

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona Mission Station,
March 8th, 1941

Dear Homeland Friends:

Another Quarterly Meeting is over and we are glad to report blessings from God. The meetings were good and well attended right from the first.

On account of the river being full we did not expect as many as were present, and we were glad to see such a good crowd. Quite a number of the preachers from the Natal side came by bicycle.

Two of our converts from Gazaland came with their preacher, Alfred Matula, and they were a great inspiration to all. One is now a helper worker whose name is Samuel. He was telling Eugene how much he longed to go out among his own people who are in the compounds, and preach to them about Jesus. We gave him a picture roll that we brought out with us and his desire is to get a little time off from his white man so he can do some work in the nearby Shanan compounds. He feels that the picture roll will help him to preach the word of God in a more impressive and effective way. May God bless this tribe of people is my earnest prayer.

I believe our church members were helped and two girls gave themselves to the Lord as seekers. There was no baptism this time. Several felt that they were ready but the workers thought it best that they wait a while. One was taken into the church by letter and one who had sinned was restored.

We presented our baby to the Church. I did not feel that it was at all necessary in one way, for we fully intend to bring him up in the fear of the Lord, but we thought it would be an example and might encourage other parents to make the same promise before the church concerning their little ones.

The weather is very dry and the people are longing for rain. The gardens right around us are all quite good but down through the Pongola River valley the crop is very poor indeed.

We had a very pretty church wedding here about two weeks ago. The girl, Joana Sibiya, is a sister of the chief and she married Phillip Kunene. The wedding customs are quite interesting. They had the church service on a Wednesday afternoon. Joana looked very nice in white satin dress and everything to match, even to a silk umbrella. Her little attendants were also dressed in white satin and the bridegroom was also nicely dressed. The service was very nice and when it was finished we invited the wedding party to the mission house where we gave them each a cup of tea and a cake.

The next day was the feast at Joana's. At a heathen wedding there is lots of dancing but at a Christian wedding they sing quite a lot; have lots of meat to eat, etc. I believe everything was very nice at Joana's, but the following day was spent at her husband's and there rather an unpleasant thing happened.

It is the custom for the girl's party to take all her belongings and go to her husband's kraal. At the entrance is placed a stick and the girl pays her husband \$5.00 to open the gate and allow her to enter, I suppose. As the party neared the Kunene kraal with our preacher at the head, they noticed a stick but as it was not in the usual place they mistook it for something else so simply kicked it out of the way and went on. These people do not belong to our church and they do not like Johannesi

so that gave them a chance to blame him. Their talk was very disrespectful to their chief also as well as to Johannesi. One man went so far as to say that if he had his knife he would cut Johannesi open.

At last the chief, who felt very much insulted and grieved at the way all their explanations were being treated, got up and said that if he and his party were in the wrong he would give several cows to make them feel better. I think he did it mostly to make them feel ashamed for upsetting his sister's wedding but it didn't help matters at all. There was much talk but all to no avail as far as clearing up the matter was concerned.

Later Phillip went to the chief's home asking his pardon for the way his relatives had acted. The chief does not blame Phillip, but does not forgive the relatives, and now goes so far as to say that his family must become heathens again. He says when one married a heathen he is treated with respect but now in a Christian wedding the people disregard his explanations, etc.

Now this will affect us for some of his people are our church members. Eugene and George have had several talks with some of the workers from two of the other churches and once with the offenders to try and think of some way to help the chief to see that it would not be wise to try and make heathen of all of his people but so far we have had little success. Those who were wrong will not admit it and those who will not admit their wrong are very hard people to deal with.

Such unusual things as do come up in this land! Some of their customs might seem rather amusing but to these people they are very important and many are very good too and to have them broken is a trial to them.

We are asking God to undertake so that these dear souls who want to be Christians can do so. But if the chief says no, there is little they can do but obey. His family is large; he has twelve or more wives; is engaged to eight girls and is still looking for more, for recently he has been trying to court one of our school girls. Then besides his own family I expect his word would affect his brothers and sisters as well.

Our children are all well for which we thank the Lord. There have been cases of smallpox not far from us but none real near the mission. Malaria has not made its appearance near us either, but the mosquitoes are present to carry the germ if cases do appear. We are not troubled by mosquitoes, but we see one once in a while, and one morning recently I killed a malaria carrier in our room. Recently the boys killed a large puff adder just over the mission fence and Eugene killed a small snake by the kitchen door. Dangers have been and likely are near but the dear Lord has kept us safely through the months and we thank and praise Him.

We all join in sending Christian love to you all and pray that God will bless you.

Yours, in His service

G. M. KEIRSTEAD

As light to the sun, as the heart to the body, as weight to the hammer, as the foundation to the building, as point to the spear, as edge to the sword, as fruitfulness to the tree, so is Christ in preaching; and preaching without Christ can no more enlighten the world than the sun without light.—John Bate.

OUR LORD'S HUMILITY

The life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ are a standing rebuke to every form of pride to which men are liable. Note the contrast between these well-known sins and His own holy life.

Pride of birth and rank: "Is not this the carpenter's son?"

Pride of wealth: "The Son of man hath not where to lay His head."

Pride of respectability: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Pride of personal appearance: "He hath no form nor comeliness."

Pride of reputation: "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."

Pride of independence: "Many others who ministered to Him of their substance."

Pride of learning: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"

Pride of superiority: "I am among you as he that serveth." "He humbled Himself." "Made a curse for us."

Pride of success: "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." "He was despised and rejected of men."

Pride of self-reliance: "He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them."

"Pride of ability: "I can of mine own self do nothing."

Pride of self-will: "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

Pride of bigotry: "Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is on our part."

Pride of resentment: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride."

WHAT IS LACKING?

William James in his Primacy of Action has pointed out that there are times when no decision becomes a negative decision. This truth applies here. The neglect of religion by the public schools carries a powerful anti-religious influence. For a modern school—embracing in its curriculum every normal human interest but religion—to neglect religion gives the pupil the impression that it is of little importance for life. The state program of education, now generally secularized, lacks the one essential required to achieve its own ends. This must be corrected. Unless the solution to this problem is found, religious faith will lapse still further.—Selected.

"BE YE HOLY"

Compiled by Rev. Floyd L. Skinner
X—Present Holiness

"Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Psa. 32:2).

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness * * *" Rom. 6:22).

"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect" (I. Cor. 2:6).

"And such were some of you * * * but ye are sanctified" (I. Cor. 6:11).

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one * * *" (Heb. 2:11).

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected" (I. John 2:5).

"Herein is our love made perfect * * * because as he is, so are we in this world" (I. John 4:17).