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Unseen things

by Bill Mills

I have noticed that when my kids walk with me and they don't know the way or they sense danger (as when crossing the street), then they slip their hands into mine. When disoriented, stick with Dad. This is a lot more comforting than getting directions or looking at a map – just stick with Dad and you don't really need to know the way. Stay with Dad and you are guaranteed to arrive at Dad's destination. Sometimes they don't even care about the destination, they just want to be with Dad. Kids can enjoy the day with Dad armed only with a general sense of where we are going. They don't need a lot of explanation or a detailed schedule.

If we haven't got a certain and compelling knowledge of God's will, we Christians tend to look at things that can be seen: these conditions, those circumstances, this logic, that result. Instead of falling to our knees many of us turn to our lists of pros and cons. But we really only have two things to guide us: 1- our own desires (we'll find reasons to support them), and 2- the (often hidden) will of God. Sometimes the two coincide, and sometimes they clash.

We may err in assuming that God's will is like a commodity we need in order to get on with our lives. Are we seeking His heart or are we seeking a thing He can dispense to us?

Trying to determine God's will can throw us into tortures of indecision. Yet the "do nothing" alternative can be just as destructive as a wrong choice. May God give us wisdom to make good decisions and also deliver us from the paralyzing fear of making bad ones.

We'd do better to treat the search for God's specific intentions as a fresh opportunity to fellowship with Him. This is the wisdom I have learned from young children – when disoriented, stick with Dad. Enjoy being with Him.

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When our Mongolian friends are on a long journey, they take delays in stride because they are focused on enjoying the journey. The trip is a series of interesting experiences. Enjoy the fellowship. Take in the changing scenery. Eventually we will get there. By contrast, westerners like me think of the trip as an inconvenience that must be endured in order to reach the destination.

Certainly God gives wisdom and direction (Jn. 15:15), but does He

want us to rush off by ourselves just because we know the way forward? It's much better for us to seek out the God Who hides Himself (Is. 45:15). Then we can enjoy the changing scenery of our journey with Him, and begin to appreciate unseen things – the promptings of His Spirit and the most valuable things:

- The influence of a godly leader
- The impact of a word spoken in season
- The power of an act of kindness
- The liberation won by forgiveness
- The mystery of eternal rewards

May the Lord guide us all in JCS and make us fruitful . . . 'as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.' (2 Cor. 4:18)

Project updates

Bayankhongor Agriculture Training Field Project

Reporting by Dustin Baker

The Bayankhongor Agriculture Training Field project was started in 2006, as a joint project between the Khongor Institute and the Bayankhongor branch of JCS. The goal of the project is to provide local Bayankhongor area vegetable growers with practical in-field training in vegetable growing methods, in addition to testing and introducing new vegetable varieties, technologies and growing methods to local growers.

The first year the project started with planting approximately 1,500 square meters and one small green house. In 2007, the project was expanded to 2,500 square meters and four green houses.

Training days are held once or twice a month throughout the growing season as needs dictate. Around 200 vegetable growers have received training, varying from, planting root crops (potatoes, beets, rutabagas, carrots), to "new" vegetables, such as broccoli, cauliflower, squash, and kohlrabi, to growing green house vegetables (cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers). Many of the field day participants have been mothers looking for ways to improve their children's diets, pensioners looking for a way to supplement their food supply and income, and some young people looking at vegetable growing on a larger scale as a for-profit enterprise. In visiting the homes of some of the families that have been attending the trainings, we see many productive home gardens and a noticeable increase in the consumption of vegetables - even new vegetables such as broccoli, peas and beans. The families are very proud to show the fruits of their labor.

The Khongor Institute started a Vocation Agriculture program in 2007 that provides community members and high school Juniors and Seniors a way to get an Agriculture diploma after 2 ½ years of study. The Ag training field provided practical training for five adult students in 2007 and 70 high school VoAg students in 2008. One of the students from 2007 is the field manager for 2008, and one of the VoAg students has been retained as his assistant. The initial funding was provided through World Relief and administered by JCS. Through the course of the project the Khongor School has taken on much of the cost and during 2008 provided over 60% of the project's operating costs. They will receive all the harvested vegetables. As this program was planned for three years, the Khongor Institute will be taking over responsibility for the project after this year and JCS's official involvement will finish. JCS will still be available on a consulting basis as needed in the future.



Project updates

Streams in the Desert Project

Imagine both your parents are dead and you have come to live with your oldest brother in Ulaanbaatar, only to be kicked out when you don't get along with his wife. And you are only 17 years old. You end up living on the streets until some young men approach you and offer you shelter and a way to make some money. What they do not tell you is that they are now going to be your bosses and will make you sell yourself for sex.

This was Nergui's (not her real name) story when we met her one rainy night outside the UB Hotel in June this year. Our Streams in the Desert project goes there every Friday night to serve hot tea and coffee to the street prostitutes. Nergui wanted out but was afraid if she attempted to leave with us, her bosses would follow. So we gave her our phone number and two days later she came to join us at the live-in shelter we provide for ladies who want to change their lives.

The Streams in the Desert Project started about 18 months ago. Every Friday night we go to the UB hotel in Ulaanbaatar and serve the Ladies that gather there, as a way of building relationships. We also do "parties" for them where we share that through Jesus there is a way to live a different life.

As women have responded we have rented an apartment in order to give them a place to get away in order to change. Currently we have three women living in the shelter. We realized that since we are asking women to leave their livelihood we have to provide some other training so that they have some way of making a living once they leave us.

Besides character and discipleship training through the Bible, we offer training in making simple jewelry and wool products. But we want to expand that training into a more marketable area of teaching the Ladies how to make a living through sewing. We also have sponsored ladies to attend cooking and beauty school classes.

The aim of our project is to see these Ladies become Ladies in the full sense of what God intended. We want to see their character changed and healed but also want to equip them with a trade so they don't have to resort to selling their bodies. If you'd like to keep up with what is happening with us you can visit www.mongoljohn.net

Nergui has had many ups and downs during her time with us but I am happy to report that she entered a YWAM discipleship training school in September.

Reporting by John Koehler



Handicraft Training



Open Sharing Forum

Language learning experience

Reporting by Toshiko Urushibara

My name is Toshiko Urushibara from Japan.

I came to Mongolia two years ago, and now I am released from language study. I am kind of a professional language student which does not mean I am brilliant. I just have long experience in studying English. Why so long? Because I am a slow learner.

Then God had mercy on this slow brain. Mongolian is in the same language group as Japanese, which means the grammar (or I would simply say the order of the words) is the same! Wonderful!

Anyway, this relates to my experience at Bridge school. At first I was doing language there with other new missionaries. It was quite enjoyable but strange feelings attacked me. I felt my class was so slow. It was nobody's fault but because my mother tongue is similar to Mongolian. I used to be the most desperate student in the English class and in the Bible school class in Britain, but here... After one year, after praying, I decided to move to Friends school. They have one-on-one lessons with a teacher, and lower fees too. So why not?

At Friends school, the one-on-one lesson is really up to teacher and myself. If I am tired and so is my teacher, it is just a disaster. If the teacher loves talking and I love listening, the class becomes a counselling room. If the teacher has watched a Euro cup game and so have I, 2/3 of the lesson hour is exciting football talk.

Looking back on the last year, I feel sorry for my teachers because I sometimes compared them to my English teachers in the UK. They had a much longer history teaching English and there were lots of good textbooks and material. Also my English teachers were mature Christians and more experienced. Surely I was sometimes in a critical frame of mind. Toshiko repented. Overall I improved, especially my speaking skills improved at Friends school. I am deeply grateful to my patient teachers who listened to my bad Mongolian. I'm sure it was like listening to an awful violin recital played by a four-year-old kid.

I am working now with street people at a church and have to listen to some people who do not have enough teeth. I don't understand everything they say, but if I had not taken the intensive lessons at Friends school, I would not be able to understand them AT ALL. Thanks be to the Lord.



Toshiko and her teachers

JCS Retreat

I presume that every member of JCS knows that the JCS Retreat was held 5th-8th August 2008 at Chandman Tor (the same place as last year) and we all had plenty of:

Restful and Relaxing time: We all enjoyed beautiful nature which Our God created. One rule that everyone had to follow: Don't pick the wild flowers!

Blessed time: This year our speaker (Craig) preached on five characters in the Old Testament: Noah (Man for all seasons), Hagar (In search for freedom), Jacob (following God with an "If"), Joseph (The detached believer) and Anonymous (The worthy woman of business). It was challenging for us all.

Snack (eating) time: Plenty of delicious cake, biscuits and fresh fruit! However, it seemed that sugar cubes were the most favourite snack!

Fellowship time: It was a great opportunity for the people who live in UB to get to know and catch up with the people who live and work in the countryside. The communion time was meaningful for us all.



Reporting by Bee Yacam

Fun time: Games and activity time really showed us how competitive JCS members could be. I think in 4 years JCS should send some of us to join the Olympics in the UK! Furthermore, Fun Night shed light on how talented and crazy we are!



Naadam in Denmark

Can you celebrate Naadam in Denmark?

I was asked to do a 'Mongolian Day' for the kids (1st to 7th grade) from my church at their summer camp. When I learned that it was on July 6th, I immediately thought about arranging a traditional Naadam celebration. I started thinking and planning and I dug into all my Mongolian resources to find useful things that could illustrate what Mongolian Naadam is.

First I did a general introduction to Mongolia. The kids learned to count to ten and write their names in Mongolian and I told them about life in Mongolia – both in the city and the countryside. They were fascinated that an entire family can live in a ger – without bathroom!! I showed the kids a video from the Naadam celebration. They were especially impressed about the outfit the wrestlers wear and the eagle dance they perform – very different from a traditional sports competition.

Then it was time to start the competition. We did archery, wrestling, ankle bone game and running race. We tried to do it as authentically as possible with eagle dance but without

Reporting by Grethe Kock



Naadam in Denmark

horses. The kids were very competitive and fought like it was a question about life and death! When it was time for the ankle bone game the kids thought the bones were yucky – I explained that for many Mongolian kids, ankle bones are the only game they have – hard for a Danish kid to imagine!

The winners of each competition were honoured and they received a small gift (an ankle bone key ring!).

So the answer to the question in the beginning of the article is definitely yes – you can certainly celebrate Naadam in Denmark, if you have a good imagination and are flexible!

The kids were very excited, asked a lot of questions and wanted the games to be as authentic as possible.



Comings, Goings and Notices

from Leadership Team

Reporting by Sam Biro

Farewells:

Vicky Borthwick: Unfortunately Vicky, who we announced as arriving in the last issue, has now left due to a health crisis. Please pray for her full recovery.

Returning Staff:

Patrick & April Hellberg and their daughter Aurelia: Patrick & April and their daughter arrive August 28th. They are returning after a long time away which have included studies and the birth of Aurelia. Patrick & April are with YWAM and will be returning to Erdenet.

Alun and Marion Price-Davies: In October we expect to welcome back Alun and Marion who will be with us for a few months again.

New Arrivals:

Mone Beck: In September we look forward to welcoming Mone with SIM coming from Germany. Mone will begin language study once she settles into life here in UB.

Sally Holloway: Sally will arrive later in September for a short term stay.

• **IF Meeting:**
October 7th

• **Board Meeting:**
October 28th - 29th

• **Beginning with the Jul/Aug 2008 issue, Horizons is being published bi-monthly.**

• **Urgently Needed:**
Medical Advisor

Dr. John Sturt: We are also expecting a short visit from Dr. John. John is son of Reginald Sturt, an early 20th century missionary to the Mongolian People. See Steppe by Step chapter 38.