

Miktav He (Letter 5)

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We are surprised that we have only one sheet left on the calendar. What happened to the other eleven? But there is no time for morbidity, for reflection, as a new spirit drives us with eager expectation ahead to Christmas- that glorious day and Season. Joy floods the soul, laughter is in the air, and new life is energized into tired limbs as we hurry along.

And so it must be as Christ has made this possible. He came to bring life and that in abundance. We must only fill this Season with Him and not what is a chasing after wind. Whilst we celebrate also spare a thought for the environment and the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

Thanks to Bishop Bowles, Rev. J. Krotz (amidst his hectic wedding preparations) and Sandra Vorster who have put effort into this edition. Feel free to do the same in the New Year as we all benefit with collective ownership and input.

Blessed is the one who takes the time to read this newsletter.

1. Walking in the light

Give a thought to the Christ of Christmas

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings thou hast not desired, but a body hast thou prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings thou hast taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God,' as it is written of me in the roll of the book."(Heb 10:5-7)

Did you ever wonder how the Godhead was affected when the Son was sacrificed to appease for the guilt of the world? Did you ever wonder what happened the first Christmas in heaven?

I think what we dread most and rebel against during Christmas was a reality in heaven. We dread losing a loved one during this Period.

We do not want to experience loneliness, tears, a seat that is empty, to be sustained by memories only, etc. during Christmas. Some lift their eyes and voices to heaven and ask: **Why?**

If we can contemplate and understand these emotions, we can start to realize the extent of the sacrifice, the dept of love, the care for us, the dreams for us that are in the heart of God.

Christmas is God's sacrifice for us to clear our mess and the mess we caused to His creation. Somebody needed to go down for it, to pay the price, to take the rap. Sacrifices and offerings did not suffice-although they were steps of contrition in the right direction.

The problem was that sting remained: The wages of sin is death! (Rom 6:23) Who will die?

The Substitute came into sight that first Christmas. This Volunteer took our burden upon Himself and ended this scourge on Calvary. With Him a hymn rung forth: Glory to God in the highest; *on earth Peace to humans on whom his favour rest* (Luke: 2:14). May we experience this song, may we accept this invitation, because the restoration has started, the reconciliation has come, the enmity was dealt with, the barriers removed. We can rejoice in the knowledge of Immanuel-God with us- for ever from henceforth.

2. What shall we say about all these?

{Reflections on the current national and international news events will be mirrored by/in the Word of God to console, direct and challenge (where needed).}

Is the bell tolling for us when it comes to Climate Change? Will the echo comes back to haunt us in successive waves when we and our descendants face the consequences of our decisions? Will the children curse their ancestors for the heritage they have left them?

Frightening- and yet it is a reality! *Ke nako* we shout for 2010 and our dreams for the Soccer World Cup, but a more eager *Ke nako*—"It is time!" need to reach Copenhagen. Decisions and grand ones (with true commitments!) need to come about to reduce greenhouse gas emission or we are in for amongst others, for more flooding and more drought; less ice and snow; more extreme weather conditions; and rising sea levels that will shock us to our senses.

Yes, there are culprits here in the major emitters USA, China, India, etc. and although they should be called to task, each little fish (sorry human being) need to do his/her bit to secure our future. A simple step will be to register your concern online and all these petitions will be laid before "the mighty ones" who might just let go of their fears and greed. It is better to lose face in the light of the common sense onslaught, than to be adamant in keep up the economic edge and destroy everyone, including yourself in the process!

We were given the task of stewardship of the earth, but some seemed to have forgotten that the earth is the Lord's and that He will call us to account.

There is no way we can just destroy, exploit, abuse, and pollute, without consequences. We urgently need to return to the Creator and His guidelines as what we are supposed to do. Whilst it is still possible we need to seek the face of the Lord. Whilst the day of salvation is still possible we need to draw near or the terrible consequences will kick in when we have crossed the line and we have to face the music. In vain will we hear the refrains? *When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?*

Where have all the flowers (food) gone, long time passing? Where have all the water gone long time ago... When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?

Do make a quick stop at: <http://en.cop15.dk/>

3. Joy with the sorrow.

*The
Editorial team
would like to wish
each of our loyal readers, and the ones
who will read this from hindsight, a blessed Christ like Season.
May Jesus Christ fills your life and that of your family with peace, love and
true joy.
Remember
Jesus Christ is the same
Always and is available
To your needs!*

4. Chess (nee CHURCH) moves: Bishop

{All the movements of the Bishop (and deans), where they sow, plant, water will be made known so you can pray to God for these ventures at your Prayer groups and during Worship services}

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY VISIT TO SWEDEN AND FINLAND

The main reason for my visit to Sweden was to witness the consecration of the new Bishop of Harnösand, our partnership Diocese, Bishop Tuulikki, Koivunen Byland.

As it turned out to be I had the privilege of witnessing the consecration of two women bishop's on 8 November 2009. The bishop of Stockholm Eva

Brunne and the bishop of Harnosand Tuulikki Bylund. This was really a historical day in the Church of Sweden.

On the 14th November 2009 Pastor Chris Hendricks and I attended the installation of Bishop Tuulikki in her Diocese of Harnosand. This was a very big occasion because in this way she takes charges of her Diocese.

We further had the normal partnership business to attend to. This was a wonderful visit which also included Finland and a meeting with the Arch Bishop.

I return to South Africa on 21st November 2009.

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The **89th Diocesan Council Meeting** took place 26-28 November 2009- the first “full” meeting of 2009 as all the Circuits were represented with their deans. The meeting took place in positive spirit with high expectations and hopes to turn the Diocese around.

Spiritual matters are high priorities to the Bishop as he tries to re-energize the Diocese with what is vital to the wellbeing of every congregant and those beyond. Hereto it is vital to him to dislodge anything that obstructs the working of the Holy Spirit. The Bishop has been given the mandate to act pro-actively and intervene timeously, before damage goes too far.

Personnel matters brought about mixed decisions, some favorable decisions, especially transfers to the various Circuits. The Eastern Cape Circuit is especially pleased as Dean Maho till now was the only fulltime pastor for all the four parishes. He will now be ably assisted with colleagues.

Financial matters, although vital to the smooth running of the Diocese, have been seriously debated especially in the economic climate we are. It was thus resolved not to burden the parishes with higher assessment, and furthermore to start Circuit Fundraising Committees to try to lighten the burden from weary shoulders.

Next year is Synod again and everyone is urged to make an input how to take the Diocese, which mean each local congregation forward and to be salt and light in this world. Our witness is crucial at this stage.

5. What about....

Highlighting the **Copenhagen Convention** to your congregation and bring it before God. For info go to the site under section 2, so that you inform and conscientize your members and friends to a changed lifestyle which protect rather than destroy.

6. Spotlight on....

World AIDS Day & 16 Days of Activism against Abuse

Do keep the candle burning and continue to bring the infected and affected before the Lord. Create hope amidst this pandemic by reaching out to those in need. The love of Christ compels us to care for our neighbour. Do take note about the call of our government: **I am responsible, We are responsible, South Africa is taking responsibility.**

7. What's in it for me?

Tell us about your efforts and that of your congregation to save the environment. The **Message Board** is waiting to capture your views and discussions (on anything!) Handy spiritual books are up for grabs!

Wishful thinking

This then was the last issue for 2009 .We will Deo Volente be back on cyberspace the third week in January. May you have a blessed time of rest, a fabulous time with your family and loved ones, and be re-energized to start the most blessed year yet-2010. God take care of you!!!

Please encourage others to subscribe to our news letter which aims to inform, stimulate, to involve and to grow the visitors to our site. It is still my wish to hear from you. Please volunteer to contribute to any of these regular features. You also need to tell us your needs and whether these regulars are sufficient and cater for your expectations. Any other brilliant ideas will be gladly accommodated. Eagerly waiting to hear from you!!

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