

## Summer newsletter 2009

**Attention!** Our new academic year opens September 26-27<sup>th</sup> with a weekend training-seminar. We are currently accepting applicants who wish to enroll as first year students. Further information about the registration process can be found on our website [www.transsilvanus.ro](http://www.transsilvanus.ro)

### Introduction

We read in Numbers 6 that if someone wished to consecrate himself to God, to make the vow of a Nazirite, he had to promise purity and separation concerning three things for a certain period of time. He was not to drink alcohol in any form. He was not to cut or shave his hair or beard. He was not to touch a corpse. In fact, the vow of a Nazirite was invalidated even if someone “accidentally” died in the Nazirite's presence. The man who would make such a vow had to realize that it is dangerous to live a life dedicated to God and to not take seriously the commands of God related to this vow. Clearly, we do not do God a favor by dedicating ourselves to Him, e.g. by choosing to be missionaries, or by voluntarily assuming an exceptionally sacrificial mission service. God warns us that in increased sanctity there is increased temptation for sin and – as it is more serious to abuse sanctity than indifferent things – that this kind of sin is more serious.

The Word presents three cases showing the seriousness and the majestic bearing of consecrating ourselves, in contrast with a possible breach of promise. We read that if someone broke his vow before the agreed time, he could not simply start over. First, he needed to present atonement in order to void the previous consecration and only then could he start all over again.

It is interesting in the second case that if someone died near the Nazirite, then that tragedy annulled the Nazirite's vow. It's not as if the Nazirite had murdered the person! In that case, the requirement for an atoning sacrifice would be logical. In fact, we can say that it is the Lord of life and death who should be held responsible for that individual's death, not the Nazirite. Therefore, it is God who should bear the person's death, yet it is the Nazirite who becomes unclean. Moreover, he must present propitiation for himself, as if he were a murderer. If his judgment in righteousness is sophisticated, he won't take upon himself the “sin” and “responsibility” of God. But here is the secret. The Nazirite must love God so much that he is able to “forgive” God. He must love God so much that he is prepared to take upon himself the accusations against God and to carry His responsibility, as if not God, but the Nazirite himself had caused that person's death. Being a Nazirite doesn't suppose an ordinary consecration of one's life to God; therefore the challenge can't be ordinary either.

The Word also regulates the expiration of the vow, in the third case described. The man consecrated to serving God must present sin and peace offerings as if he had broken his vow. Jesus referred to this: "So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'" Luke 17:10.

Aaron's blessing crowns all the above. That it comes as a closure to the whole chapter is not a coincidence. After the consecration to serve God, the Lord's blessing can

validate only one type of attitude in the ministry: the one who serves without wanting any reward realizes that the fact that God allows him to serve Him is a majestic reward in and of itself. And the fact that his service isn't an ordinary challenge is a great privilege as well. The one who serves knows he can love God through this attitude, moreover, he is fully conscious of the fact that even through this kind of attitude, his consecration is accepted the best.

We give thanks to the Lord with the above thoughts in our minds for the blessings of the past two academic years.

Horváth Levente, TSI contributor

## Retrospective

**April 17-18th**, psychologist *Gyula Bodó Tóth* held the closing section of his team leader training course with 15 enrolled students and 2 others participating. We received a lot of positive feedback about the training from our students which made us truly happy.

**May 16th**, pastor and family-therapist *Zoltán Dányi* held the third part of his course. The series of presentations took place at the Koinónia House with the participation of 8 attendees.

**May 16-17th**, the usual 2-day weekend training seminar took place as well. Old Testament, New Testament and apologetics were taught by *Dr. Csaba Balogh, Dr. Lehel Lészai*, and *Dr. György Papp*.

**May 18th**, we organized *The Church for Israel* conference at the Koinónia House. Lectures were given by *Dr. Willem Glashouwer, Andrew Tucker, Jaap de Vreugd, Koen Carlier, Pastor Imre Zöld* and theologian *Norbert Nagy*. We gladly report that an open and constructive discussion was had with the Dutch presenters. The presentations convinced us of the importance for our church to continuously learn a correct attitude towards the people of God. We plan on organizing similar conferences at least every 18 months and look forward to discussing our attitude towards the Jewish people, how we can serve them, and how we should share the Gospel with the people of Israel.

**June 6th**, the *Transylvanian World Mission Conference* took place successfully. 32 attendees had the opportunity to hear our invited lecturers, *Dr. András Lovas, Dr. Eszter Dani* and *Rev. Duncan Peters*. Presenting his ministry among Muslims, *Duncan Peters* offered us a practical model of how to present and share the Good News in a very different culture from our own.

The afternoon presentations of *András Lovas* and *Eszter Dani* convinced us of the possibility of a seemingly impossible enterprise: that in reaching out to the city, the unreachable, isolated and postmodern people can be reached also.

The closing lecture of the day about mission among Carpatho-Ukrainian gypsies, with a practical presentation of bridge building in the concern of the Gospel, crowned the all-day conference, highlighting intercultural mission-possibilities.

**June 7th**, *Zsuzsa Bakk* held the weekend training seminar in the fellowship hall of Tóköz Church on the topic of Christian management and community development. 14 students and 3 others attended the seminars, all of whom had been present at earlier seminars during our academic year.

**June 13th**, the closing part of the marriage pastoral care training was held by *Zoltán Dányi* at the Koinónia House, with 11 students attending.

**June 27-28th**, *Dr. András Visky* held a lecture for first year students on the topic of Arts and Mission during the 2-day weekend training seminar. The attendees also followed with attention the presentations on Methodology and New Testament given by *Dr. Lehel Lészai* and *Dr. Levente Horváth*.

## Looking ahead

### July

**July 22-28th**, with the help of God, the scheduled, full week training seminar for all registered students of our institute will be held at Ozd.

The program of the coming academic year is available on our website. Any changes of program will be announced on the website as well.

## News

- The Senate will receive a student delegate among its members by Autumn, in accord with the students' proposal and vote.
- Based upon the Senate's latest decision, the mentor of the students will be *Csaba Veres* who is studying for a masters degree in missiology from Great Britain.
- The Senate established a social aid fund, appointing a separate committee with the purpose of setting up a scholarship for the support of students coming from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The role of this committee is to analyze and determine the students' needs and the amount of sponsorship. Those who would like to support this project with regular donations or who want to adopt a student with a disadvantaged background can do so either by contacting our institute or by getting in touch directly with the committee. For more information please contact us at [trans\\_silvanus@yahoo.com](mailto:trans_silvanus@yahoo.com) or [transsilvanus@gmail.com](mailto:transsilvanus@gmail.com) and by phone on +40-264-52500.
- We recently received word that our institute's lecturer in the disciplines of Arts and Mission and of Addiction, *Teri Szűcs*, successfully defended her doctoral dissertation on June 29 in Budapest. The title of her thesis was *The Poetical, Aesthetical, Ethical and Theological Issues of Testimony in Hungarian Holocaust Literature*. She obtained her Ph.D. with exceptional results, *summa cum laude*. Congratulations Teri and we wish God's blessing in your teaching ministry!

### **Praise points**

Our hearts are grateful for the heard prayers. The Koinónia House's stairway has been finished and the fence and entrance gate were erected.

We give thanks that we finished this year with a balanced financial statement, although we closed some of our conferences with a deficit.

We praise God for the lecturers' conscientious work and the professional standard of the lectures. We praise Him also for the deep fellowship formed among students.

### **Prayer points**

We pray for the program of the coming academic year, for the invitation of lecturers, for the smooth running of conferences and courses.

We pray for the concerted project of Bonus Pastor Foundation and TSI, that we could establish the accredited form of the pastoral care and addiction courses.

We pray for our agreement with western partner-colleges, also praying for them to teach regularly and to provide us with accredited training courses.

We pray for integration into BBT.

We pray for *Emma Zaban* to get British support for her job at TSI.