

Walking Through Open Doors

BY **GREG PARSONS**

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In I Kings 8, Solomon prays at the dedication of the temple. Verses 41–43 reflect Solomon's understanding of God's purposes to bless all people. He prays,

Foreigners, who do not belong to your people Israel, will come from a distant land because of your reputation. When they hear about your great reputation and your ability to accomplish mighty deeds, they will come and direct their prayers toward this temple.

Then listen from your heavenly dwelling place and answer all the prayers of the foreigners. Then all the nations of the earth will acknowledge your reputation, obey you as your people Israel do, and recognize that this temple I built belongs to you. (NETbible.org)

Remember that when Solomon was younger and had just become king, he prayed for discernment—literally “a hearing heart.” God answered, “I...give you a wise and discerning mind superior to that of anyone who has preceded or will succeed you.” (1 Kings 3:9 & 12)

Like Solomon, all those who follow Jesus must always, in every place, take opportunity to extend and reflect God's great reputation and glorify Him.

Here is one example of ministry that demonstrates that heart:

An increasing number of mission organizations have located offices in Malaga, Spain. Many years ago,

organizations came because the location was a great base for supporting work in North Africa. But it also made for easy communication with all time zones and was very convenient for travel to much of the world.

For similar reasons, businesses often locate their European HQ in this area, since it is less than a three-hour flight from most major cities of Europe and the cost of living is much lower than much of the rest of Europe.

Recently, new missions have moved into the area to engage the refugees as well as the local business, arts and government communities. A driving force for this is the refugee crisis, including the relocation of North African and Syrian refugees into Spain. Malaga is the main port of entry into the country for refugees. Italy, Greece and others have radically reduced the refugees they allow to come.

Four years ago, Charstar International located its offices in a Business and Innovation Center (BIC) in Malaga. A BIC is a network of “centers” located throughout Europe that seek to help start-up/incubate businesses. They are happy to have Charstar there because of their refugee work and the business experience and global connections of their staff.

More broadly, **there is a push in the city/region to make Malaga a “hub” for technology for all of Spain and much of Europe.** The Malaga BIC is situated in a large “tech park” where Accenture, Huawei, Ericsson, IBM and many others have a significant presence. The entire tech center has some 600 companies and some 17,000 employees.

Because of the pressure by the European Union (EU) on businesses

(and individual countries) everyone is interested in effective projects that help integrate refugees effectively. There is great interest among well-known multi-national companies to deal with Europe's practical issues with refugees.

Now, more than eight mission organizations, several smaller organizations and independent workers are engaged in various aspects of this migration opportunity.

Working with the BIC (the business world) the government (the EU) and three NGO partners, Charstar staff help identify, assess and equip an entrepreneur in the immigrant community and incubate and accelerate his/her micro enterprise that will hire 10 unemployed immigrants. The process then will repeat and be used to create new local, regional and global enterprises that eliminate unemployment. Another program they use helps refugees navigate government and other systems in their newfound world.

Want to come and help? There is a need for business trainers and business mentors (some from a distance), digital media experts, web designers, trauma counselors (with refugee immigrants), administrators, grant writers, communication experts, legal advisors for start-ups in various countries...these and other skills are needed *now*. In some cases, language skills are necessary but not all. If you are interested in more info, email: csinternational@charstar.org They will connect you with the partner that fits your interests.

Let's pray that this kind of opportunity will be maximized for Jesus and His Kingdom. 