

## MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

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Altona M. S., Berbice, P. O.,  
Via Piet Retief, Transvaal.  
January 12, 1932.

Dear Homeland Friends:

New Year's greetings to all. As we enter this new year our prayer is for a special touch upon our own hearts, and upon the work. We thank God for what He has done this past year. We see many things to encourage our hearts, and so we praise the Lord; we know all power is in His hands, and we can trust Him always. On Saturday, December 27th, Brother MacDonald came over for Big Sunday. Samuel Mavimbelo, Philemon Nkosi and Johane Kunene, and a good number of others from the Natal side came also. Of course we were glad to see them all. Sunday morning we had a baptism service, five women being baptised; for these we thank the Lord. The Sunday service was good, and we felt a sweet spirit, and the Lord's blessing upon it. Three babies were given to the church; we had a nice altar service at the close of the meeting.

On Monday we had our fourth Christmas Feast at Altona. We were sorry George was unable to be with us. The natives gave better than ever before. We had an ox, eleven goats and sixteen hens, besides the stamp which is crushed corn. Although this is such a hard year for food, the natives gave cheerfully as unto the Lord. One saying "I thank the Lord for His care and love over me this year and I thank with a goat." Another thanks for being saved this year and gives a goat, and so on.

A young woman comes on Monday morning saying "My husband and I want to thank the Lord for saving our baby's life when he was so sick," and she leaves a goat. Others thank with a shilling or more, and it is all given as unto the Lord. It is really very sweet to see how these dear people give. Yes, and a few heathen men whose wives belong to the church, also send a goat every year. We appreciate this very much, as it shows their hearts are softening.

On late Saturday afternoon, Isaya had the ox killed to have in readiness for Monday morning. Early Monday the goats were brought and slaughtered. Isaya and others who kindly came to help, began work and it was big work to get all the meat cut and cooked. The native workers men and women all worked with a good will; everyone was happy, and people were coming on all sides; it was quite exciting. We had a lovely cool day for which we were so thankful. About 2 o'clock the service began, there were five hundred natives present. We had a service in the church and an open air service for the overflow, conducted by Johane Kunene and Philemon Nkosi. Both services were blest of the Lord and we were so glad to see so many heathen to hear the Gospel story. We were very pleased to have Samuel with us once again, he looks the picture of health now, and we all enjoyed his talk very much.

After the services were dismissed Brother MacDonald presented each native with a box of matches, this was the first time the people had ever received them at Altona, and there was a grand rush; all were pleased, and then came the serving of the food every one said they were well helped, and all went home happy. On Tuesday morning after an early breakfast, Brother MacDonald and the Hartland party all left for home. Isaya and I went to Kipainyaivo to see Eliasi Siliuja's sick baby, and to have prayers

there. We found the child improving. We thank the Lord for the little band of workers among us; may the Lord bless them this new year.

These last two Sundays, I have had the services at Klip Vaal. We had such seasons of refreshing; the people gave such lovely testimonies and the spirit was so sweet. Mapondo, the young converted man, keeps shining for the Lord and others are coming. The weekly classes in this New Year have been sweet times.

School will open again on January 19th. Dear ones continue to pray for us. The Lord is answering prayer.

Yours glad to be in Africa.

HELEN M. STERRITT

Hartland, M. S., Paulpietersburg,  
Natal, South Africa.  
Jan. 10, 1932

Dear Friends:

Probably you people would be interested in hearing about the first Christmas tree at "Ekuvumeni" Johan Kunene's little church down by the Pevaan. After a ten mile ride through the cool of a brilliant South African Summer morning we arrived at our worker's cosy little home perched like a sparrow's nest on the shoulder of a ridge of mountains. Beneath the cool thatch of his two roomed cottage we were plentifully supplied with a repast of potatoes and chicken served with black tea from a generous sized tea pot, and baker's bread brought from Paulpietersburg, (fifteen miles distant). This made us fine and fit for the next two miles. In the first 300 yards of this descent we had a drop of about three hundred feet, which was like leading your horse down a steep roof. This slope was covered by small loose stones, some of which started by the horse's hoofs, tumbled down the steep, jumped the precipice and landed in the leaping brook among the rocks below. Skirting the edge of the precipitous cliff it fairly took one's breath away to watch the waters of this same little brook as they dashed over the edge and dropped in filmy spray to the rocks and ferns a hundred feet below. For a half an hour more we followed the snaky windings of the narrow foot path down and ever down the steep decline, arriving at last at the first levels of the Pevaan valley where stood the little church. Over a hundred highly excited natives dressed in various costumes ranging from skins to silks and satins, managed to crowd into the humble fifteen by twenty-five foot sod building. Working almost alone Johan built and thatched this little church which will compare favourably with many brick buildings done by white men. All declared it was a blessed service, the attention was splendid interrupted only by the arrival of your young white girls just as our poor seat collapsed beneath us.

When the meeting had been dismissed each member of the congregation received a small cup of salt as they went out the door. The fervent expressions of gratitude showed their deep appreciation of this highly prized gift. Then came the plucking of the Christmas tree which stood in the yard outside. Fortunately Johan had planted it deep, otherwise the strong gusts which blew up the long valley would certainly have overbalanced it with its heavy freight. The tree certainly did not look like your Christmas trees do. No candles nor trimming, but the white bark and fragrant green leaves showed off the hand made straw mats and bread boards, wooden spoons, calabash dippers, and water gourds, matches, piece goods and sweets were in various parcels all over the tree, while at the foot lay a goodly array of chickens, their legs

tied together and big tickets around their necks. The childish glee of the recipients was really amusing as they held their gifts aloft and jumped for joy. Johan and his wife Lena had a gift for every church member and seeker in their charge, and went to a lot of expense and trouble to make this thing a success. The majority of those present had never seen a Christmas tree before and asked all sorts of funny questions.

Then came the feast which having been described so often I need but mention. Our white guests helped us in the disposal of a big pot of delicious chicken, cooked feet and all. Thus well fortified we tackled the homeward road, taking a shorter though more rugged route. We arrived at Johan's little cottage about eight o'clock and were very kindly entertained there that night.

Trusting that this New Year may see many more Victories for Him both with you in the Home land, and with us here.

Yours in His service,

GEORGE SANDERS

ONLY THE POWER THAT  
CREATED CHRISTIANITY  
WILL PRESERVE IT

In vain have unsaved scholars and historians attempted to give a satisfactory explanation for the success of Christianity in saving the Roman Empire from destruction. There is no counting on natural principles for that great movement which originated by the humble life and disgraceful death of a humble peasant of the despised Jewish nation. There is no human explanation of the rapid progress and great increase of its number in a few years. There has been nothing like it in the history of the human race.

The dying declaration of the great founder of Christianity is the only rational explanation. He said it was because of the presence of the Holy Ghost. "Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me." This is the only sane explanation. Christianity is a supernatural religion that does not depend on the things of this world for its spread, neither wealth, education, philosophy, intellectual culture or the power of the word. It was and is the power of the Holy Ghost in his church that has made it powerful.

We assert therefore that it will require no less power to preserve Christianity than that produced it. If it requires any other power, then it must be a stronger and higher power. And there can be no greater power to preserve it than that which created it. How absurd then, for the church of today to think of trying to get along without the Holy Ghost. And if the church of today does not cease trying to get along without the Holy Spirit, God will raise up some other institution to take its place. We have been trying almost everything else; or at least we have been putting the emphasis on other things.

Many are lamenting the decline of the power of the church over the world and are praying for a revival. The revival will never come until we stop avoiding or neglecting the preaching that insists on the Holy Ghost as the great factor in advancing the kingdom. Our pitiful efforts to try to carry on spiritual life by the methods that slight the Holy Ghost has got to cease or God will raise up something or some one who will honor his method of carrying on his work by his method—by Spirit-filled men.—*The Christian Witness.*