



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)

You may have noticed that the title of our prayer letter has changed (yet again). Now that we are finally here in Botswana, we are discovering what a premium water is both for body and soul. Read on to find out more . . .

"Gaborone dam is only 18% full"

"When will the rain come?"

"We must pray for rain"

The above are phrases on billboards or they come up frequently in conversations.



Rain is so important that the word for 'rain' (pula) is the word for their currency (the Pula).

Throughout the day we see donkey carts and pickups in the village full of jerry cans of water that the people are hauling out to cattle at the cattle posts. All the animals are suffering for lack of water and food, except the ever present goats, which I'm convinced can live solely on plastic bags and air.

We've had water at the house only 3 of the last 12 days. And it has been HOT outside and inside. When it is 105 outside, it is the same inside the house. It feels like we live in a brick oven.

Everything around us reminds us that we live in a desert. Unfortunately over eighty percent of the population lives in a spiritual desert as well.

One day last month I noticed that the neighbors across the way had a big tent set up in their compound. Well that afternoon a young man and an elderly woman knocked at the door and asked if I could help them. I asked what I could do for them and the young man said that they were going to have an all night prayer service and would like to use our electricity for the lights in their tent and by the cooking fire (most of our neighbors don't have any electricity). I asked him about the service and he said that they would be praying and singing all night and then said something about the ancestors. I kind of had a feeling by now about what was going on, so I innocently asked if they would be praying and singing with the ancestors. "Oh no!" I asked if they were Christian. "Oh no." Well, this begged for more details. Apparently they have this special service every October to try to get things right with the ancestors. The young man's departed Grandfather in particular has been a problem of late, making people sick and coming to them in dreams telling them to do this or that. In the course of the conversation he asked me if I would join them and I said that I was a Christian and so it wouldn't be right. "You don't believe what I've said," he remarked. I told him I did believe that he was being tormented by ancestors but that I was not afraid of them because Jesus was in control and had power over all things. A little while later as he was leaving the yard he said that he would like to come over sometime and talk to me about what I believe. I encouraged him to come over any time and we could look at the Bible together (he has one in English and one in Setswana). He still hasn't stopped by but I've seen him several times and have talked some more, and he is still wanting to learn more about what the Bible says. So, I pray that the Holy Spirit would work through this encounter to open his eyes to the truth.

Family Stuff

We are continuing to learn Setswana. We've concluded our formal learning sessions and are beginning to work one on one now with individual language helpers. This is pretty much just conversational practice, which is much needed. Now that we have a good understanding of the grammar and such, we need to expand our vocabulary and practice our listening skills. This has been very frustrating, trying to understand what is said, but is beginning to improve.

We anticipate that our level of Setswana will be high enough by the first of the year that we'll be able to move up north and begin working up there to learn Khwedam. As of this writing, we haven't found a place to live yet so we pray that something will become available for us.

Aaron

We now have a little ankle biter, literally. He is sporting two bottom teeth and likes to try them out on everything: ankles, legs, furniture, you name it. He is becoming more and more mobile, pulling himself up to stand on anything that will support him and then letting go and balancing until he abruptly sits down. We've had more than one head meeting the concrete floor incidents to contend with. It usually ends an otherwise fine mood for him.

Prayers and Praises

- Thanksgiving for the opportunity to meet this young man and share the hope that we have in Christ.
- Thanksgiving that we have finally received our residency permits.
- That the rains will begin soon. We are told that it hasn't been this dry since 1979.
- For our language learning, that we will learn quickly and retain all that we are learning.
- That we will find a house up north before our anticipated move this coming January.
- For full monthly financial support of our ministry.

Why the last prayer request? Lately the well of our support is showing signs of a drought also. Our ministry has received only 69% of what is needed for the last two months. For us to remain here and for this fledgling work to continue, our ministry fund needs to receive \$5600 each month. If you haven't already, we would ask you to prayerfully consider financially supporting our work here in Botswana.

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://www.gospelcom.net/lbt/involve/giftsec.htm>

Additionally, you can 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>

Finally, we would like to express our sincere thanks for everyone who has so generously supported our ministry over the past year. We treasure your partnership in this effort to bring the living water of the Gospel to the people of Botswana. It couldn't be done without you.



Your servants in Christ,

Tim, Lisa, and Aaron Beckendorf