

TRIP REPORT - CZECH REPUBLIC

November 2004

Almost immediately upon my return from five weeks in the Czech Republic, Maria and I drove to Trenton, Florida, to witness the joining in matrimony of Tami Andrews and Robert Hodanko, a Czech brother from Prague. It was a beautiful wedding and a delightful mini-reunion of American brethren who have carried the gospel to Eastern Europe. I understand that the newlyweds will travel to Prague on January 7th where they will make their home, and I'm certain, be a great asset to the Prague church. As for me, I am only now settling down to a normal Stateside routine.

Individual Studies

During the four full weeks I was in the Czech Republic, I had a total of thirty-one studies with, oddly enough, thirty-one individuals (some studies were with more than one person), six of whom are faithful members of the Lord's body, four are out of duty, and the rest are not yet New Testament Christians. Ten of these were first time students: Anna and Robert S., mother and son from the apartment building; Petr M., clerk at the copy center; Honza, a friend of Pavel H.; Dominik, the brother of Daniel S. with whom I have previously studied; Petr Z., elder of the Christian Assembly; Durka, girlfriend of a long time friend, Jacki J.; Sonja, sister of Ivoš with whom I have studied before; Petra, co-worker of Petra B., who is a fallen saint; and Andrea V., the wife of Petr V., also unfaithful. All agreed to follow-on studies should I return to Brno, and several agreed to study with me by email.

Andrea V. is an agnostic in belief, so we spent most of our study time discussing the existence of a personal God, the God of the Bible. However, she is reading the Bible. I encouraged both Petr and Andrea to use Sewell Hall's NT Survey as a study guide, and they agreed. Please join me in praying that they follow through.

It is encouraging to me to study with those of the faithful Czech Christians. It is obvious they are studying and growing on their own, and I cannot always answer the questions they save for me without begging a little time for research. It was wonderful seeing and studying again with Pavel H., who traveled from London to be with us in Brno over a long weekend. Pavel's faith seems to have grown during the nine months he has been in London studying English. He attends faithfully, studies his Bible daily, and continues to work toward his goal of becoming a gospel preacher.

Preaching/Public Lectures

I was privileged to preach for the Brno church every Sunday and the church at Litomýšl on one occasion. Twice I presented public lectures in Brno. There were fifteen in attendance at each, which is less than have attended most earlier lecture, but not a bad number considering the subjects and that most coming were not NT Christians. The first, *Is the Apocalypse a Threat to Us?*, was quite controversial. Most there were premillennial. One man, a Seventh Day Adventist, couldn't wait for the question period after the lecture, but interrupted during my presentation. When the question period did come, he dominated the first half hour with a virtual tirade of complaints about my interpretation of primarily Daniel's tribulation prophecy and the number of resurrections there will be. His outburst seemed to throw cold water on any other questions. Later, he and I exchanged several text messages and then met the following week for a discussion of our differences. Unfortunately, I could not get him out of an argumentative mood. He seemed to want me only to listen to him and agree, which of course, was non-productive of any good that I could detect. Thankfully, we were able to part on good terms, and I expect him back at any future lectures, mainly to keep me in check. ☒ The second lecture was entitled *Do You Know You Will Be Judged?* in which I was able to emphasize God's love. There were good questions from the audience.

My last Sunday, I preached for the Christian Assembly, a long established church with about 100 in attendance. Some of their members have attended my lectures, and I have studied with an elder and the Hancík family, who are members of that church. They are quite fundamental, premillennial and teach a Baptist-style salvation. Their worship service was so interesting, I would like to describe it. The women, most wearing a hat or other covering, sat in the back with the men in front in semi-circles facing the Lord's table. Everyone was seated quietly before the service began – no visiting, only meditative silence. On the table was one cup, a tall silver goblet, containing alcoholic red wine and a loaf of leavened bread. (Another cup and loaf were produced from elsewhere when it was time to serve the ladies.) They take a collection every first day. Most of the worship time was devoted to songs, accompanied by a pianist, and prayers. Men stood spontaneously and announced a song or lead a prayer. I lost count of the prayers after seven. Elders are not selected according to scriptural qualifications, but as I understand, older men announce their willingness to serve and the congregation accepts them as leaders. New converts are encouraged to wait three months or so after salvation by "receiving" Christ before being baptized. Though not mandatory, the wait is considered a probation period after which the subject is thought truly committed. All in all, I was impressed with the group and with the members with whom I have had contact. They seem sincerely devote, though mistaken in some of their beliefs and practices.

I was anxious to return home, and yet reluctant to leave the opportunities to teach, which I felt were increasing almost daily. I had hoped to visit more in other cities, but because of the study schedule spent most of my time in Brno. I can do some follow-up from Chattanooga, thanks to the Internet, but realize that someone needs to be there to continue sowing the seed. Because of health concerns, I am making no plans to return. Perhaps later. Please pray for the work in the Czech Republic and for those who have yet to know the joy of salvation.

I am grateful for and indebted to the elders and members of the Embury Hills church in Atlanta, GA, for financing this trip. They have faithfully supported my work over the years, as have others of you, and for this I thank God and you. If any church would like a personal report of the work, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. May God bless you in your work.

Love in Christ,
Charlie

Brackett Report – Brno, Czech Republic
726 Stone Crest Circle, Chattanooga, TN 37421
Czech Mobile: 011 420 776 809 932 • U.S. Phone: 423.490.1199
cbrackett@comcast.net mlbrackett@comcast.net