

GOD AMONG THE ZULUS

Nestled amongst the rolling hills of KwaZulu Natal, is a most remarkable mission station and an on-going testimony of transformation. Since 1966, this Mission has been blessed with an extraordinary outpouring of God's grace. Tens of thousands of people, including gangsters, witchdoctors and Satanists have come to Christ through the remarkable ministries of KwaSizabantu.

While KwaSizabantu Mission has never held a healing service, many hundreds of people have been healed. While the Mission does not hold deliverance services, many thousands of people have been freed from occultic bondages and found freedom in Christ there. God has sovereignly intervened and transformed many lives in miraculous ways.

The emphasis of KwaSizabantu Mission is the preaching and teaching of the Bible, prayer, repentance and faith, as well as service "as unto the Lord". This Biblical simplicity and faithfulness has been mightily blessed by the Lord.

CLEANING OUT THE COWSHED

The ministries of KwaSizabantu grew out of the itinerant tent evangelism ministry of Rev. Erlo Stegen. Although there had been many converts, he was dissatisfied. Where were the transformed lives? After 12 years of itinerant evangelism, in 1966 he felt led to engage in extraordinary prayer before the Lord for revival. A cowshed was made available for their prayer meeting. Rev. Stegen testifies that first they had to clean the dung out of the cowshed, and then God began to clean the filth out of their own hearts.

After a season of deep repentance, restitution and extended intercession of their prayer fellowship, God poured out a mighty blessing.

A mighty wind, like compressed air when released, swept straight through the building and everyone praying. Each person was aware that God was in their midst. Erlo Stegen buried his face in his hands, deeply aware of his own unworthiness and fell to his knees.

From that point onwards, everything was different. A witch came to Erlo Stegen and said: *"I'm looking for Jesus. Can He set me free? I'm bound with the chains of hell. Can He break these chains?"*

SET FREE TO SERVE CHRIST

Erlo Stegen, with five other co-workers, formed a circle around her and began to sing and pray. Suddenly the woman's eyes lit up with an evil glare, she writhed around like a wild animal that wants to attack and tear apart its prey. Then this woman began to make noises, first like many dogs barking, then it sounded as if a herd of pigs were screaming within her.

There was no doubt that they were dealing with demon possession. Erlo Stegen commanded these evil spirits to leave her in the Name of Jesus Christ. Then the voice of a man speaking in English, came from within her, refusing to leave. Erlo and his team continued to wrestle in prayer, struggling against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Then the evil spirits began to leave the woman with screams that sliced the air.

The next moment her face was transformed, it shone like one who had already lived in the presence of the Lord for a long time. While joy shone from her eyes, she called out: "How wonderful! Jesus has set me free! He has broken the chains of hell!" Everyone was awestruck. The Spirit of God had come into their midst in power. After months of searching the Scriptures, persevering in prayer, searching their hearts and confessing their sins, the moment had arrived when the fire of the Holy Spirit, for which they had desperately longed, was set ablaze in them.

"Oh that You would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before You! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make Your Name known to Your enemies and cause the nations to quake before You."
Isaiah 64:1-2

From that time on, many people came to put their lives right with the Lord. In the mornings, Erlo would come out to find over a hundred people in the front garden: witches, witchdoctors, demon possessed people, the desperate and the unsaved - people seeking help. Nobody had sent them - they just had the inner compulsion that they must go to Mapumulo to make their peace with God. Many came with tears, most left with great joy.

CHANGED LIVES

The changes in lives were incredible. Thieves returned all that they had stolen, people made restitution. There were fire services, where witchcraft charms and fetishes, and occultic books and symbols were brought by the new converts and consigned to the flames.

The small Mission station at Mapumulo became too small. In 1970, the Mission was moved to a farm called KwaSizabantu, situated between Kranskop and Mapumulo.

MINISTRIES MULTIPLIED

Now, 33 years later, the Mission continues to grow. The auditorium can seat up to 10000 people. On the average Sunday, there are over 5000 gathering for morning worship. Youth conferences attract up to 7000 young people at a time. Over 1000 delegates gather for each Ministers Conference. The Domino Servite School at KwaSizabantu Mission has regularly hit

the headlines with the best matriculation results in the country, and with some of the highest distinctions in the nation. The Cedar College of Education trains teachers. Christians for Truth mobilises tens of thousands of Christians countrywide to stand for the right to life of preborn babies, and to oppose pornography, prostitution and other social evils. Khanya Press prints world class quality publications, including books, for international distribution. The KwaSizabantu Choir conducts ministry outreaches throughout Africa and Europe. Radio Khwezi is the largest, independent Christian radio station in the country, reaching almost all of KwaZulu. Doctors For Life, True Love Waits and a host of other ministries have also sprung up from this vibrant Christian community.

Since that time when the Holy Spirit's fire and wind blew through that little cleaned out stable in Mapumulo, God's blessings have continued to flow, even to other parts of the world and many thousands of people have found real freedom and lasting peace in Christ.

By God's grace, there are many thousands of testimonies of transformed lives at KwaSizabantu.

TRANSFORMED TOBACCO FARMER

I remember a farmer from Mpumalanga, who related his testimony to me over breakfast there. This farmer had heard that if your farm workers go to KwaSizabantu Mission, they will come back honest, work harder and no longer steal. He thought this was a great idea, and so loaded his truck up with farm workers and drove through to KwaSizabantu Mission. God's plan was greater, and the farmer himself got converted there!

As he drove back to his tobacco farm, this man grappled in his heart with what he should do. How could he glorify the Lord by producing tobacco, which was going to ruin the health of so many people? He determined to plough up and destroy his entire crop. The neighbouring farmers were astounded. *"This will bankrupt you!"* they exclaimed.

Nevertheless, the farmer persevered, and for the next several years he struggled to make a living out of his new vegetable crops. Then a crop disease hit the entire area and wiped out all the tobacco crops. Now only his vegetables were left standing! His farm has continued to flourish and so has the worship amongst his workers.

BUSINESS BLESSED

Another man told me how he had run a supermarket and after his conversion at KwaSizabantu, he'd felt convicted to get rid of the immoral magazines, cigarettes and beer. As these were all high volume items, his shop suffered initially. Many customers complained. But after three years of testing, his business picked up - God's blessings were poured out and he has never had to look back.

DIAMONDS AND THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Another brother related his testimony to me. He had worked in the diamond mines, and over the years had succeeded in stealing a large number of these valuable gems. He had a great

house and a very comfortable lifestyle. Then he was converted and learnt about the importance of restitution from KwaSizabantu Mission.

Although he had not been caught and no longer worked for the mines, he went and confessed his crimes, and began the painful process of repaying everything he had stolen. This involved a lot of sacrifice - he lost his comfortable standard of living and ended up in a very small rented house. Nevertheless, this brother has continued to rejoice in the Lord and be a dynamic witness of the transforming grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev. Erlo Stegen says that revival is the special presence of God among His people. No man can force revival to happen, as it is an Act of God, and not a human arrangement. But this does not exclude the fact that obedience to God's Word results in God's blessings and presence.

Geographic revival (where a whole area is affected) is an Act of God that takes place only according to God's sovereign will. Yet, personal revival should be the normal state of every believer.

For further information on KwaSizabantu Mission, visit
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