despite the challenges, this past year alone saw 10,000 certificates issued for completed courses and several testimonies of the specific work of God in the hearts of students.

Beatrice learned through her SLM lessons that Jesus defeated Satan and through Him she is an overcomer. God’s Word has transformed her, and her conduct at home and school is evidence of His work in her life.

Aldolphe rejoices that after meeting Jesus, he has been set free from drug addiction and is making Christ known in his school through sharing SLM lessons with others.

Neema shares that she is learning that love for God enables a person to truly change.

Methuselah has lost the desire for worldly pleasures as obedience to Christ has produced a greater desire to please Him.

Naumy realized that she is a sinner in need of God’s forgiveness in Jesus Christ. She has exchanged her old way of life with the new life she has in Christ and gives thanks for the Source of Light lessons.

Edward learned through the lessons that there is only one true God, the Creator of the world. He praises God for belief, repentance, and redemption.

Cecilina has realized the importance of obedience and forgiveness through the lessons she studied in school. She has trusted in Christ for salvation.

As the Word of God is carried throughout the regions of Kenya by faithful servants, seeds are planted into lives that are forever changed by the truth.

In the words of Daniel Mailu, an SLM Kenya staff member, “We really thank God for enabling us to reach thousands of lives and make Christ known.” Now is the time to sow, for the soil is rich, and the future will be full of many such blossoms of grace to display the glory of God, perhaps not just in Kenya but as their testimonies go beyond their own borders in Africa and around the world.

We may never know where God will lead Beatrice, Aldolphe, Neema, Methuselah, Naumy, Edward, and Cecilina, among many other students in Kenya who are studying Source of Light lessons. They will one day become adults and go out into their cities and communities. God is now preparing them for the continuation of His work in the world. They will fill positions as teachers, shopkeepers, airport security, or any other such roles in society, and they will be equipped with the truth they learned from the Word of God to shine His light in the darkness, to tell others the Gospel, and to continue the work of discipleship. 🌿



Danielle Dare is married to Bruce, Director of Publications at SLM. She spends her time caring for their three children and assists at the mission as she is able.

THE PRINTED WORD... STILL CHANGING LIVES, CONSIDER BECOMING A PAPER PARTNER!



Weighing up to **1,100** pounds, an **\$800** roll of paper yields **18,000 to 20,000** Bible lessons. A **\$75** box of digital quality paper can produce about **1,250** Bible lessons. Source of Light material is used in Christian and secular schools, church planting, Bible studies, and even prisons around the world. Translations include languages such as French, Spanish, Tagalog, Hindi, and Japanese among several others available in Madison and abroad.

One of SLM's goals is to enable our international missionaries to produce the lessons on their own soil. However, many cannot because of the high cost of paper. Your generous gift will reach people in the United States and overseas.

Consider a donation with the ultimate return on investment...
...an investment which yields eternal results!

Become a Paper Partner today, go to
sourcelight.org/donate



GLOBAL OUTREACH FUND



Source of Light International in Madison, Georgia operates and ministers to each of its missionaries without any administrative fees charged. We rely solely on gifts and regular donations in the same way as any of our missionaries, purely by faith. In order to continue to operate this way, we are asking God, by faith, to raise up new individuals, churches, and foundations to support the work of the home office through the Global Outreach Fund.

**Would you prayerfully consider partnering with
SLM through the Global Outreach Fund?**

WHAT'S NEW?

By Ben Doomy

At Source of Light, we believe that God is effectively using us as a tool for sharing the Gospel and discipling believers. We know the urgency of seeing people come to Christ and grow in their relationship, so it is important that we do those things with excellence. I believe it is a disservice to God if we do not serve Him to the best of our abilities. If we represent Christ, as His body, we ought to represent Him well. Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;". This is one of the reasons Source of Light has upgraded our printing press. If we are going to print Bible lessons, then we ought to print the best lessons we can, and we believe we will be able to with this new press.

In striving for excellence, we began to create new children's Bible lessons. I am very excited to announce three new series of Bible lessons for children of all ages.

The first new Bible lesson series was created to share the Gospel in its entirety, beginning with Creation and walking through the Bible to show the redemptive need for Jesus. These children's lessons are written for age groups of 3-5 years old, 6-8 years old, 9-12 years old, and teens. Each age group currently has four books written with four lessons in each book. Each

lesson has a creative story (Children will love the characters!), a quiz, and an activity page. We are excited to see how God will use these new Bible lessons for many years to come! It was important for us that we began with children because they need the Gospel too!

The second new Bible lesson series is a two-year Sunday school curriculum called "Bible Story Series." This unique set of 104 lessons was designed for Sunday school teachers to walk their students through the whole Bible in two years. Each week, students will learn a new story from the Bible, chronologically. The beauty of this new series is that it will be on our website, totally free! Anyone can go on our website and print the lessons as many as needed. Each lesson has an overview of the Bible story, coloring page, brief quiz, truth to remember, and memory verse. We are excited to provide Sunday school teachers with the curriculum they need.

Lastly, the third Bible lesson series is called "99 Adventures in the Bible's Big Story." This book is unlike anything else we offer; only the teacher needs to have the book! This has 99 Bible lessons from Genesis to Revelation, and it too shows the whole redemptive plan of God in the Bible. Each lesson has a Bible story summary, activity, song, memory verse, and review. For areas around the

MEMORY VERSE 2:

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?
Psalm 27:1



TRUTH TO REMEMBER:

Obey God over man.

Example of Bible Story Series — Photo by Kim Thigpen

world where children cannot read, this will be an exceptional tool for teachers to share the Bible with children!

It is important to understand and learn everything in the Bible! This is why all of our new Bible lesson series cover Genesis to Revelation. We live in a world where many people have not heard of the creation of the world and mankind. People do not know **who God is**. This is why it is important to start from the beginning and teach children the whole Bible. When we told our Branches in Africa that we had these three new series of lessons, they were ecstatic and said, "This was what we needed."

If we are going to reach the world for Jesus Christ, we cannot assume that people already know about Creation or who God is. We must follow the model

BABY MOSES IS PUT IN THE RIVER

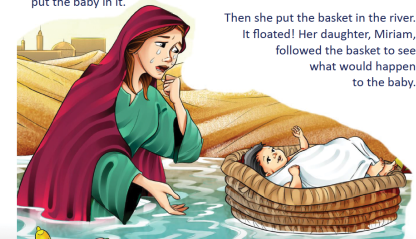
From Exodus 1-2

Many years went by. More and more Israelites were born in Egypt. There were hundreds of them, then thousands, then many, many thousands. The ruler of Egypt was afraid. Pharaoh knew there were so many Israelites that they were becoming powerful. The Israelites were slaves to the Egyptians, but if they decided to rise up and fight, the Pharaoh was not sure who would win.

Pharaoh decided to make a law. He told the Israelites that any baby boy born to them must be thrown into the river to die. Many babies died.

One lady had a baby boy. She did not want her baby to die. She hid him for 3 months. When she could hide him no longer, she made a basket and put the baby in it.

Then she put the basket in the river. It floated! Her daughter, Miriam, followed the basket to see what would happen to the baby.



of Paul in Athens, where he taught everything from creation to the coming of Jesus. In Acts 17, Paul was not in a culture that already knew the one true God; they were serving many gods. We live in a time similar to Athens; many people have no foundational understanding of God and the Bible. It is our goal for all three series to be ready for use at the start of the new year 2024. Please pray that God would use each of these Bible lessons for many years to come! 🌿



Ben Doomy serves as the Youth Ministries Coordinator and is helping to coordinate the development of the new SLM courses.

BUILDING PROJECTS & NEEDS

THE VISION FOR OUR BIG CAMPUS IS GETTING BIGGER.

◆ 25 pillows for our guests houses	\$625
◆ 50 sets of bed linens for guest houses . . .	\$1,000
◆ Replacement for our broken vending machine . . .	\$2,500
◆ Remodel guest house bathroom and add a third bathroom . . .	\$8,000
◆ Help fund/purchase 2 newer vehicles for ministry use . . .	\$20-\$30,000 each
◆ Help fund/replace/repair new driveway and parking lot . . .	\$200,000
◆ Help fund/build a new ministry guest house . . .	\$300,000

WOULD YOU PRAY WITH US ABOUT THESE BUILDING PROJECTS AND NEEDS?

NEW LIFE IN THE MISSIONARY GRAVEYARD

By Kimberly Thigpen

The shrimp that falls asleep is carried by the current.

– Spanish proverb

In the 15th to 19th centuries, Spaniards traversed the seas on ships exploring, sometimes conquering new lands and claiming them for the world empire that was Spain. Now in the 21st century, one small team of missionaries crossed those same seas back to Spain by plane. They travel through Spain by car to visit churches and clustered people groups. And increasingly, they will travel from Spain through the Internet to Spanish speakers all over the world.

To reach other countries while remaining in one—imagine what the great explorers of history would have thought of that!

Formerly a country of Catholicism by force under the leadership of dictator Francisco Franco, the population of Spain is increasingly disillusioned,

liberal, and anti-religion. After Franco's death in 1975, the culture saw a spike in those who embraced atheism, agnosticism, or no religion whatsoever, a phenomenon that has only increased with time.

A large percentage of the non-religious are young adults and teens. Spain is known as the graveyard for Protestant missionaries, and for good reason. Even Islam has more adherents than evangelicals.

Branch Director Jorge Vecchiarelli knows this work will not be easy. He shares their strategy, saying, “From the beginning of our ministry here, we [Jorge, his wife, Olga, and daughter and fellow missionary, Paulina] began to make strategic contacts with people, who need to know you day by day and then open their hearts. Evangelistic work does not have immediate and quantitative results. On the contrary, it is gradual and procedural, but at the same time effective and lasting.

New Church Plant

“In the city of Centelles, where there was still no church, many pastors recommended not going because it was a difficult city for evangelism and the government was not very kind to the religious. After prayer time and regular visits, we contacted some people last March and we began to share about God in a clothing business. Esther, the owner, was very willing to pray and began to collaborate by speaking



SLM Discipleship School in Spain
— Photo by Jorge Vecchiarelli

to others of the task. Weeks later, we were received by the Director of Culture of the city council, who had told us that she was agnostic. However, after sharing with her and praying for her life and work, she offered us a place in the town hall, where we began to have worship and preaching meetings every Sunday. God had made the impossible possible, Glory to His name!”

New Discipleship Schools

Jorge says, “Part of our task is to interview and contact pastors and churches to introduce them to the SLM ministry. The Evangelical Missionary Church of the city of Tordera, after reviewing the proposal, decided to start its discipleship school for the leaders of the church and also focus it on the young people. We begin by preparing them for the first subjects and we hope next year they will carry out the Discipleship School locally.”

Paulina was contacted by the leaders of the only evangelical church in the province of Barcelona to start an ADS among the leaders and young people. “I am sure,” she writes “that the Source of Light material ‘The Practical Christian Life’ will bless a generation that thirsts for Christ.”

New Ministries

The Vecchiarellis are part of the Global



Youth Outreach — Photo by Paulina Vecchiarelli

Children Forum, which trains leaders to train children’s workers. Through online and in-person meetings, “LE (Leadership Experience) is a training that we will provide to different leaders in the Hispanic world to train and challenge them to work more effectively for children.”

Paulina also recently organized a youth event on the beach in Barcelona that included musicians and preaching. A surprising 300 young people attended, and many “gave their lives to Christ.”

New Missionaries

The Vecchiarellis look forward to welcoming two new couples in the future. “We were mentors for them at different stages,” says Jorge. “Both couples have a missionary call to Spain and the intention is to add them to the SLM team to support the development of the Schools of Discipleship and the founding of new works in populations where there is still no testimony.”

New Methods

Thanks to the Internet, Paulina is able to enhance and expand a typical church-planting work with methods not possible in prior generations. A large part of her ministry is online. “Spanish society rejects God because they do not know Him and they give their opinion out of ignorance, anger or pain,” Pauline wrote. “But every day we see God’s work, and His embrace strengthens us. We are happy because we have debuted on Instagram and many people from the town contact us there. They give us reasons to pray and feel supported by the church.... Instagram is a channel open to everyone to evangelize and disciple hearts that need Jesus.”

Top 11 Countries with the Highest Number of Spanish Speakers - all of which have a Source of Light presence.			
Country	Official Language	Distribution	Population
Mexico	yes	90.0%	114 million
Colombia	yes	99.0%	51 million
Argentina	yes	96.8%	44 million
USA	no	10.7%	35 million
Spain	yes	74.0%	35 million
Peru	yes	84.1%	28 million
Venezuela	yes	96.9%	27 million
Chile	yes	89.7%	17 million
Ecuador	yes	93.0%	16 million
Guatemala	yes	69.9%	12 million
Cuba	yes	100.0%	11 million
https://www.worlddata.info/languages/spanish.php			

From the Internet connections, they can invite people to come in person to hear God’s Word at the new church.

New Possibilities

For a country moving more and more toward secularism, agnosticism, and atheism, traditional methods may be rejected by a disillusioned society before differentiating that the forced religion of the past was Catholicism rather than true Biblical Christianity.

Here in the graveyard for Protestant missionaries, Jorge says, “We are looking for creativity in the way of evangelizing. People in Spain are reluctant to come to church for a service; the contact and personal knowledge that they must have is very important, which is why we are preparing and organizing choral meetings, youth recitals of Christian music, impacts on society through street plays, events that draw people’s attention and generate gratitude.... There the door opens to be able to talk

to them about Jesus and the love of God. We ask for your prayers for our ministry!”

Both the need and potential reach go far beyond Spain’s borders. The Spanish language, originated in Spain, is now the heart language of over 400 million people globally. The second most populous native language in the world, 21 countries have Spanish as an official language, and another 14 have people who speak the language as their mother tongue. This work, through face-to-face and online encounters, has a potential outreach beyond what any explorer could have dreamed. God is providing the right people, tools, and creativity for such a time as this. 🌿



Kimberly Thigpen is a homeschool mom, teacher, and author. She serves as SLM’s Literature Coordinator....

LIGHT TO THE DARKEST OF CORNERS IN PERU

By Bruce Dare

Every nation. Every language. Every ethnicity.

This is the scope according to the mission statement of Source of Light, but is bringing people of such truly part of our goal? Yes. Is that realistic and reachable? Well, if you were to ask our Director in Peru, Enrique Machado, he might respond as he typically would, that it is according to the will of “our God.” I can guarantee that this is not only a part of his vision for the ministry in Peru but that it also includes faithful – albeit seemingly small in themselves – next steps toward fruit in multiple nearly unreachable fields. This seems to be how he advances the ministry in general: contemplate a specific need, make inquiries (then additional calls, then yet more contacts), secure a survey trip, work through partnerships developed. As a result, some pretty big ministry objectives, that are rather honed in focus, are being realized.

Take for example our ongoing effort toward lessons translated into the Quechua language. With the more accessible option of Spanish widely available and the potential audience being only one-eighth of Peru’s population, the need might strike you differently when you consider the almost four million people that consider Quechua as their mother

language. Enrique has established contacts and interest from brothers in the cities of Cusco and Curahuasi in the Andes Mountains who teach and broadcast in this language. Though the longer-term goal of lesson translation into Quechua is in motion, possibly with the help of qualified individuals who have even reviewed Bible translation, the more immediate possibility of virtual classes in this language using SLM courses is exciting. Enrique reports, “I shared with them the interest in using our lessons as discipleship materials. The answer was positive ... We have the opportunity to develop video or radio lessons in Quechua and share them with the evangelical community in Peru.”

If effective, the process could be replicated in other original languages,



Deaf Students During the Class at the Associate Discipleship School — Photo by Enrique Machado

such as Aymara, and in other remote areas, such as Iquitos, the largest city in the world inaccessible by road and the gateway to the Amazon River. The Peru Branch asks us to pray “for the people in different communities in our jungle regions that need to be evangelized and disciplined. There is an effort from many churches to reach these communities with the Gospel. SLM will be near to offer its discipleship resources.” Much of this work has sprung, not only from the impact of broader Gospel efforts in South America for generations now, but even specifically for Source of Light through decades of ministry from Pablo and Dalila Correa now passed on to Enrique and his wife, Katia. Older ministries are still bearing fruit, such as the students Enrique continues to hear from, like one who recently told him that “she knew about SLM courses from years back when they were delivered through the mail. This means had been very slow and the process too long. She had no idea that the ministry was still in Peru, but she found us on social media. She wants to use the materials in her church now because they have simple and clear explanation of God’s truths.” One pastor in Pucallpa was disciplined with SLM courses and now wants to do the same with his congregation in the rainforest of Peru. As Enrique shares, “The path is open. The Word of God can reach, impact, and change the lives of more and more people in Peru. Praise to our Lord.”

People—not just population percentages—are the focus. This could be no more evident than yet another new ministry being developed by our Branch in Peru,

namely to the blind and deaf. Each of these categories make up only around half a percentage point when it comes to the population, but Enrique instead sees the tens and even hundreds of thousands of souls those figures represent. “I was interested in finding churches or evangelical institutions in Peru working with blind people. I didn’t find one.” He also could not find a Bible in braille in Peru, and one found in Argentina was limited in country. This obstacle was only something to overcome; however, as he has found someone through the National Blind Association that will produce a sample of “A Country Called Heaven” in Spanish braille that will be used to recruit others to begin ministries to disciple blind people. A similar effort is being made with the deaf in Lima.



Pastor Sósimo Quispe, Who Is Deaf, with a Student He Has Discipled with SLM Materials — Photo by Enrique Machado

Enrique reports, “I invited them to use our discipling materials and to develop virtual classes in sign language. They are very motivated and interested in taking part in this project. Soon we will be starting.” They have an Associate Discipleship School with one pastor who is discipling about 60 deaf-mute believers with SLM lessons already in person, some of which have been presented certificates for completing a course. This is only the beginning. People are in a position to do the work. They just need the tools to finish the task: “With the donations for our project, we can realize this new video and virtual material to reach all those persons.”

The Gospel goes forward in other languages and even in the smaller subsets of those languages. We are getting closer to “every.” Those who might be otherwise easy to neglect need to hear the truth also and in a way that speaks to their hearts. Building on the foundation of past “standard” work in churches, a next level of ministry has turned to the even less reached, to other niches that seem so perfectly suited for



Enrique and Pablo Giving Certificates to the Students — Photo by Katia Machado

and so uniquely served by Source of Light resources. Breaking through hardship are several new horizons, new visions of ministry that drive deep into the literal or at least spiritual darkness. We all serve “for such a time as this.” It may not seem to be a time of great ease or efficiency or effectiveness in ministry, but it is at such times that God can bring freedom and light to a certain viewer or class or city or language. Let us take great courage and small steps, doing our part to take the Light to reach those darkest of corners, which certainly are in Peru. Or even at the end of your street. 🌿



Meeting Pastor Daniel Choque Who Has a Radio Program in Quechua and Shares Bible Messages. — Photo by Katia Machado



Bruce Dare serves as the Director of Publications at Source of Light. He and his family are grateful God opened this place of ministry full-time in 2021.

LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO SERVE?

The SLM Global Outreach Department serves our Source of Light missionaries around the world providing administration, administrative support, counseling, and training. We are seeking experienced missionaries who have served on the field previously who have strong administrative skills in organization and leadership, teachers and trainers.

WE ARE SEEKING:

Administrative Assistants who are strong in office administration

Regional Directors with cross-cultural experience to administrate and shepherd national missionaries

Regional PR Representatives to share the SLM vision and needs in each region around the US

Teachers and Trainers who can both teach and organize teachers to deepen the level of education and training for our missionaries and their partners

CONTACT SLM@SLMIN.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION



PRAYER

- ◆ Please pray for our Print Shop staff as they adapt to the new press. Pray especially for Philip Fraiser as he runs the press and becomes acquainted with the different features of this new machine. Pray that little glitches in the set-up will be resolved so that the Print Shop can meet all the printing needs in a timely manner.
- ◆ The Source of Light Africa Branches have a huge demand for literature. The door is open in many African countries to serve in the schools. Many of our Branches are seizing this opportunity, and they see many, many students coming to faith in Jesus Christ and utilizing the Source of Light materials to grow in Him. One of the limitations that the Branches face, however, is having enough literature to meet the demand. Please pray that God will provide the resources so that we will be able to seize every opportunity to reach school students with the Gospel and to provide timely discipleship.
- ◆ Many of our Source of Light International Branch Directors are nearing retirement age. Please pray that God provides a replacement for each of these Directors in sufficient time for them to be trained so that each of these ministries will continue in the future uninterrupted and strong.
- ◆ Please pray that Headquarters will fill staff vacancies for key positions. Pray that God will bring the staff and provide them with the support team necessary to enable them to serve and thrive at Source of Light. Help is currently needed in the Field Department, Operations, the Print Shop and Shipping Departments, and the Finance Department. Jim Tilson, Head of the Braille Department, is also praying that God will send someone he can train to replace him in the future.
- ◆ Please pray for relief from the ongoing persecution in some of the areas where we have Branches in Asia. It has really intensified in the past year.
- ◆ We have several national missionaries who are planning to visit the United States in 2024. Please pray that they will be able to get the documents needed to travel and that God will provide for their deputation expenses. Headquarters staff will be especially busy during the times when the Field Staff are in the States helping them to secure meetings and planning transportation for them to get to these meetings. Please pray that God will open the doors for meetings during their time here and provide contacts for them. Please pray that their time in the States will be profitable in raising support for their ministries and that God will protect and provide for their ministries and their families during the time they are apart.
- ◆ Please pray for our Headquarters' Staff who deal with ongoing health issues. Also, pray that God will protect the health of our Field Staff. Special prayer is requested for Isaiah Bernasko in the Ivory Coast who continues to struggle with illness
- ◆ As many of our fields are seeing a harvest of souls, please pray that God will provide all that is needed for their discipleship and long-term spiritual growth. 🌿

PRAISE

- ◆ The Print Shop at Source of Light Headquarters in Madison, Georgia, praises the Lord for the new press that has been installed. We praise the Lord for safety in the installation process. They are looking forward to many years of service from this new equipment.
- ◆ Source of Light invited their Africa Field Staff to a conference that was held in Kenya in November of 2023. We praise the Lord for the funds donated for this conference and for our SLM Branch members in Kenya who helped facilitate accommodations and travel. It was a time for teaching, training, and introducing new resources. Source of Light representatives from Kenya, Uganda, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, D.R. Congo, and Mozambique attended, as well as SLM Board Member, Doug Truax, President Ron Barnes, Director of Children and Youth Ministries for SLM, Ben Doomy, and Africa Administrative Assistant, Gwenda Trapp.
- ◆ Source of Light is rejoicing in the new resources that are already available, or in the latter stages of development, that will provide our Branches and online partners with new tools for ministry. Source of Light is developing new courses and partnering with the developers of materials that will add variety and a broader scope of lessons to further facilitate the sharing of the Gospel and the discipleship of believers. Please pray that God will provide our International Field Staff with the resources and personnel needed for translation of the materials not yet available in the languages in which they serve.
- ◆ Source of Light is a faith-based ministry. Through its many donors to the main office, Headquarters staff, and national missionaries, Source of Light can reach many, many people with the Gospel. Source of Light is grateful for its financial partners who share the resources that God has given them to promote the work of evangelism and discipleship.
- ◆ We praise the Lord for the healing He has given our director in Japan who was undergoing treatment for cancer and for our director in Myanmar who has recovered remarkably from a stroke. We are also rejoicing that Source of Light's Colombian missionary, Laura Vanegas Alfaro, who struggled with a difficult pregnancy, has recovered and delivered a healthy baby boy, Lucas.
- ◆ Source of Light is so grateful for the volunteer teams that come to Headquarters on short-term mission trips throughout the year. This past year we had 12 teams visit Headquarters. They have provided 20,000 man-hours of support. They accomplished large chunks of work that freed up our staff to do other things.
- ◆ Madison Discipleship School at Headquarters has really struggled with prison regulations making it difficult to get lessons into prisons for inmate students. They have spent a lot of time writing letters to try to resolve the problem. They are praising the Lord that progress is being made; prisons are now allowing the students to receive their lessons.
- ◆ The Source of Light Braille Department praises the Lord that they have been granted renewed permission to print Sunday school materials that had temporarily been suspended. 🌿

FIELD GIFT FUND



The Field Gift Fund is set aside for the emergency needs of the Source of Light fields and missionaries. The fund seeks out the fields of which have little to no income, and provides enough money for them to get by with. It also provides a “safety net” for these fields in case of emergencies, natural disasters or unexpected health issues. It has been a source of hope and encouragement to the fields on many occasions.

Would you prayerfully consider partnering with SLM through this Field Outreach Fund Campaign? There are many ways to help.

To partner with us today, go to
sourcelight.org/donate

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Source of light
INTERNATIONAL

Dear Friend,

Let's remember His words...

Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth ...but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven...for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Paraphrase Matthew 6:19–21)

...for in heaven we will be glad we did.

Yours for the harvest,

Dr. Ronald J. Barnes, Jr.
President & CEO

Give Online at:

sourcelight.org/donate

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706.342.0397

Each gift will be used as preferenced with the understanding that when any need is met, the remaining gifts will be used where most needed. Gifts are acknowledged and receipted with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

***We are grateful to you for being
a part of the ministry of Source
of Light through your prayers
and financial support.***



Source of light

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