



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)

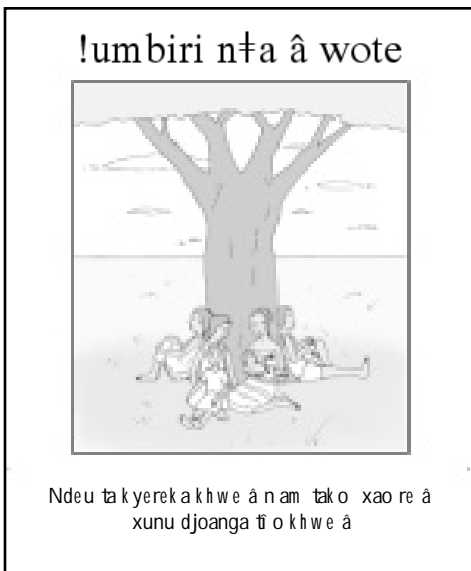
!umbirici cuerehî xo â (!umbiri's story)

Since the beginning of the new year, we have been working on translating a series of five booklets on HIV/AIDS. The booklets are a five part story about a girl and her younger siblings who are orphaned when their parents both die from AIDS, and how the village community and the church responds to their situation. The booklets are in English, published by Shellbook Publishing which is a computer software company that, in addition to the software, provides electronic booklets such as the ones we have. We have a license that lets us translate the "shellbooks" into Khwedam (or any language for that matter). The layout for the booklets, the pictures, page numbering, etc. is all finished and all we have to do is translate.

ago (not recently). For the present there is basically one way to express it with a couple of variations. The future is relatively easy also as there is only future today and future after today. So when we are translating the stories we really have to think about when the action happened.

What's in a word?

In the first story, the mother tells the children to let their father sleep **as** she herds them out of the room. I noticed that the translators used a word that means 'like, as, or as if' in the sentence. In Khwedam that word does not have the meaning of 'while' like the word 'as' does in English. Well, they could not give up the word. "It says 'as' in the story, and this word means 'as'." I asked them how they understood the sentence in English. They replied that the mother told the children to let their father sleep and they thought that she was herding them out of the room but she really didn't. It took a lot of explaining for them to finally understand that in English 'as' could mean 'while' and that in the sentence the two actions of telling the children to let the father sleep and herding them out of the room took place concurrently. It is amazing the confusion that such a small word can cause. This was also a good opportunity to explain that we are trying to translate ideas or meanings of sentences, not do a literal word-for-word translation.



We can also use the software to create our own publications and make them available for other language projects to use. This project has given us some good introductory practice at translating and has given us insight into the challenges of the task.

What time is it?

In English we generally have three tenses: past, present, and future. Of course there are some nuances such as simple past, past progressive, etc. Well, in Khwedam there are a number of affixes on the verbs that give rather specific time. In the past there is past today, recent past before today, distant past, and aspectually there is perfect of an action recently completed and perfect of an action completed a while

Say What!?

Part of the translation checking process is to have the booklets back-translated into English. This can bring to light some mistakes or misunderstandings. In one instance a person was explaining to the newly orphaned girls that some men might try to bribe them with food and presents to have marital relations with them now that they were orphans. She warned them that this was a very easy way to get the disease that killed their parents. In the back-translation, however, it read that this behavior made it very **difficult** to contract HIV. Whoops. We'd better redo that one.

What for?

Virtually everyone in this area is affected by HIV/AIDS, whether by infection or knowing someone who is infected. We've been here for two years and the enormity of the problem is still staggering. The other day I was out in a village and there were 8 young adults under a tree talking. They were all in their 20's or early 30's and all had young families. Of the eight, at least five are HIV positive--and I don't know the other three, they could be too. This is certainly not a statistically accurate sampling but for that particular village it is a pretty close average for that age group.

We are hoping that the churches will use the booklets since that is for what they are intended. Each booklet has a facilitator's guide which includes relevant portions of Scripture to guide Bible study. When we begin Bible translation later this year, we intend to begin with these portions.



I am skeptical that these booklets will change peoples' attitudes or behaviors that lead to infection but we are praying that they will encourage the church to reach

out to those burdened by the disease in a Christ like way and in so doing lead them to Christ.

Internet

Well it has finally happened. We now have internet service at our place, most of the time anyway. In partnership with five others, we've installed a satellite dish on the crocodile farm down the river from us. From there the signal is sent via radio to a tower which then relays the signal to the other places including our radio which is mounted above our solar panel array. It took over a week to install everything and we are still working out some bugs and have to put in a power backup system because every time the power cuts out, even for a second, the switch at the tower gets "confused" and I have to drive down there to reset the thing. However, we are so thankful that we can do our e-mail from the house as it saves so much time! The speed is still very slow compared to what we experienced in the States, but we are still thrilled to have it.



Tim adjusting our receiver. Yes, he is standing on a stepladder which is perched on the topper of our truck....

- Give thanks that we finally have an internet connection
- Please pray for completion of the booklets and that they will have a positive effect on the community.
- We have a workshop on Bible translation principles coming up soon. Please pray that it will go well and that the people attending will gain valuable skills.

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:

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

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Your servants in Christ,

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