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Caring for the Orphans & Widows

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FEATURED CHILD: KUMILACHOW MELESA

When God gives a vision, He will give the provision. Tadesse Gebreyes, Blessing the Children Ethiopia's National Director, had a vision recently about an 11 year old girl who needed help because she had no family. She was living on the streets – alone, unprotected and uncared for. She was in dire need and in a seemingly hopeless situation. Involved in Tadesse's heartbreaking vision was a Pastor from a BCI partner church, MKC Church. He was the one who would be the liaison between the girl and Tadesse.

A few days later, Tadesse received the anticipated call from the MKC Church Pastor. Before the Pastor could talk, Tadesse began to share his vision with the man, who started to laugh. The Pastor explained to Tadesse that the vision was accurate, with one exception. The girl was a boy.

Meet Kumilachow Melesa, an 11 year old boy that came from the Bahadar region of Ethiopia. His father died of yellow fever when he was only four and his mother – his last living family – died when he was 9. Kumilachow was his mothers only child and upon her death was forced to the streets.

Kumilachow was living along the roadside and receiving some charity from a local school, but they could not afford to help him for long. He was then brought to Addis by a Good Samaritan truck driver who wanted to help the boy although resistance from the truck driver's wife put an end to that. The truck driver, unsure what else to do, took Kumilachow to the police station where he lived for around 15 days.

Kumilachow was receiving very minimal assistance from a local organization called Kingdom Youth International but unfortunately they are unable to continue due to financial constraints. Kingdom Youth International was only able to assist Kumilachow by providing a small amount of injera and he has gone hungry many times and has been frightened as he slept out on the road vulnerable to any people and animals passing by.

While his dire situation is no indicator, Kumilachow has attended school in the past and is in grade 4. He is a smart young man who speaks like a young adult and even knows some English. All he needs is a chance.

God has placed Kumilachow at the feet of Blessing the Children and we are seeking support for this young man. God has told us in his word that this is what true religion is, to feed and clothe the poor orphans.

Would you be willing to get Kumilachow off the street and into a good home? With a sponsorship through BCI, Kumilachow's life will be drastically changed, allowing him to attend school and giving him a chance at a bright future. Would you be willing to change this young man's life?

We need to raise full support for him of \$90/mo so he can be accepted into the sponsorship program and removed from street life. If you or someone you know is able to help, please phone the office at (989) 667-8850 or email Info@BlessingtheChildren.org



Kumilachow Melesa



KEITH V. STRAWN
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT

Dear friends,

Please join us in this edition of the Post for an article from a recent team member who shares about her experience in Ethiopia with Blessing the Children. On the cover you'll find our featured child, Kumilachow Melesa, an eleven year old boy from the Bahadar Region of Ethiopia.

We have some pretty exciting news in our praise report this month and this edition's highlights feature the Activity Day and Feeding Program!

Thank you for your support and continued prayers. Because of you, we are touching lives in Ethiopia.

Abundant blessings,

336 HOURS: A MISSION TRIP EXPERIENCE

“Dogs barking, roosters crowing, bajajs honking—I’m actually in Ethiopia!” This was the thought that resonated with me for most of my two weeks in Debre Zeyit.

As I write this, I am on my way back home to Canada, and as I sit here in the Frankfurt airport, it’s hard to discern if the last 14 days actually happened, or if it was all just a dream. The green, yellow, and red bracelet with the Ethiopian flag that adorns my wrist quickly reminds me that it was, indeed, reality.



A picture from Courtney’s trip.

So how do I begin to explain my life-changing trip? Incredible. Heartbreaking. Incredibly heartbreaking. Heartbreakingly incredible. I have seen so much in the past 336 hours (is that all?!) that it seems that I have to have been there for a month at the very least, but, of course, I haven’t been. I was just submersed in a culture so unlike my own that I can scarcely believe I could be in two such opposite places in less than 24 hours of travel time. From dirt roads and farm animals milling the streets to pavement and skyscrapers. Have I only crossed continents, or time periods, too?

To pass some time, I just walked through a few stores and was bombarded with high-end names like Louis Vuitton, Tommy Hilfiger, Swarovski, Burberry, Tiffany & Co., and more. I’ve never been one to be frivolous with my money, but while these names used to leave me drooling, they now leave me utterly disgusted. The people hustling through the stores with their big bags of purchases seem like personal attackers. We live in a society that all too often chooses to ignore the problems that it can’t see. We egotistically focus on ourselves (and maybe even on our families, too) and try to forget about the hurting, hungering, world out there. So why do the excessive Christmas decorations trimming the stores and hallways of the airport now leave me so unsettled when they would have brought me happiness and comfort before?

Could it be that I have been exposed to a country where some children have protruding bellies not because of

over-indulgence, but because of severe hunger? Or perhaps it has something to do with the many people I saw on the streets with no other option... the many children I saw on the streets with no other option. How many could I feed with just one of those designer handbags or diamond watches I walked past? How many could I feed with just the pocket change of one shopper?

And then there’s the fact that I will go home to the people around me complaining of such trivial things. But who am I kidding, I’m sure I will catch myself doing the same. The ironic part is that I saw the poorest of the poor, and I never heard a single complaint. In fact, it was the opposite—they were so full of praise, and counted each and every blessing. I suppose that when you don’t have many other options, it becomes a lot easier to keep God as the main focus.

Maybe we’re not the ones who have it best, after all... at least not in that regard. We have so many more ‘things’ that we allow (sometimes unknowingly) to come between us and our Maker. Whether these things are technological, materialistic, media-related, etc., they make it much more difficult to focus on what’s most important. Even living in their sparsely furnished mud huts, it was not bitterness and resentment towards God that was in the people’s hearts. No, it was trust, hope, and praise! And how fast the individuals I met were to give all they had—offering popcorn and coffee, and even hoping to share treats brought by us for them. It leaves me speechless. When I think back to the many people I met at the school, foster home, or on social visits, I remember huge smiles and welcoming embraces. I arranged my mission trip with BCI in the hopes of helping to make a difference in the lives of the people and children of Ethiopia, but I think that the biggest difference made was the one they made in my life.



Courtney R. at the BCI Academy.

PRAISE REPORT: ETHIOPIAN NGO LICENSE

Dear co-workers in the Kingdom;

We are thankful to God for getting the NGO license after a great effort for two and half years. I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for your prayers, counsels, encouragements and patience.

Rejoice with us,

Pastor Tadesse Gebreyes, National Ethiopian Director

“Now The Lord has given us room and we will flourish in the land.” Genesis 26:22



HIGHLIGHTS

ACTIVITY DAY & FEEDING PROGRAM

It is always such a blessing to see the continued impact that these programs have on the children, not only physically through the nutrition of a meal but also spiritually through the nourishment of skits and dramas based on the Word of God. Thank you to everyone who supports these programs!

