

# MARCH 2019



Dear faithful prayer supporters,

*'The Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem'*  
Amos 1:2



We've never heard a lion roar in real life before but imagine it must be terrifying. In our current preaching series on Amos, we at Forte Torre are regularly listening to the lion roaring his judgements on nations and Church. Trembling at his word is a rightful response to the roar that comes from Zion but we also rejoice that one day we will run to the Lion of Judah for

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safety, in the midst of his exercising final judgement.

We write this month of FUNDING, FORMATTING and FORTIFYING, asking you to pray that the LORD will act so that more Italians can be ready for the Lion's arrival.

## Funding

It's hard for many of our UK supporters to understand, but 10 years on in Italy, we can still count on **one hand** the number of men who are financed full time for the ministry of word and prayer in the local church. Without pastors, church growth is stunted and the church's mission in this nation is hugely weakened. We firmly believe that the Lord's chosen instrument to win the world IS the local church and we're passionate about **creating a cultural precedent for the future** for being a local church investing in and financing the ministry of word and prayer, for the health of the people of God in Italy.

At the turn of the year, we had our quarterly members' meeting and rejoice at three very bold decisions made by faith for the Kingdom. Firstly despite the outstanding debts of our building project (€215,000), the church agreed to **continue to give away 20% of our income to ministry locally, nationally and internationally**. 😊😊😊 Secondly, proposed and driven by members (not us!) the Italian congregation confirmed that they wanted to **increase their support of JP's ministry** in line with the increase in the church's giving we've seen this past year. 😊😊😊 Thirdly the church wanted to **contribute towards the cost of S**, a dear brother who has taken part time work in order to give more time in his week for theological study and greater word ministry at Forte Torre. 😊😊😊

**PRAY:** The Lord would honour the courage of individuals who want to be generous and ambitious for the Kingdom, and for us to miraculously find the necessary €7-800 a month to cover these targets.

## Formatting

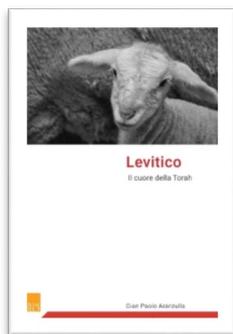
This next week will end this academic year of courses in Hebrew, Exodus and Church History in Applicazione, the theological input that JP seeks to offer across churches in Bologna. They have been happy modules, with good attendance and a joy to use our building to host the sessions. Students have been hungry to learn and humble in their participation, showing willingness and perseverance with the personal cost involved in committing to study till 10pm after an early start and a day at the office! We're continuing to take steps, long and tedious as they are, in

**formatting all the material** to go on a website as a resource for future students. Uploading handouts, audio and video is time-consuming and we give thanks for **J**, a super student from Durham University, who is helping. It's yet to be seen how useful this will be online to others but we labour in faith for fruit of ministers better equipped in the long-term ministry of word and prayer.



## Fortifying

The next few months will offer some significant change to our lives. Sue will be engaged in an intense period of 'fortifying' study for a **Diploma in teaching English** as a foreign language. In the insurance firm where she teaches English, Sue has sometimes felt out of her depth with teaching now very able, near-fluent students. In wanting to honour Christ in her employment and with a growing number of managers to teach, Sue (alongside the normal routine) will be completing the Diploma's coursework and teaching placements from March to end of August.



Meanwhile after Easter JP will take **four months' sabbatical** away from weekly preaching and the burdens of ministry life. Forte Torre congregation has encouraged JP to take this rest after the gruelling managing and completion of the building project. It will be a real privilege to visit other churches in Italy and see family and friends, a freedom he's never enjoyed greatly since arriving in Italy because of not having the men previously to share in the preaching.

**PLEASE PRAY:** for deep rest for JP and for him in writing his fourth book on Numbers (Leviticus has just been published), and that he can benefit from visiting some other ministries, and in particular touch base with older saints and older wiser pastors! For Sue that her studies will be useful and that her ongoing

witness in the office would adorn the gospel and bear fruit amongst folk of the town.

With great thanks for your prayers for us. We look forward to hearing some of your news!

JP and Sue xx

## Prayer points

### FUNDING

PRAISE for the Forte Torre wanting to invest financially in the ministry of word and prayer

PRAY for provision of approx £700 extra a month to cover decisions made by faith

### FORMATTING

PRAISE for students on courses of Church History, Exodus and Hebrew this academic year

PRAY for fruit from the sacrifices made in formatting on line the resource Applicazione

### FORTIFYING

PRAY for Sue's diploma studies to be a better teacher witness in the insurance company

PRAISE for JP's sabbatical and pray for a jolly good rest!

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