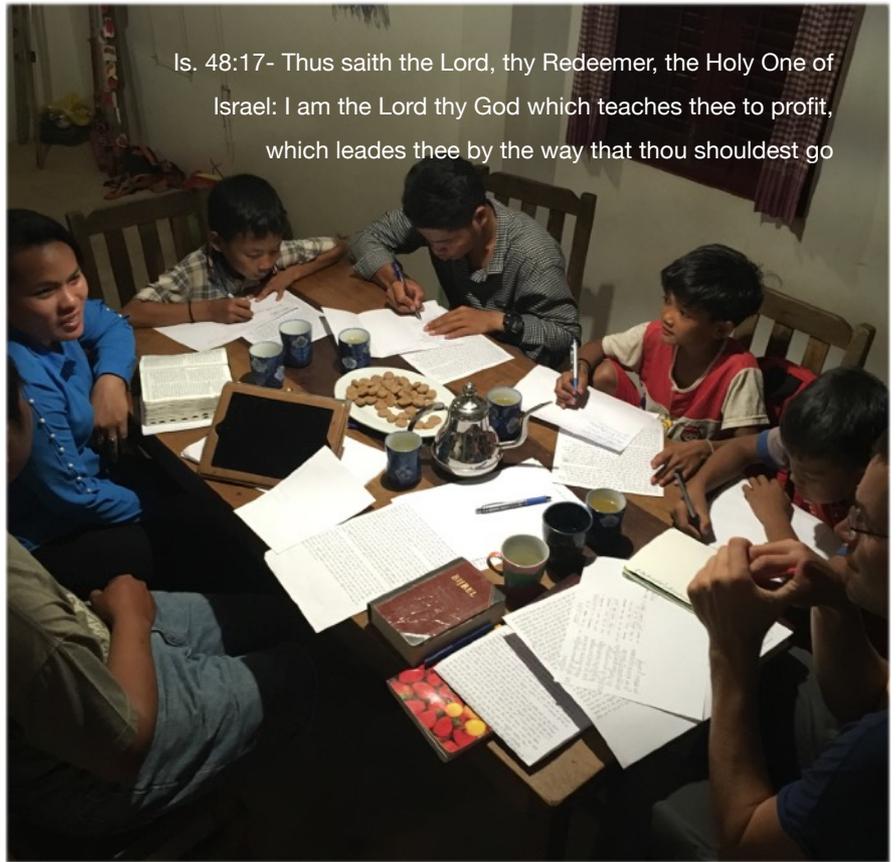


# NEWS Letter

MART-JAN &  
TALITHA

JOY  
MICHA  
AMY

Is. 48:17- Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord thy God which teaches thee to profit, which leads thee by the way that thou shouldest go



## We're in this together!

"P-own proh"(young brother), how nice that you help us today to bring the garden back to order again!" No problem bong srey(big sister)! This place belongs to the Lord Jesus and therefore we have to care for it well together!"

Just a fragment out of a conversation on a Saturday morning while we as a family maw the lawn around the house, pick weeds and burn trash. A few kids from the neighbourhood came spontaneously to help us. In kids club we taught in the past few weeks during lessons about who the Lord God is ,who created everything and how we can care for each other and the place we live in. A game of collecting trash was a great success. And how it improves everything! The children learn to be more observant for their environment and e.g. also for those children that they

normally don't accompany with. For ourselves, we notice again and again how much rumbling there is under the surface in a community and how conflicts are or aren't being resolved. "No, my mother doesn't allow him to be in our haystack for my grandmother and his grandmother have a fight. Such fight can take years just like that. The children most often don't know the exact reason for it or if it still is relevant anyhow.

Often children come to share what's on their heart. So valuable to not having to bring them our Dutch / western values (because it still remains the question if these are "better") but can tell them about Gods values and standards. A couple of children really want to know more about the Lord Jesus. That opens possibilities to look with them to what the Lord Jesus says about their situation. By this, we learn together. Together we pray about an examination, a sick grandfather or grandmother, we

view how you can solve the argument with our friend and discover that we are not that much better as the one we have so much comment on.

In the way we work together in our neighbourhood with young local believers and with a large group of children; in the way we work as a team to build Shalom valley, in that way we are in this together with you. And we are grateful for that, your prayers make the difference. That's our strong belief. Some of you bring very faithful the names of all those over 85 names of the children in our community before Gods throne. Others pray consequently for our safety at Shalom Valley. Or for our health. Maybe nobody notices this, but the Lord notices. The impact of your prayers is probably much larger as we can see. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Keep on praying about that which God laid on your heart!

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This News is sent out about 4 times a year in order to inform you well about the things that are happening in our lives and enables you to pray with us. Feel free to forward this letter to others.

You can subscribe or unsubscribe via our website [www.2followus.com](http://www.2followus.com) On our website you will also find more information and our BLOG. If you have any questions please ask us!



### SHALOM VALLEY UPDATE

The building at Shalom Valley is in full progress at this moment. Every day about 30-35 men are at work on the territory, busy - busy. Me, Mart-Jan, is helping there every day by leading the project and lay out a course for the coming weeks and months. I enjoy this and I am very grateful that I can give my effort to this in this way. On our website we have some [photographs](#) and some more [photographs](#) of it and to the people on [Facebook](#) – our page is called Shalom Valley.

Every Friday morning we have a meeting with the core team from Shalom Valley. Pon, Vbol and myself. We discuss safety, progress and finances, but Pon and Vibol always start the meeting with sharing something from the Khmer-culture.

Also for questions from daily life at home and about things that happen in our surroundings is a place. Sometimes there's a leap to the Dutch culture. In that way Talitha and I learn more and more about the Cambodian culture and we learn to know and understand each other better as a team. I enjoy those moments.

Recently Vibol shared something beautiful. We asked Vibol if we could

share this testimony with you. His reaction came fast : “sure! And give God the honour!” Vibol told us that, at the moment that he just became a Christian, there was a nasty situation in his family. His mother decided to consult a fortune teller. This fortune teller advised then what each one of the family should do. The fortune teller was able to “see” into all of these people’s lives. Until he came to Vibol. The fortune teller couldn’t say anything about him! Vibol’s life was closed to the fortune teller because Vibol has another Master in his life!

Vibol shared this with us to point out that we, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, are safe and don’t have to be afraid. It’s true for him, but also for us, and we pray that this will become true for more and more people around us.

### IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

At the end of last year, the local church that we visit in our community suddenly closed. This rose amazement and questions in the young local believers, in the children from our neighbourhood and also in us. We had always worked together with the local church and nobody saw this coming. A few pieces of the puzzle (still) lack. To us. Not unto the Lord. We can give our questions and

concerns to Him in a peace of mind. On the other hand we believe that it’s not without a purpose that we live as a family in this community and have all these children in our home daily. There are many natural moments for us to share the good news with them. Last time this became pretty labor-intensive next to our other daily tasks. This drove us to ask the Lord again about His plan for this community and what our role in this will be, through our prayer-app we then asked you to pray with us for the relations and the work in our community.

During that same week Lykean (10) and Diewiet (11) came to us with a lot of questions about the local church and the kids club. It gave a good conversation and I encouraged them to (keep) pray(ing) for their community and to keep asking the Lord God about His plan. Without hesitation one of them said: “I know! You have to start a church here!, and could you please teach us more about the Lord Jesus?” And when I asked a bit further they didn’t mention the games, the singing, the cosines, the snacks, the soccer but ....the Bible and a row of things that they learned from us during the past months and this was really encouraging to hear.

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"We want to follow the Lord Jesus and learn more about what the Bible says. Even when our family doesn't like this".

Their openness and eagerness touched me. Recently these two boys come also to the Tuesday evening study.

Meanwhile we have every Sunday afternoon a growing group of children at our house. They even have figured out a name for this gathering: 'kamwietie daaë taam Preah Jesu'. Their explanation: this is a place where we want to learn how to follow the Lord Jesus.

Sometimes it is a challenge to harbour everyone. Many easy sheep gather in a loft, and most often we can spread out outside, but with heat or rain this gets more troublesome. We are looking for a new location and pray to be enforced by two local Christians. This prayer point too we send in on last Monday by the prayer-app.

The day after, Lykean's mother came by suddenly after Bible study. She came to see if her son was still here and told us, by the way, about the land and house next to our house that became available and if we didn't know somebody who would want to rent it. Remarkable we thought. The house is really old, but it could suffice. The rent is low, provided that we keep the garden proper(which is pretty large). We will keep you informed.

Soon(11 April) we will work together with a group of children who like that a day at Shalom Valley. We earn by this some pocket money for the kids club and in this way the children have an (extra) opportunity to save for a Bible. They save one half and a local Christian who works at Shalom Valley will adjust the other half. In this way the children learn about ownership. Things of their own they will care more about as things they "just" get. Lykean e.g. sells tin cans now. He saves by this, not only for his own Bible but has also lots of good ideas for the club!



## FAMILY UPDATE

We have been all ill lately, but happily, set apart some cold, are up on our feet again. The hot season has started again, but we enjoy regularly an unexpected rain shower that cools down everything nicely. It is, until now, not as warm as last year.

Joy, Micha, and Amy live and enjoy themselves here in Kep. They play and learn much. We're grateful about how they all three grow and develop.

Joy is writing a children's book and gives Dutch lessons every week to some children in the neighbourhood.

Micha learns how to climb coconut trees, start a fire safely and which street language he can- and cannot use.

Amy started this month officially at school. She is, being nearly 4, very eager to learn and enjoys all the new things she learns and discovers. Such a blessing, that she - just like Joy and Micha - can participate with her own class at the Regenboogschool in the Netherlands.

Because we have Eva here (see home-schooling) Mart-Jan and I suddenly have the opportunity to go out together. Such a luxury, we really enjoy this.

The children are looking forward to the furlough. We see that they enjoy being in Kep but that, Joy and Micha, sometimes really miss their friends and



family in the Netherlands. It helps to talk about this here openly with each other and to know that this missing is normal and that we have this all five sometimes. Even though we know that we are here in the right place, and our house really feels like "home". Missing our family and friends remains a sacrifice that you bring when you grow up in a family that does this kind of work. We see how our children learn how to take these difficult moments to the Lord God and it encourages us to see how that often helps them.

Sometimes the children get a lot to handle. Good, funny and nasty things alternate each other here very fast. In the prayer-app last time we wrote about this. Just like you we often have to face situations in which we together learn to trust the Lord (more).

What if your friends one afternoon come by and say Bong srey (big sister Joy)! P-own proh (young brother Micha)! Take care of those big black pigeons that build a nest on your house. They can take your spirit from you.

Or they tell you that when you don't sacrifice, you might be responsible that someone in your family dies. And would there really live an evil spirit in that ruin a bit further?

Are all those stories about evil spirits true or not? Can we totally trust on the Lord God? Does He really have control over everything?

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Hello,

my name is Eva.

I am twenty years of age and after getting my diploma last year I thought it would be nice to have an in between year. How to fill up that year was a bit more difficult question. To travel was high on my wish list and I wanted to see the world and "discover" myself, but actually I wanted to help people.

By and by I came into contact with Mart-Jan and Talitha. They had placed a call in their newsletter earlier with the question if someone would like to teach Joy, Micha and Amy. At first hand I had my doubts. Teaching sounded like fun, but to be in a family a lot where I wanted to have time on my own made me hesitate. The only way for me to come to a good decision seemed to talk about it with God.

I write this piece at the kitchen table from Mart-Jan and Talitha in Kep. God has given, happily, courage to me as well as to Mart-Jan and Talitha to start this adventure. During five days of the week I can teach Joy, Micha and Amy. I admire how they handle their homework and the new teacher. It's wonderful to see how these children learn things and it's maybe even just as fun to see how they teach me things.

I can understand now better why God placed me especially with this family van der Maas. He is always with us and always wants to lead us, when we are open to that. Mart-Jan and Talitha show me every day again how they lay their lives in His hands and God shows us that He supplies.

I am very curious about what the coming months will bring but I know it will be good anyhow.

Thanks!

## FURLOUGH

We hope to be on furlough during the months July to September in the Netherlands. We look forward to, in July, together with Mart-Jan's youngest sister, celebrate Rianne and Tom their wedding live!

Just like two years ago we will be, during this furlough in a couple of central places in the country to share about Gods work here in Kep, Cambodia and how we can participate in this. We will let you know all the dates and places early in time. We look forward to be able to meet many of you again!

## GIVE THANKS WITH US:

1. For good health
2. For the good ethos among the team in Shalom Valley, for the pleasure and the strength during the work and for the good proceeding
3. For the relations we have in our community
4. For coolness in the hot season
5. For children that have an open heart to learn more about the Lord Jesus

## PRAY WITH US:

1. For the young believers and children in our community as we study the Bible together on Tuesday evening
2. For the children work in our community: that which the children(as well in the neighbourhood as ours) have learned about the Lord Jesus may be written in their hearts
3. For support of the team that does the children work and for a possible new location
4. For the progress at Shalom Valley and preparations for the transfer when we go on furlough. We do hope that we can "let go" of the work during our furlough
5. For teacher Eva
6. For Gerup and her three children(Noown, Srey Nut, Sinaat) in kampong Cham. It's tough for them, I (Talitha) hope to be able to visit her soon with Srey An
7. That we will set the right priorities.

We are in this together. It is fantastic to experience that in many different ways. God's blessing to you!

Kind regards from Kep  
Mart-Jan&Talitha, Joy, Micha and Amy

## Practical information

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### Financial support:

Alongsiders does not pay us a salary. We're very grateful for those who want to support us financially. If you want to do so, then please use the Dutch bank details as stated below:

Foundation: Nehemia (ANBI)

Please note: Project church-work  
Cambodia

IBAN: NL66 SNSB 0931 7011 39

BIC: SNSBNL2A

## HOME-SCHOOLING

And now, suddenly, we have a female teacher from the Netherlands!

We are grateful for Eva's effort, her fresh input, supporting and cosines. Wonderful to get space to do some things that we had no time for, and especially, to be a few months only daddy and mammy

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On [www.2followus.com](http://www.2followus.com) you can find more information about our Homefront Team and other people who are helping them so that you can stay connected to the work in Cambodia!

