

1 April 2014

"The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him." - Exodus 15:2

How a Miraculous Deathbed Prayer Led to Something Unexpected

"I don't think he knows who we are," **Pastor Mlungisi Zuma** told ITMI's **Kelly Smith**. They were in a well-lit, non-private hospital room near Zulu Natal, South Africa. The two men were visiting a man they knew as Mr. Cele.

"He is mumbling and saying a lot of things, but he is making no sense at all," the pastor observed. Kelly and the new South African pastor of his church continued chatting with the delirious patient.

The patient was a balding middle-aged Zulu man with a full graying beard and mustache. His eyes were bleak and lifeless. He slouched in the inclined hospital bed, his neck at an awkward angle. He wasn't wearing a shirt, but the covers were pulled snugly up to his under-arms.

As a Zulu living in the hilly community of Zulu Natal, South Africa, Mr. Cele's life likely consisted of constant oppressive attempts to appease his ancestors through self-mutilation and sacrifice. He likely trudged up and down steep hills daily to meet his needs for water and food. Statistics tell us he mourned the deaths of a high number of friends and family due to HIV/AIDS and poverty.

As their small talk topics dwindled, Kelly and Mlungisi began sharing the gospel.

That's when it happened.

The man seemed to return to himself. He began responding coherently to the good news Pastor Zuma was sharing. Kelly and Mlungisi repeated a clear explanation of the gospel to the now attentive invalid.

After the gospel was presented, the sick man uttered the beautiful words, "I understand what you are saying, and I want to receive Jesus as my Lord."

After leading the man in prayer, the conversation continued, but the visitors noticed the new believer had returned to his previous state of confusion. They believed the Spirit cleared this man's mind long enough for him to receive Christ!

Three days later, the man's family left the hospital after visiting him. While still traveling home, they received word that Mr. Cele had passed away.

This incredible story doesn't end there.

Normally, the oldest brother of the deceased organizes a funeral that matches his own beliefs. But to the Smith's surprise, Mr. Cele's



(continued on p.4)

ITMI's **le Roux family**, serving at **Onseepkans Mission** in the northern cape of South Africa are homesteaders, living off their mission land in a remote place. They raise goats and cultivate a large vegetable garden to feed their 8 children.

Electricity is available in their area, but they don't use much. Modern conveniences like electric heat and air conditioning aren't available in this isolated location.

They turn on a few lights at night and pump water from the river into their elevated tank. For this meager wattage, they have been paying over \$250/month USD. And rates should be going up soon. There is no process ensuring justice for such extortion. They simply have to pay it or be cut off.

Why do they live like this? Why did they move from temperate Malmsbury, just outside of beautiful and scenic Cape Town to remote and isolated Onseepkans?

Because they want to bring knowledge of Jesus and His blessings to this spiritually inoculated land.

It hasn't been easy. But they've persevered by God's grace.

The ever resourceful **Gerhard** has found a way to stop the bleeding and better utilize the mission's meager income.

We'd like to raise \$17,503 USD to help them purchase a solar system that would not only provide for their home but for future expansion.

On a meager income, even small monthly cuts make the difference between not making ends meet and having something left over to bless others with. But eliminating electricity would make a huge difference in the le Roux's ability to live in Onseepkans.

This is a family who knows how to maximize their resources and live on only what they need. We can help their mission become more efficient. Ultimately, this helps the family stay in Onseepkans, where there is great opportunity to bless many, both physically and spiritually.

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers



Help Us Harness the Sun

and steward wisely!

Missions

in a Shocking Culture

by Charl van Wyk (edited for print)

For all the chaotic, dangerous, far-flung destinations God has led me to—and through—in calling me to the missionary life, there are some situations where I simply cannot successfully operate.

Thankfully, He provided me with a “partner” who can—my wife, **Sonja**. Currently, Sonja is ministering to at-risk girls in a semi-formal settlement near our home.

Life is complicated for youth there:

- Most girls are encouraged by their mother to have sex before marriage and give birth, thus proving their fertility to any potential husbands.
- Homes are filled with illegitimate children who have no idea who their father is. If there is a man in the home, it is probably their mother's boyfriend.
- Most, when they were babies, will have been dedicated to their ancestors and have the body

scarification to prove it.

- To have a personal relationship with God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who is seen as distant and uninvolved in our mundane matters, is pretty strange for them.
- They struggle to communicate without shouting and swearing at one another and almost knock the leaders off their feet to get attention.
- They feel no shame in stealing from the belongings of those there to help them.
- One missionary friend told me how he wanted to call the police when a fight broke out in this community. He was threatened with a knife if he dared make the call. The victim was stabbed to death.
- Many young girls will be raped before their 18th birthday.
- Stabbings took place during a fight - though no deaths. The stepfather of one of the injured boys later took



revenge by setting him on fire. The boy survived badly burned.

So, where does a missionary start?

Prayer and Scripture. The Christian Gospel in its comprehensive, life-transforming and culture-changing way needs to be told over and over again. Through this we hope and pray that many will come to faith in Jesus Christ. The long journey of discipleship and teaching the submission of our lives, cultures and nations to the Lordship of Jesus Christ will take years of hard, tough and at times, scary, labor.

Won't you please pray for this Dream Girls ministry Sonja is involved with?

From the Director

Dear Team,

The world watches anxiously as the Russians play international football with the Crimean peninsula. Granted, there is much at stake if this Crimea situation escalates, but so far it seems there have been little to no physical casualties.

Meanwhile, the media is almost silent about another political tug-of-war that is severely impacting a much wider group of people. A game of political sport that is physically terrorizing masses of innocents.

ITMI has done what we can to keep you informed as the political power in South Sudan has recently been the football of the newly-formed country's two largest tribes. Sadly, this game has perpetuated far more devastating consequences than the more oft publicized Russian/Ukrainian turmoil.

ITMI's **Jahim Buli Vincent** has been on the ground in South Sudan for most of the conflict. He is deeply burdened to help the overwhelming number of orphans and widows who are now without. Without shelter. Without food. Often, without hope.

In February, one of ITMI's long-time supporters made a special sacrificial donation so Jahim could purchase basic food supplies for some of the orphans, widows and elderly who now reside at two make-shift refugee camps outside the capital city, Juba. Giving food to the starving is the immediate need, but our long-term and more permanent desire is to give them food and hope that will never leave them wanting.

Jahim delivered over 8200 lbs. of maize flour, 3300 lbs. of lentils, and what looks to be about 50 gallons of cooking oil for the two destitute camps.

Jahim and his team of pastors spoke to the gathered crowd about "...seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," (Matt. 6:33) and how this includes forgiveness and reconciliation. He also clearly explained that he was not the one to be thanked for this food. No one but a God who sees all things and knows all things touched His children's hearts in a place across the ocean. These people obeyed God's leading and gave God what they had. God was the one that provided for them.

Jahim shares, "The camp community leaders and government representatives were grateful to those givers. They say, '...*This is a true love of God that you provide food to people you have never seen.*'"

Jahim continues, "Steve, these elderly people and the orphans ... have seen their relatives, parents being killed before them. A boy of 15 years old was left with his grand-mum, his parents and all family members were killed. He kept dreaming and having nightmare of terrible things that he had seen and the grand-mum was worried about her grandson. We prayed for this young boy for deliverance and he was change[d] and transform[d], he is not having nightmares anymore." He added, "We were requested to come every Sunday to preach and pray with them."

When the local television station, **Citizen TV**, heard of Jahim's efforts, they sent a TV crew to record "...the first Christian ministry to provide food for refugees in Juba."

Our ITMI team made up of each of you - whether by prayer or physical support- helped make this happen. We likely won't meet many of these grateful people here on this earth, but Jahim shares that we will meet someday. If I know these people at all, they will graciously grasp your hand and with deep gratitude say, "Thank you," for remembering them. If you are so led to help us empower Jahim to continue meeting this critical need, we will gladly make sure that your sacrificial gift will be quickly sent to South Sudan and immediately used to show God's love and hope by nourishing both body and soul.

In His Service,



(continued from p.1)

family decided he should have a Christian funeral because he died a Christian. This opened up the opportunity for Pastor Zuma to share the same message their loved one had received with his family and community!

The family's response was encouraging. They commented that they enjoyed what was shared and respected the authority with which Mlungisi spoke.

.....

This incredible story of God's work among the Zulu began several years ago, with the Smith family's constant, faithful baby steps. Joyfully and sacrificially serving their community for years - one family, one meal, one school at a time - has led to an established credibility with the community.

Thanks to their leadership, a body of believers is gathering and growing. Because of the Smith's prayer and advocacy over several years, the church has a godly, Zulu leader in Pastor Zuma.

That's just one of many ways the Smith's have blessed this impoverished, HIV/AIDS ravaged community deeply entrenched in ancestral worship.

The Smiths reflected, *"there are still many dying, afraid and alone, or living,*

afraid and alone, with no knowledge of their creator God who loves them so completely, and will walk with them through anything."

Each December, the Smiths stage Christmas celebrations at several schools in their community where they give personally purchased gifts to children who otherwise would not know Christmas. As a part of this much-anticipated celebration, the children also perform skits and hear an age appropriate gospel message delivered by a Zulu pastor in their own language.

The Smiths shared, *"This year's Project Christmas Blessing was loads of fun and a huge blessing as usual. The Gospel was shared and everyone enjoyed their gifts. One of the teachers mentioned that they always look forward to this, as it is a special day to just relax and have fun, compared to all the difficulties and heartache that they all experience in their lives."*

This year, the program included a skit by the youth of the Smith's church. Among other things, many received beautiful pillow case dresses made by some ITMI supporters in Phoenix, Arizona. The Smiths said, "One girl we know of refused to take hers off at all until it absolutely needed to be washed."



These seemingly-small-but-actually-enormous victories would *never* be happening without partners faithfully praying for and supporting the Smith's ministry. They can't be there without support. They can't advocate without others advocating for them. They need our partnership. They need our prayers. They need our support.

Thanks for yours!

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

For Praise

1. USA - A beneficial time of connecting with God's family in the US for Muhindo Kawede.
2. Romania - Funds received for paint and insulation for Bethesda's two elderly widow's care homes in Arad.
3. South Africa - Smiths - a family is pursuing adoption of Adile, the disabled Zulu boy.
4. South Africa - van Wyks- Sonja's courage and faithfulness to minister to young girls in impoverished townships.
5. Poland - Growth in home groups, homeless ministry, and progress toward a proofed and printed new Bible Translation.

For Prayer

1. South Sudan - Jahim as he seeks to minister to the refugees, feeding them physically and spiritually.
2. Poland - Ongoing project to print Polish Bible.
3. India - Paul/Molly pastoring and parenting in India.
4. USA - Charl van Wyk's visit to the US to connect with and encourage believers from Mar 27 - April 15.
5. USA - Gospel Joy's Andrew Gorski is visiting the US from April 24 - May 8.

itmi **In Touch Mission**
INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 7575 - Tempe, Arizona 85281 - (480) 968-4100

E-Mail: itmi@intouchmission.org - FAX: (480) 968-5462 - Outside Arizona: 888-918-4100

