

SUNDAY LINE and World Ministries



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Caring for children around the world

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Watoto Celebrates 20 Years

Uganda, Africa



David, Watoto's 1000th baby



Sunday, former child soldier

2014 was an extraordinary year at Watoto. In June, they had a big party to celebrate 20 years of rescuing the most vulnerable women and children. During the same week, Baby Watoto rescued their 1000th baby since they started in 2007. Baby David was abandoned in a local Ugandan community and joined the Baby Watoto family after spending approximately a month in hospital. As he grows past toddlerhood he will become a member of a family in one of the children's villages. In 2014 over 112 babies were added to Baby Watoto and 131 children were welcomed into the 3 Watoto villages.

WATOTO CHILDREN INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURE

Over 90 Watoto children are involved in various agricultural activities. Sunday is a former child soldier and one of Watoto's children (now a young adult) from a village in Gulu, Northern Uganda. He was abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in 2002 and managed to escape a year later.

Sunday became part of the Watoto family in 2007 and was able to return to school. Since he is

pursuing a diploma in Agriculture, he participated in the Watoto agricultural farm for three months to train on the tractors and to oversee corn shelling. Not only has he grown from the experience, but the relationship with him has helped to develop a relationship between Watoto's Sustainability Department and the Institute where he is studying. He even brought his lecturers and classmates on a study tour to the farm. In the future, he intends to use his skills in extension work to help farmers in northern Uganda improve their skills.

WATOTO SUSTAINABILITY

Uganda's fertile land and favourable climate provides the perfect environment to support sustainable projects through agricultural and livestock farming. These income-generating projects help to provide employment for young adults as well as raise future business. The 200 acre agricultural farm provides basic grains and vegetables, 101 goats at the goat farm produce 630 litres of milk per week for Baby Watoto, and at the poultry farm, 8000 chickens supply eggs for the Watoto villages.

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

At present, more than 50 community members are employed at the farms. As a result, there have been tremendous social, moral and economic changes in their lives. One very significant change has been the commitment of the employees to give their children better education, as the money they earn allows them to afford better schools.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Through discipleship, trauma rehabilitation and business training, 392 new women have had their lives changed at Living Hope. These women represent almost 2,000 children.

Meidius suffered terrible abuse from a young age. Unable to go to school, she travelled to the city in search of work. Once in Kampala, she became a slave to a family who had promised her a job as a house keeper. She was raped by a security guard and the family did nothing to defend her. At thirteen, Meidius became an HIV+ teenage mother who felt unable to escape her circumstances because she



Above: Women working the fields at Lubbe Farm



Right: Chicken Farm

Below: Meidius at Living Hope



had no one to stand by her.

After eight years, Meidius found the strength to return home but the stress caused by the stigma of being a rape victim broke her down. Her sisters had already bought a coffin for her when Meidius made a miraculous recovery. She wasn't ready to give up, so she asked God to help her stay alive. "I said, 'God I still have many things to do. I know you are there. I know you are healer,' and He did a miracle in my life," she said.

A few weeks later, she left her son to the care of her sisters and came back to Kampala trusting God for the opportunity she needed to rebuild her life. She plodded through the streets late one day, looking for work and a place to sleep, when she heard the sound of worship. She followed it and joined the lively crowd. After the service, Meidius spoke to the pastor who agreed to let her stay there.

Living Hope found Meidius through the church where she slept. She is one of 115 women who joined the various skills training departments this year. With the salary she earns making jewellery Meidius is able to send her son to school.

A CHANGE IS COMING

Key Scripture: Revelation 21:1-8

“Then I saw a brand new heaven and a brand new earth.”

The Bible mentions the reality of heaven more than 700 times. In our passage God not only shows it to us, but He also gives us a vivid description of the change that is coming.

As we look at this passage we notice many changes:

1. The pattern of the universe will be changed. Verse 1 shows us that our physical surroundings will be brand new. The new will be unlike anything we presently have. In Isaiah 65:17-18 we also read: **“See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.”**

2. Our present physical environment will change. All the things we trust in to give us a sense of security and belonging are going to be wiped out. 2 Peter 3:10-12 also tells us: **“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.”** This should give us a clue of what God thinks of all the stuff we have on earth because it is all going to be burnt away.

3. Our future environment will be changed. The Bible’s picture of heaven is that of a city, and the first thing we notice about this city is that there is no more sea.

4. The city will be changed. The character of the New City will be holy. The present Jerusalem

is far from being holy while the New Jerusalem will be completely holy. In **Galatians 4:24-26** we see a contrast between the Jerusalem of the bond slave and the New Jerusalem. The present city of Jerusalem is a city of bondage, but the New Jerusalem is going to be free where there will no longer be a curse and will be completely free of sinners.

In **Revelation 21:2** we see that the New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven, meaning that right now at the present time it is in heaven. It is the place which Jesus said He was going to prepare for us in **John 14:2** and which He has been preparing since His glorification. If creation only took 6 days to complete just imagine how lovely the new heavenly city will be. The New Jerusalem is said to be as a bride adorned for her husband. All that we now know will pale in comparison to what the New Jerusalem will be like!

5. There will be a change where God dwells.

Verse 3 tells us: **“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.’”** The presence of God will include the visible manifestation of His presence before our eyes. We shall see Him as He is! This is our hope, our blessing, and our joy beyond comparison.

6. There will be a change from tears and death. Verse 4: **“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”**

In the new heavenly city there will be no more tears - they will all be done away with for all eternity. Isaiah 25:8-9 tells us: **“He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people’s disgrace from all the earth.”**

As Christians we believe in many things we have not seen and cannot see. But the things God promised will ultimately be realized for several reasons because:

a) It will be based on God's ability to do it. God says: **"Behold, I make all things new."** When God says all things it means all things, not just some things . . . everything will be completely new.

b) It will be based on His Word. God cannot lie. Things are either true or false . . . and God's words are always true. That's how we know that the promises of God are going to be fulfilled.

c) It will be based on God's authority. Jesus never appealed to anything other than who He is. In verse 6 He declares it is done! **"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End."**

d) It will be based on the assurance that God gives. In John 4 Jesus declared that everyone who thirsts and comes to Him will be filled with the water of life. Apart from faith in Jesus no one can ever enter into the new city.

We might question whether someone like John living in the first century would be able to see something that is thousands of years in the future. But in the Book of Revelation we see that it contains 44 distinct and separate visions given to John, and more than 60 times we have John's words **'I SAW IT'**. This is not unique, as the apostle Paul in **2nd Corinthians 12:4-7** was caught up into Paradise where he also received an abundance of revelations.

Continuing in verses **9-22**, John describes the shining light of the city. To him, the appearance was precious like jasper, referring to a crystal substance which light shines through brilliantly.

He describes the structure of the city having walls, 12 gates and foundations. The 12 gates are located 3 on each side which is the way Israel always assembled around the tabernacle. In verses 15-21 John describes the size of the city. Its length, width and height are all equal to 12,000 furlongs which translated means the city is 1500 miles long, 1500 miles wide and 1500 miles high. Its wall is 216 feet thick, and is made of jasper, and the glory of God shines through the entire city . . . far beyond what the human eye has ever seen. John tells us that the gates are of pearl and the walls consist of 12 foundations which are decorated with every kind of precious stone. The foundations have the 12 apostles names on them, the streets are of pure gold, transparent like glass, and the city itself consists of pure gold, showing its great value.

What happens in the new city will also be out of this world.

All of the symbols of the old order - the temple, the Ark of the Covenant, the lamp stands, the showbread - will all be obsolete because the whole focus of worship will not be a place but a person, the Lord Himself. The presence of the Lord will eliminate the need for the sun and moon. (Isaiah 60:19) **"The nations and kings will come into the new city to bring their glory to it, and the gates will not be shut day or night."**

The final thing that John sees is a pure river which flows from the throne of God. Psalm 46:4 tells us: **"There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells."** The river portrays a picture of eternal life. On either side of the river is a tree. This is the same tree that was in the Garden of Eden which Adam was forbidden to eat. The tree will bear 12 fruits every month; its leaves will be for the health of the nations, another symbol of the eternal life.

Finally we are told about our existence in the New Jerusalem.

First, we will not have to struggle anymore because there will be no more curse. Second, we won't be sitting on clouds strumming harps, but we are told that as His servants we shall serve Him. Third, we shall see His face, the One whom we sing about and worship. Fourth, there will no longer be any need for light because the Lord Himself will give us all the light we will ever need. Finally, as His servants, we will supervise the universe on behalf of the Lord as we rule and reign with Jesus forever and ever.

This is what we have to look forward to. All things will be new, and finally there will be true peace, joy and righteousness for all eternity.

**And that is why we pray "Come Lord Jesus.
Even so . . . COME!"**

**Thank you for helping us to make a
difference in this world.
Blessings in Christ!**

*Pastor Roman
and Pat Kozak*

