



# McCRACKEN MEMO

ATHENS, GREECE

JULY-DEC. 2004

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## New Life In Jesus...

(The following was written a few months ago by our Iranian teammate Nader)...

We had the **baptism** this afternoon at one of the beaches in Athens. We have 1 couple, "M and S" from Iran and one Afghan man named "E." They were happy to be with the family of God and we rejoiced with them for their act of obedience to the Lord.

This was the first time in the history of **Persian Christian Fellowship** in Athens that two Muslims converted to Christianity, ministering to our own people, leading them to Christ, baptizing and teaching them in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit, to do the baptism for their own people. Mohammad, my Iranian brother whom I was prepar-

ing for leadership, assisted me for the baptism. My team leader, Scott McCracken, led in prayer and exhortation for the baptism ceremony. After the baptism, we came back for the Sunday meeting. The Lord gave me a word to preach about "Sin." Afterward, I invited those who wanted to receive the Lord. **One Afghan man named "A" was touched by the Lord. He came forward trembling and sobbing.** He understood that he was a sinner and he needed Christ in his life. He understood that Jesus can forgive him if he confessed his sin. He was a seeker and many of my co-servants also ministered to him. He was the man in my previous newsletter I asked you to pray for. He came to Athens and on the first day was caught by the police for not

having documents, jailed for 16 months, and then because of a hunger strike was put in the Mental Hospital and received treatment of a lot of tablets for the mentally-ill. Now, he's better than before. Please pray for him.

Jim teaching an English class



### Nov. 16, 2004 Tea House Stats...

- Over 600 sacks of food given out
- 145 family men, 149 family women, 165 children (0-16 yrs. old), 142 single men, 48 single women
- The majority from Iraq, and others from Iran, Sudan, Afghanistan, Somalia, and 19 other countries
- About 100 turned away

## AIMS Update...

The **Athens Intensive Ministry School (AIMS)** started in September with eager, hungry, committed students from Iran and Afghanistan. **Courses** they have **already** covered include: English, O.T. survey, N.T. survey, Servant Leadership, study skills, Wilderness Mentalities, Christ Connection, Praise and Worship, Power of Prayer, Reconciliation, Managing for Tomorrow, Essence of the Gospel, Living to Give, Leadership

Vision, Personal Evangelism, Leader's Integrity, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, Systematic Theology, Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Life Stewardship.

**Character issues** such as Integrity, Self-control, Patience, Humility, Love, and Endurance have been studied, discussed, prayed about, and exercised. All of the students are involved in **ministry experience** in a variety of

ways outside of the classroom and also have **mentors** with whom they regularly meet.

Both students and staff are learning much from this strategic training school, which we hope will further improve future effectiveness. **Please pray** especially for diligence for our dear brothers as they spend 7 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 6 months in this intensive schooling experience.



**HELPING HANDS**

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**International  
Teams**

Reaching the Nations Through  
Athens

[www.ITRefMin.org](http://www.ITRefMin.org)

## Meet and pray for some of our teammates...

- Pray for **Nader and Ella** as they were **NOT** accepted for immigration to Canada. They are still awaiting one last answer to their appeal for asylum in Greece. Nader turned over the leadership of the **Persian Christian Fellowship** to an Iranian brother in September. Meanwhile, he is actively pursuing building bridges of unity among the various Persian fellowships in Athens (there are now 4) and beginning an inter-church **Persian Training Center** where Persian believers from different churches will be trained in discipleship courses such as **NLTC**, and various evangelism, marriage and family **seminars**. He is also working with **International Teams' Persian Ministry** to bring in Iranian Gospel workers from countries all over Europe. **Ella** continues to oversee our literature ministry, train Filipino believers in the **NLTC**, speak at various Filipino fellowships, and help with the various other ministries of **HELPING HANDS**. **They are at about 1/3 of the financial support they need.**
- Pray for our team-mate **Sahar** and her husband **Arno**. They married in March with plans to eventually move to his homeland of Holland. However, the Dutch government has denied Sahar permission to enter their country. Meanwhile, they pray, investigate other possibilities, and allow God to use them to share His love with refugees in Athens. They have both been instrumental in helping their church here (the Glyfada Christian Center) begin a **new Persian Fellowship** for all the Iranians and Afghans that have been attending their church. **They need support, especially with the added expenses of legal aid in their immigration situation.**
- Pray for **Jim and Kallie**, our British and Greek teammates who joined our team last year. Kallie focuses on helping the refugees who are women, children, and families. She teaches, provides hospitality, takes them to hospitals, medical centers, and other social agencies. She loves them in practical ways while verbalizing the love of God to them at the same time. Jim serves on our Short-term Team committee, helps with accounting for team finances, serves at the Tea House and Friday Family Outreach, teaches English classes, mentors one of the AIMS students, and displays a servant heart in many other ways. **Their family needs about another 3,000 Euros each month to be fully supported.**  
Please visit <http://www.geocities.com/scripturecalligraphy/> to view and order some of Kallie's beautiful artwork and thus help support them in the ministry here.

## The Good News and the Bad News...

### First, the good news...

On our last furlough (summer of 2003), we attempted to raise our monthly support by \$950/month. Due to changes in financial policies at I.T., terrible exchange rates, and increased cost of living, it was the first time in 16 years that we found it necessary to raise the issue on a furlough. Fortunately, due to the generous commitment of friends like you, we were able to raise our support by \$610/month. This would not have been enough were it not for the fact that by the time we returned to Greece the exchange rate had improved. It was still difficult, but God supplied and some additional support came in later.

### And now...

However, **the bad news** is that **some** of the initial commitments from that summer were either sporadic, delinquent, or discontinued completely. Additionally, **the exchange rate is currently the worst it has ever been, and the predictions are that it will grow steadily worse in the coming months.**

We **HATE** talking about personal financial needs, especially when so many in the world (including people who are receiving this letter

and people to whom we minister every day) have so many more desperate needs.

On the other hand, we want to communicate honestly and openly. So there you have it. **We leave it in the hands of the Lord to use whoever He will to join Him and us in the ministry here. Thanks** for your prayers. And **thanks** to those of you who have been faithful and generous investors in this strategic ministry. **We appreciate all of you more than we can say.**

Financial Investments can be made out to:

**International Teams**, with a clear indication of designation (ie, for Scott & Vicki McCracken, OR for Nader and Ella Mohajer, OR for Jim and Kallie Skaife, OR for Sahar Kamrani Fard, etc.) and sent to:

**International Teams**  
411 W. River Rd.  
Elgin, IL 60123  
USA



**The Athens Refugee Center received the "Hope Award" from the Evangelical Alliance of Europe**