

Martin & Elizabeth
and Elias Barley
About Addis
Sharing the Love of Christ
May-June '11 Praise & Prayer Letter



Dear friends and supporters,

We really enjoyed our time in the United States.

While most people in the state of Maine were wishing that the winter would end, I (Martin) have loved my first experience of quite so much snow, and was not averse to 'dragging' my very pregnant wife out with me to enjoy it too!



I was fascinated to discover that here 'freezing rain' doesn't just mean really, really cold rain! The effects are shown below!



(Apologies to our American supporters, who may be wondering why anyone apart from a small child would be quite so excited by these things! Though you are all way too polite to say so!)

While Lid and I continued to walk as the snow melted, this isn't all we did in our time away from Ethiopia!

While the snow was still thick on the ground, Lid and I had **official engagements** at her sending church, Hallowell First Baptist, and also at Fayette Baptist. At these churches we shared about how we have seen God use us and others in ministry in Ethiopia, despite the fact that we are weak. Our theme was how "God chose (and still chooses!) the weak things of the world to shame the strong" (1 Corinthians 1:27) and so our weakness is not an excuse that we can use to avoid what God is calling us to do, for he can still use us for His glory!

After Elias (El-ee-yas) was born and the weather was warming up, we attended church services at Hope Baptist and Lighthouse Baptist and saw some of our supporters there too.

We enjoyed time with **family and friends**; getting ready for bub's arrival and then welcoming our son into the world.



Elias' American grandparents were on hand to celebrate the day of his birth and it was an amazing blessing that his Australian grandparents were able to meet him only 17 days later.



Elias was 3 weeks old when we went to church to **honor the Risen Son** at Easter time. In America it seems to be more common to wear new 'Easter' clothes than in Australia, maybe it has something to do with the coming of the sun and spring!

Anyway, Elias' Grandma bought him a suit for Easter (third picture across), which was the only reason that I dusted off my wedding suit (fourth picture across) - I thought we should all match!

We also kept in email contact with the **Urban Ministry (UM)** team and helped out where we could with communication, reports and photos. In particular, I was helping with...

Genet's situation

We last wrote about Genet in our Oct-Nov '10 prayer letter. Genet is an eighteen year old girl who has a mental disability, and lives with her mother, Assede, who is also mentally disabled. UM's Children and Youth program (C&Y) has supported them for over ten years and encouraged Genet as she made slow progress at school (she is currently in grade 3).



UM has found a local church, the Akaki Kale Heywet (Word of Life) Church, to provide the long term support that they need. They have agreed to be the channel for their financial support and also to provide them with spiritual, social and emotional support. Genet's transfer to the care of this church is now complete. Please **pray** for ongoing progress in their lives.

An extract from Lid's journal

Well, it's been a new experience being a mother and it's pretty amazing how life changes. In some expected ways; like nighttime feedings, lack of sleep, and extra time needed for getting out and about. Yet there have been some surprising changes as well; like a new creative ability when trying to calm the baby, and the ability to wake up several times in the night to nurse and not go completely nuts (mostly). But one really great change is a new perspective when reading the Word of God. So I thought I'd share with you all one of my recent journal entries.

***Luke 18: 15-17: "And they were bringing even their babies to him, so that he would touch them, but when the disciples saw it they began to rebuke them. But Jesus called for them, saying, 'Permit the children to come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child, will not enter it at all.'*"**

People were flocking to Jesus because of his ability to bless them through his teaching and his miracles. Jesus' teaching that precedes this passage consists of two parables which state how we are to approach God in prayer; with persistence and with humility. And how could there be a greater picture of persistence and humility than the one found in this passage of children and their parents?

Having little Elias helps me see what it means to receive God's Kingdom like a child. He is completely dependent on both his parents to meet his needs. He cannot even communicate with words, but simply with cries and little noises that we are to interpret. And he certainly is persistent in these limited communications!

And whether he always knows it or not, we as his parents try to have his best interests in mind. If we as human parents can cultivate great trust from our children, who humbly accept that we know what is best, how much more should we trust our heavenly father to know what is best for us?

He consistently and perfectly meets all of our needs, whether we can always see it or not, because he indeed is perfect and has our best interests in mind. So we should trust him as completely or perhaps even more than a child trusts his parents.

Further, we do come from a humble position with regard to our Lord. We are completely dependent on him whether we acknowledge it or not.

It really has surprised me how the miracle of a little baby can change how we approach life and how we approach our relationship with God and his kingdom. He calls us to persistently and humbly trust in him to know what is best.

In Ethiopia, Lid will continue to work with Urban Ministry's Deborah House program in the afternoons, and care for Elias in the mornings and nights! **We thank God** that we have an Ethiopian lady, **Sisay**, who loves children and will care for Elias on weekday afternoons! Martin will continue to work full-time with the Orphan Support (OS) and C&Y projects. **Pray** that we will both adjust to life and work in Ethiopia while also caring for Elias.

We **praise** God that we got a passport for Elias, we all arrived safely in Ethiopia on 25th May and we were able to get Elias a 3 month tourist visa; we now have time to wait for his authenticated birth certificate - we need this so he can get temporary residence here.

More praise points!

- for Elias' safe arrival, Lid's good recovery & for all we're learning about parenting!
- for time with American and Australian family, friends & supporters; that the Lord has used us to be an encouragement to some in ways that we didn't plan!
- that UM found a great (temporary) replacement for our spiritual program teacher.
- that Genet & Assede are now being cared for by a local Word of Life church.

More prayer points!

- for UM's work in transforming the OS project into a church planting ministry.
- that both the OS and the Deborah House projects will soon be able to form new agreements with the government.

Thank you for your partnership in prayer.

Yours in Christ,

Martin, Elizabeth & Elias Barley

P.S. We strongly encourage our Australian supporters who are interested in missions in general and SIM in particular to attend SIMWORLD - see attached document for details!

SIM Ethiopia, PO Box 127, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Ph - W: (251-11-) 551 3684

e: martinb.ethiopia@yahoo.com.au

e: elizabeth.cromwell@yahoo.com

SIM Australia, PO Box 42, Penshurst, NSW, 2222. Ph (02) 9580 1422.

e: sim.australia@sim.org.au

SIM USA, PO Box 7900, Charlotte, NC 28241. Ph 1 800 521 6449

e: simusa.webmaster@sim.org