

# Clifton News

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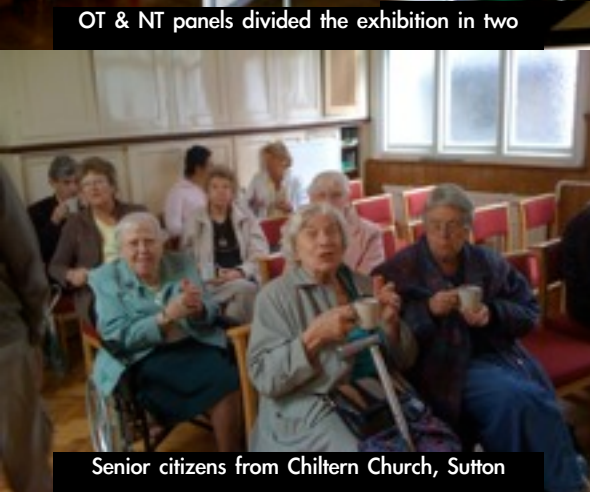
A mug shot of Peter



OT & NT panels divided the exhibition in two



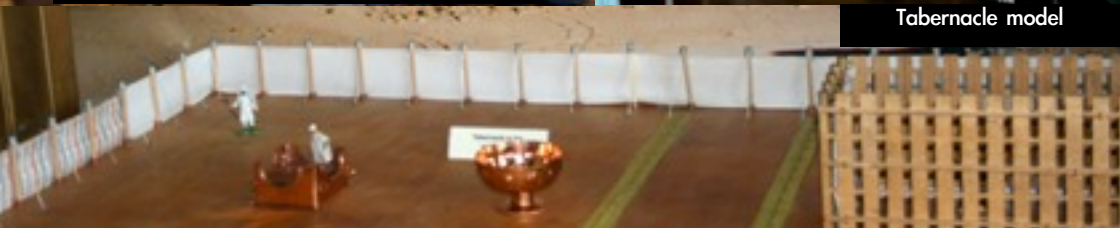
Roman legionary in full armour



Senior citizens from Chiltern Church, Sutton



Tabernacle model



# News

We would like to wish our readers a very

Happy New Year

## Bible Exhibition September 2009

During the month of September, the assembly held a Bible exhibition and gospel campaign with evangelist Peter Brandon. We were taken back by the response to the exhibition and praise God for the many people who came in. Only two schools responded but they did send a total of 202 children along with teachers and helpers who were taken on a brief tour of the exhibition with an explanation of what they were seeing. The children were then given work sheets to do and at the end were given refreshments before they left. Many spoke of how much they enjoyed it and how much they learnt. Good numbers of magazines, tracts and New Testaments were taken. In total over 450 people came and a few came to listen to the gospel message in the evening. It was felt that this is a good means of attracting people to learn about the gospel and it will be something we shall hold again in the future, if the Lord will.

## Other news

In August, Nitish and Ellen Patel made a visit to India and in November there was a visit to Poland by Richard Catchpole and Nitish Patel to help with the Lord's work there. Reports and photos are on the back pages of the magazine.

Around a dozen different children come to the two mid week clubs and listen well to the gospel message. Sunday school attendance is a little down in numbers with some children no longer attending regularly as they grow up and start secondary school..

Lord willing another holiday club will be held in the Easter holidays which we pray will attract new children.

# Meetings

## The Week at Clifton

### Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread	11 a.m.
Sunday School	3 p.m.
Gospel Meeting	6:30 p.m.

### Tuesday

Bible Reading (First Tuesday of the month only) 8 p.m.

Wednesday Seekers Club (Term time only for under 11s) 6 p.m.

Thursday Prayer and Ministry 7:45 p.m.

Friday C3 Club (Term time only for 11+) 7:30 p.m.

## Sunday Evening Gospel Meeting

### January

3	Roy Dawson (Family Service)
10	Roy Aitkin
17	Nitish Patel
24	Archie Carew
31	Gareth Roderick

### February

7	Ferranti Wong (Family Service)
14	Norman Gibbons
21	Mark Beardall
28	Phil Briercliff

## March

7	Mike Surry (Family Service)
14	Glyn Davies
21	Mark Beardall
28	Peter Hamm

## Tuesday Bible Reading

*Studying the book of Proverbs*

5th	January	Proverbs 14:16-35	Local brother
2nd	February	Proverbs 15:1-16	Glyn Davies
2nd	March	Proverbs 15:17-33	Local brother

## Thursday Prayer & Ministry

*Open ministry & missionary reports*

### January

7	Nitish Patel (Report of visit to Poland)
14	Nitish Patel
21	Raymond Reed
28	Raymond Reed

### February

4	Mike Surry
11	Mike Surry
18	Ian Roberts
25	Richard Catchpole

### March

4	Glyn Davies
11	Glyn Davies
18	Glyn Davies
25	David Tinkler

# Questions

*Answered by Richard Catchpole*

## **What is the meaning of Matthew 5:13 and how does salt lose its 'savour'?**

In verses 11-16 of this chapter the Lord Jesus is speaking of the position of the disciples in the world and two metaphors are taken up to illustrate that 'ye are the salt of the earth' v. 13 and 'Ye are the light of the world' v. 14. The Lord is describing what they are, and not what they have. It should be observed that the literal interpretation is dispensational and relative to a remnant in Israel faithful to the Lord. As to believers today the Lord says in John 17. 14, 'they are not of the world' and that must be kept in mind when considering these verses, especially 'Ye are the light of the world' v.14. While there is a dispensational setting to the two statements the principles embraced in them are nevertheless applicable to God's people in any generation and so contain practical lessons for us.

In each statement the 'Ye' is emphatic, the Lord is saying 'you and you alone' and immediately that should convey to us both the privilege and the responsibility of belonging to the people of God.

Salt is a preservative against corruption and making a practical application, might suggest a lesson concerning the condition of the world morally, that the trend and direction of society is downward, that man's history is not moving on to the utopia that men long for, but spiralling out of control to ever increasing corruption and sin. We see it well illustrated in the days of Noah in Genesis 6:-

V. 5 'The wickedness of man was great in the earth .. every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually'.

V. 11 'The earth also was corrupt before God and the earth was filled with violence'.

V. 12 'all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth'.

The Lord said Mt 24. 37 ‘as the days of Noah were so shall the coming of the Son of man be’ and isn’t it like that today? Immorality, dishonesty, and violence are all features of the days in which we live, man’s history on a downward slope, to increasing evil and corruption. Now what of the believer’s responsibility? The metaphor of ‘salt’ indicates that God expects His people to be found acting as a preservative against the spread of corruption. It infers that if the believer is living as he should then his presence will have a modifying effect upon the conduct and conversation of those he is with. Are you doing your part to preserve and promote righteous standards? It is an interesting metaphor and one that has some very powerful and practical lessons for us.

a) Salt heals wounds, and infections. Yes it might hurt and sting, but it can help. We are in a world where there are many ‘wounded’ and ‘hurt’ people, are we seeking as ‘salt’ to minister to them? It is true that it will initially cause pain, and sometimes there must be that aspect to our ministry, as with Jeremiah a rooting out and a pulling down before there is a planting and building up Jer. 1. 10.

b) Salt creates thirst, is your lifestyle creating a thirst for Christ causing others to say ‘Give me to drink’ John 4.10.

c) Salt is also a seasoning adding flavour, is your speech ‘always with grace, seasoned with salt’, Col. 4.6, adding a ‘godly flavour’ to conversations with friends and neighbours?

But to be effective salt must be applied, its impact will not be felt if it remains in the ‘salt pot’. One writer <sup>(1)</sup> poses the question ‘Where could I sprinkle some salt today?’

But there is a warning, ‘if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men’. Cf. Mk. 9.50 ‘Salt is good but if the salt has lost its saltness wherewith will ye season it, have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another’. Salt that loses its ‘saltness’ has lost its integral character and nature, it is no longer a preservative, and if that happens it no longer can fulfil its intended purpose, and men would be justified in casting it out. It is a solemn matter, we should remember that Israel were intended to be a witness to the nations, something in which they failed causing the apostle to say ‘the name if God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you’ Roman 2.24

and in light of the warning in Matthew 5.13 it is interesting that the Lord warned that Jerusalem would be 'trodden down of the Gentiles', Luke 21.24. But how does salt lose its savour? The two major components of salt are Sodium and Chloride and the only way that salt can lose its saltiness is for a chemical reaction to occur between those two components, perhaps by exposure to the elements or for it to be diluted by being mixed with another compound. To make a spiritual application for a believer 'exposure to the world' or 'mixing with it' can rob him of his ability to function as salt. Are we fit to be used by God as He purposed or only fit to be trodden underfoot of men?

The following is an additional comment that perhaps sheds some light on the verse <sup>(2)</sup>:- 'It should be noted that salt in a pure form, cannot lose its saltiness. However, the salt that would have been common in first century Palestine was typically collected from the salt marshes in the region. This salt was cheap and easily procured, but it was full of mineral impurities and had the tendency to 'lose its savour' if stored improperly. It's not that the salt itself would become unsalty but that the salt found in the mineral compound collected from the salt marshes, would seep away if the marsh salt were allowed to become damp. Once the salt content had dissolved and drained away, the residual mineral would be salt that had lost its savour. The result would be a soil which was useless for anything except to be trampled underfoot. Though it would no longer be salty enough to flavour food, it would retain enough of the corrosive quality of salt to render it useful as garden compost (Luke 14:34-35). Often, spoiled marsh salt would be used to provide traction in a slippery courtyard after a rain. It was also used to harden the earthen rooftops, rooftops which served as "upper rooms" in the flat-topped homes of the first century Jews. In either case, the flavourless salt would be 'trodden underfoot'.

(1) Some of the points in this 'Answer Page' have been suggested by an article 'Applying the salt', by Peter Ramsey in the magazine 'Truth and Tidings', and accessible online.

(2) Taken from an article 'Salty salt' by D. Eric Williams.



# Bible Teaching

## Thoughts about the book of Esther (part 3)

Charles E. Wigg (Tasmania)

### *The Queen Enters*

Then armed with a wisdom from God, a wisdom that she had not sought, she made the momentous decision, put her life in her hands, and went into the King uninvited. As she stood in the outer court, perhaps trembling in every nerve, God acted in her favour, and moved the King to extend the royal golden scepter to his Queen. Then in the presence of his nobles, the King made a promise that he could not go back on. He would grant her request even to the half of his kingdom. But Esther was not interested in riches or in fame. Her life and the life of her people were far more important than those things.



She requested the King and Haman to come to a banquet that she would prepare for them. She would defer her request until the next day. Haman was present, and heard all that was said. He heard the King accept the invitation, and he went out rejoicing to his home. What an honour the Queen had paid him, that he should be the only other guest at the banquet! But as he went out, he saw his enemy sitting in sackcloth in the King's gate. He refused to rise or to bow to the Amalekite tyrant.

Haman shared the news of his good fortune with his wife and family. But he also told them of his hatred of the man that refused to bow to him. They advised him to erect a huge gallows, seventy five feet high on which to hang Mordecai.

Haman had said nothing of the details of the banquet that he had attended with the King. His mind was set on getting rid of this troublesome

Jew. Thus after attending to the erection of the gallows, Haman went early next morning to the palace to request the life of his enemy. But God had been at work during the night, and He had removed sleep from the great Monarch. To pass the time away, he requested his attendants to read the book of the chronicles of his kingdom before him. When what Mordecai had done, in revealing the plot to assassinate the king was read, he asked what honour and dignity had been conferred on Mordecai for his noble deed. He was shocked when told that nothing had been done for the one that had spared his life. It was just at that time that Haman entered the court.

### *The Tide Turns*

We cannot but wonder at the timing of God. Though He was ignored and forgotten by the great majority of His people, yet He meticulously arranged everything in His divine skill. Who would have thought that the King having a sleepless night would have such far-reaching results?

Haman went to the court thinking that all he had to do was to ask for the life of Mordecai. Little did he know that before the day ended his own body would be swinging from the very same gallows that he intended to hang Mordecai on. So when he reached the court, the King inquired who was standing there, and when told that it was Haman the King called him in. The King then put the question to him, "What shall be done unto the man whom the King delighteth to honour?" Poor proud Haman thought within himself, "Who would the King delight to honour more than me?" In his pride and vanity he made a very great suggestion. Seeking all the pomp and glory for himself, But how crushed he was when the King told him to do all that he had said for Mordecai the Jew! There could not have been a greater reversal of events, nor could his pride have been more cruelly humbled.

After he had done what the King commanded, (he had no option but to obey), he went home mourning, having his head covered. He told his wife and all in his home of the great misfortune that had befallen him expecting to have sympathy lavished upon him. But instead his wife warned him that if Mordecai was a Jew, and he had begun to fall before him; then he would not be able to prevail over him. She predicted that Haman would surely fall before this righteous man. It was while he was lamenting his fate; that messenger came to call him to Esther's banquet.

## *The Banquet*

I expect that eating and drinking was the very last thing that he would wish to do in the circumstances, yet he had to keep up that which was expected of him. After the festivities the King then asked Esther what was her request, promising to grant what she asked, even to half his kingdom. Esther then asked that her life be given to her and her people at her request. Telling him that she and her people were sold to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. If they were to be sold as slaves, then she could have borne it, and would have held her tongue. She told the King that the enemy could never repay the loss that this would cause him

The King was shocked, “Who is he, and where is he that dared to presume in his heart to do such a thing”. Then Esther said, “The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman”. The King was furious and rose from the banquet and went into the palace garden. Doubtless he was afraid that he may explode and do something that was not becoming of one in his position. Haman could see that the die was cast, the King intended evil against him. He stood up to plead for his life, and then fell on the couch where the Queen was seated to beg for mercy. The King then returned to find Haman in this unbecoming position, and accused him of evil sexual intentions. He then ordered that his face be covered, (that he be smothered). Then his servants told the King of the great gallows that Haman had built to hang Mordecai on. The order was then given to hang him on his own gallows. Truly “whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap”

... to be continued

# Good News

## Preaching truth as fiction

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7:28-29)



George Whitefield, the great eighteenth-century preacher, told a story about the most famous actor of his day, David Garrick. The Bishop of London once asked him, "How is it that you actors are able, on the stage, to produce so great an effect with fiction; whilst we preachers, in the pulpit, obtain such a small result with the facts?" Garrick replied, "I suppose it is because we present fiction as though it were fact, whilst you, so often, offer facts as though they were fiction."

It was a great difference when it came to Whitefield. David Garrick said that Whitefield was able to melt an audience simply by pronouncing the word "Mesopotamia," and declared that he would freely give a hundred guineas if he could utter "O!" like the great evangelist.

Let us as believers never be ashamed of the Word of God in an age of scepticism, scoffing and unbelief.

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." (1 Corinthians 1:19)

## The key to freedom

While taking a prisoner from a Guelph, Ontario, correctional centre to be arraigned on charges of attempted armed robbery, police constable John Bolton noticed a cross around the neck of the convict. Knowing the man was not religious, he took a closer look. The prisoner attempted to conceal something protruding from the top of the cross. When questioned, he said it was a good luck charm designed to look like a spoon for sniffing cocaine. But Constable Bolton was sure it looked like a handcuff key. By experimentation he found that the protuberance would open most handcuffs. The discovery led to the exposure of an attempt by prisoners in the correctional centre to make a number of these cross-keys.



There is another cross which gives freedom and that is the cross of Calvary. Unlike the convict's clever escape plan to be set free to sin again, God's cross sets men free from the slavery of sin. Only by faith in Christ can you be set free from sin and be assured of eternal life.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (1 Corinthians 1:18)

*I must needs go home by the way of the cross,  
There's no other way but this;  
I shall ne'er get sight of the gates of light,  
If the way of the cross I miss.*

*The way of the cross leads home,  
The way of the cross leads home,  
It is sweet to know as I onward go,  
The way of the cross leads home.*

# Church History

by Mark Beardall

## The Waldenses



All throughout the history of the church there has been a faithful remnant who refused to submit to the Church of Rome. It has often been said that before Luther the only church was the Roman Catholic Church. This could not be further from the truth. The Waldenses or Vaudois gathered together hundreds of years before Luther and were never part of the Church of Rome.

There is some contention over the meaning of the name Waldenses or Vaudois. Some say that the Waldenses were named after Peter Waldo and others say that Waldenses or Vaudois were simply men of the valleys.

Although Waldo was prominent among the Waldenses he was not the founder of the Waldenses. There had been gatherings of believers in the Alpine Valleys for centuries untouched by the errors of the Church of Rome.

It has been said that faith passed down from father to son since apostolic times. Broadbent's timeline dates them as far back as AD70. There were similar groups of believers in other parts of the Alps known as Albigenses and there was much fellowship between them and the Waldenses. There were also groups of believers in Bosnia known by others as Bogomils. The Bogomils travelled through Italy and the south of France and found many believers who shared the same faith. These various groups of believers had never been part of the Church of Rome. There were thousands in the Alpine Valleys who had never bowed the knee to Baal and were free from idolatry.

Although Peter Waldo was not the founder of the Waldenses, he was a very important figure among them and no history of the Waldenses would be complete without mentioning him. There is no record of his date of birth, his education or his youth. Tradition say that he was married with two children. Waldo was a very wealthy merchant and a successful banker in the city of Lyons in the Rhone Valley in France. He was often criticised for lending money at extortionate rates of interest. It has also been suggested that he was involved in the political life of the city, perhaps being a member of the council.

Waldo came to realise his need of the Saviour in 1160 when one of his friends died suddenly at a Banquet that he was holding. He cried out, "If death should overtake me, would my soul be ready for the journey?" After a few weeks of wrestling under conviction of sin he came to full assurance of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. His life changed dramatically. He had a great interest in studying the scriptures and he employed two priests to translate the Gospels and other parts of the scripture from Latin into the local vernacular of Lyons. They also translated certain books by men such as Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome and Gregory.

In the year 1173 Waldo became much affected by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 19:21, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." Waldo gave his land to his wife and sold all the rest of his property and gave to the poor. Crowds gathered outside his house to make fun of him when he was distributing his goods to the poor. He boldly replied to to them, "Citizens and friends, I am not out of my mind as you seem to think: I am freeing myself of those who were oppressing me in making me a lover of money more than of God. This act I do for myself and for you: for myself, so that if from now on I possess anything you may indeed call me a fool: for you too that you may be led to put your hope in God and not riches."

It seems that Waldo himself was originally a member of the Roman Catholic Church but later gathered with believers who were known by others as Waldenses. During the 1170s Waldo began to preach the gospel in streets and many people came to know the Lord. Some of these men began to preach themselves and they became known as the Poor Men of Lyons because they went without purse or scrip as the disciples did in Luke chapter ten. These men armed with the scriptures in the local language went two by two preaching the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were also known as Sabotati because they wore wooden shoes called sabots.

According to John Foxe, Waldo was “a strenuous opposer of popery” and wherever he went, “asserted that the pope was antichrist, that mass was an abomination, that the host was an idol, and that purgatory was a fable.” Pope Alexander was furious and anathematised and excommunicated Waldo and all his followers. The preaching in the vulgar tongue was what most infuriated the Vatican.

The Waldenses were not afraid of the pope but were strong in faith preaching the gospel. According to an Inquisitors report, “These people, ignorant and illiterate, went about through the towns, entering houses and even churches, spreading many errors everywhere. They were summoned by the Archbishop of Lyons, who warned them against such defiance, but they refused to fall in line, cloaking their madness by saying that they must obey God rather than people, since God had commanded the apostles to preach to every living creature.”

He later goes on to say, “Because of this disobedience and of this arrogant appropriation of a task that did not belong to them at all, they were excommunicated and expelled from their country.” In fact the pope had commanded the Bishop of Lyons to exterminate the Waldenses.

Waldo stayed in Lyons for three years without discovery, despite the diligent efforts of the Inquisition to apprehend him.

He eventually escaped to the mountains of Dauphiny. He then went preaching the gospel throughout Dauphiny and Picardy. King Philip of France infuriated by the audacity of Waldo commanded his army to execute everyone in the whole province of Picardy. They wiped out the people of 300 manors, destroying many walled towns and burning many believers. Some managed to escape to Normandy and Germany.

According to an old chronicle, “disciples of Peter Waldo came from Lyons to Germany and began to preach in Frankfurt and in Nuremberg, but because



the Council in Nuremberg was warned that they should seize and burn them, they disappeared into Bohemia.”

Waldo continued to preach Christ wherever he went. He died in Bohemia (which is now the Czech Republic) in 1217, after spending three years there preaching the gospel. Though not being their founder Waldo can take credit for increasing the missionary activities of the Waldenses. Before his time they stayed isolated in the valleys. As he travelled through these valleys he encouraged the saints and increased the numbers. It seems to me that the Poor Men of Lyons started with Waldo but that they travelled throughout the valleys and strengthened the existing gatherings of the Waldenses and being one in purpose and one in Christ there was no distinction between them.

The Waldenses suffered constant persecution. Pope Innocent III commanded Raymond VI, the Count of Toulouse to kill all heretics. Raymond refused and in 1209 the pope organised a crusade against Raymond and all his people. In 1212 the Dominicans arrested five hundred brethren in Strasbourg. Eighty people were burnt to death. In 1380 a monk inquisitor called Francis Borelli was appointed by Pope Clement VII to search out and punish all Waldenses. He searched out Fraissiniere and Argentiere for heretics. Two hundred and thirty people were burnt to death in the space of thirteen years. In 1400 the Waldenses in Pragela were attacked by hundreds of troops. Many people were killed. Some fled for their lives but froze to death in the icy mountains. They were also persecuted in 1460 by John Vayleti, a monk commissioned by the Archbishop of Ambrone. He was so severe that anyone sympathising with a heretic was also punished. Many Roman Catholics made a petition to Louis XI, who ordered the persecution to stop. Vayleti ignored the King and continued to persecute. Pope Innocent VIII sent a great army of men into Loyse to exterminate the heretics. Many fled into caves and the armies lit fires at the entrances to the caves and suffocated them. There was scarcely a time when they were not persecuted.

There were terrible massacres in the 1600s. Oliver Cromwell proclaimed a fast on behalf of the Waldenses and raised a collection for them. He gave them two thousand pounds of his own money. The total collection was about half a million pounds. He threatened to send the navy to attack the persecutors and the very threat stopped the persecution.

In the reign of William III and Queen Anne the British government made a treaty with the government of Piedmont to protect the Waldenses. Britain has been able to interpose for their protection ever since.

# Report of visit to India

July - August 2009

Nitish & Ellen Patel

Several meetings were conducted around Bombay Island including a conference for married couples in Kalva. A visit was made to Pune 136 miles away for a special all day conference on the Levitical Offerings. Good numbers were present from various assemblies in that area. We were pleased to hear of yet a couple more of assemblies planted recently in Roha and Uran not far from Bombay. Please pray for these new assemblies.

We visited again the work in the Borivili slum held in the home of Dilip and Baby Balerao who recently were able to increase the size of their home with the construction of a new floor which is larger as it over hangs. More are able to gather now for the weekly gospel meeting. Several have professed faith in recent years but many difficulties remain regarding the establishing of a new assembly testimony in this area. The young man Vijay who was saved 18 months ago is going on well but Jyoti who was saved sometime after is experiencing opposition from her family.

Another visit was made to Gujarat to encourage the assembly in Anand but they still find it hard to evangelize the Hindus who remain opposed to the gospel. The assembly has special meetings for outreach and a number come to listen mainly from a nominal Christian background.

The Gujarati radio program that begun in March continues to be broadcast every Tuesday. At present many thousands of gospel booklets are being printed in Gujarati for distribution which advertise the program on the back page to attract more listeners. The program now broadcasts in the evening at 8 pm as feedback has shown there is a better response at this time.



Lion in Sanjay Gandhi national park

Conference for married couples



Gospel meeting in Borivili slum

Conference in Pune



Children from the Anand assembly, Gujarat

Sitting down for a meal

Visit to Poland by Richard Catchpole and Nitish Patel (Nov 2009)



Meeting at Boza Wola



After the meeting at Wojtek's house



Mława town centre



All day Bible study at Mława assembly



Our hosts, Dariusz & Ella



Assembly at Ursus Warsaw