

## David sees for the first time

by Iain and Heather McKelvie

We are visiting some churches and doing a children's club in the highlands. We are heading to a village, located nearly 5000m on the top of the world. It is so at the back of beyond, that my fellow workers from the big city of Arequipa are quite amazed. 'Is there anything else around here?' is their frequent question.

After long walks from their simple farms, the people come down to the village where they can buy food at the market, visit the health post, and there is a church and a school as well. During the school year 80 children gratefully receive a daily breakfast through the Breakfast Programme in the small evangelical church.



This is the world of seven-year-old David. Although he knows his surroundings, he cannot see them. He is in first grade, and during the children's programme he sits unobtrusively among the other kids. He pays attention to the Bible story, even looking in the direction of the flannelgraph, and laughs at the jokes of the teacher. During play time outside David runs about like all the other children, participating in relays and games.

Afterwards it's craft time, and every child can use crayons to colour a picture of the Bible story. The classroom is old, shabby and poorly equipped. The wooden desks are worn out and the chairs are so ramshackle that some kids prefer to stand at the desks.

And what does David do? With a crayon in his hand he tilts his head, moving it like an iron over the table together with the crayon. His nine-year-old brother beside him guides David's hand from time to time to another spot on the paper. Only then do we realise that David must be blind!

My colleague, Siegfried, talks to David's parents in the village and four weeks later David is sitting in front of him in Arequipa, playing with some toy cars. He can even write his name, scribbled but readable. At the optician the measuring instrument doesn't show any dioptre size. The doctor is both surprised and shocked.

David has a congenital cataract on each eye; he should have been operated on as a baby. He is the victim of circumstances that we see daily here. In the midst of this, we want to offer a practical, Christian testimony of love.

Because of David's age, he has surgery on both eyes at once. The day after the operations, his bandages are removed. What a moving moment. Words fail us, and we think back to the biblical stories of when Jesus healed the blind. With open eyes and mouth David recognises for the first time his parents.

There is no holding him. Amazed, he runs about looking, touching everything in his reach. With special glasses he can leave the hospital. Now David tastes and sees the milk-porridge and bread roll in the breakfast programme. Colours, pictures and words are taking shape. With his new glasses he can finally watch his friends playing, he can see his father's llamas and the lamb in his arm – as well as the shepherds and the Child in the manger at the Christmas play in church.

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## Urgent Prayer Need

Bingham Academy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, urgently needs a [French teacher](#) to join their staff team in August. Pray that God will provide the right person to meet this need.