



At the Well

Tim and Lisa Beckendorf, LBT missionaries in Botswana



Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:13, 14 (NIV)

In our last prayer letter we wrote about some of the reactions that people have had who are hearing God's Word for the first time in their language. The last few months we've made some good progress on translation and have a few more "first contact" stories we'd like to share with you.

FIRST CONTACT CONTINUED . . .

In the process of translation, after we've completed a significant section of Scripture and after the team has checked it and made corrections, we take it to one of the villages either here in Botswana or up to the Caprivi Strip in Namibia for village checking. There we read the section a couple of times and ask some comprehension questions and generally invite feedback from the community. At one particular session we discussed at length the divine name Yahweh. The people were very intrigued and asked some good questions. One of the men present at the discussion was Oana. He is a traditional healer, a man who is well respected in the communities here and in Namibia as he is a powerful yeukx'ao (sacred healer). Yeukx'ao are the only healers who are able to contact Khyani (god). They establish contact with the deceased ancestors and Khyani through song and dance. I've always had a good relationship with this man, but since the discussion in the village about Yahweh he has become very friendly to me. Once when Moses, Splash, (co-translators) and I were



Oana, the sacred healer

waiting for the ferry so that we could cross the river we met Oana and another man. The other gentleman began talking to us about the grass cutting that was going on out in the bush. Oana chastised the man and told him he shouldn't talk to us about such mundane things, rather he should be asking us about Yahweh and Genesis and other questions about the Bible.

In another instance, we were working through Genesis 12 and the call of Abraham. One of the people present asked about where Abraham was when God called him and told him to go to Canaan (and where in the world was Canaan?). So, I brought out a map that showed the travels of Abraham. Someone noticed Egypt on the map and asked, "Is that Egypt in the Bible the same one that is in Africa?" I assured him that yes it was. "Now I can believe in God! I thought that all those places in the Bible were a different world, not a real one." Wow!

Please pray that through this work, the Holy Spirit will transform many lives. Please especially pray for Oana that he will continue to be challenged and formed and shaped by what he hears of God's Word.

A LITTLE OF THIS AND A LITTLE OF THAT

Splash is one of our translators. Recently his mother became very ill. Her heart apparently is not functioning properly and she collapsed out in the bush while looking for food. She was alone and wasn't found until many hours later. Consequently, she was out in the searing Botswana sun for many hours and was severely burned. She lives in a village that is quite remote and about an hour's drive through the sand from Shakawe. After she was found, the family found someone with a truck to help and she was taken to the hospital an hour and a half south of here. However, the staff at the hospital said that they couldn't help her and sent her back home. The family then took her to a local healing church

here in Shakawe where they were attending to her burns and praying. She wasn't improving, so the family took her back to her village so that a yeukx'ao could perform a ceremony for her. They sacrificed two goats to the ancestors and through the services of the yeukx'ao determined that she is being punished by the ancestors because her family left her alone. Splash's father was in another village at the time, Splash was here in Shakawe and so was his brother who is stationed at the military base here.

Unfortunately, this is not a unique method of dealing with hardship. When someone needs help they try the traditional healers, then if that fails "modern" healers such as clinics and hospitals, if that fails then they try a church (not necessarily in that order). From many people's perspective all hardship is caused by a problem in the spiritual realm of the ancestors, and the traditional healer, the clinic, and the church each possess different powers for dealing with the ancestors. Even for many who profess to be Christian there is no evidence of trust in God's providence.

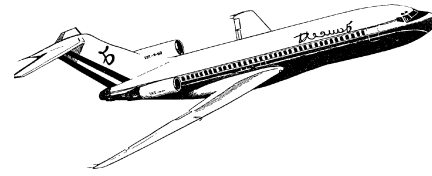
Please pray that through this experience Splash's faith will be strengthened and that he will become a strong witness to his family.

TRANSLATION TID BITS

While translating Genesis 25, the birth of Jacob and Esau, we had a good bit of confusion that needed to be cleared up. In verse 23, Yahweh tells Rebekah, "Two nations are in your womb . . .and the older will serve the younger." In verse 25 we read that the first to come out at birth was Esau and the last was Jacob. Here comes the confusion, in Khwe culture the first born twin is the youngest and the second is considered the oldest. It is perceived that the older twin opens the door of the womb for the younger to go out and then the older shuts the door of the womb again until he/she is ready to go out. So, naturally Moses and Splash thought that Jacob was the oldest and Esau the youngest. This didn't mesh well with the rest of the story or Yahweh's words to Rebekah. Once we realized that there was a cultural "mismatch" the guys were able to understand the story. In our translation then we merely added a footnote to the text to explain the differences in the cultures regarding twin's ages.

FURLOUGH 2010

We are planning on taking a furlough next year; visiting family and sharing with partners about the work we are doing here among the Khwe. So far we have had requests for us to visit from Wisconsin, Nebraska, Michigan, Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois. If we have not yet heard from you and you would like us to visit, please let us know as soon as possible. We really would like to visit as many of you as we can so that we can thank you in person for your support and give you an update of what God is accomplishing through us on your behalf. The best way to contact us is by e-mail at tlbeckendorf@lbt.org. You can also contact Lutheran



Bible Translators by phone at 1-800-532-4253 and ask to speak with Sharon Vega.

Correspondence and Support Information

You may support this ministry with gifts made out to Lutheran Bible Translators and indicate that they are for the Beckendorf Ministry. They may be mailed to:

Lutheran Bible Translators
303 North Lake Street, Box 2050
Aurora, IL 60507-2050.

You may also contribute on-line through LBT's secure web site: <https://9datoh.com/lbt/involve/giftsec.php>

Additionally, you may also support our ministry by using electronic fund transfer. Please call LBT@ 1-800-532-4253 for details.

You may contact us at:

e-mail: tlbeckendorf@LBT.org
web site: <http://www.LBT.org/beckendorf>

Your servants in Christ,

Tim, Lisa, Aaron and Andrew Beckendorf