

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona M. S.,

Dear Highway Friends:

We have had an interesting week-end and perhaps you would enjoy hearing a bit about it.

On Saturday Johannesi Nkosi arrived home, after having spent a week or so in Zululand. Alfred Metula, Philemon Dlamini, Andrew Mtetwa and Paul Nkosi made the trip with Johannesi. They went by bicycle.

Saturday evening Johannesi came down and told us all about their visits in different places, through Zululand. They hunted up some of our church members, who had moved there, and had services all along the way.

In one place they were urging some heathen to accept Christ and they said: "A girl would not consent to become engaged to a boy who had only courted her once." The people urged them to come soon again and even asked that a worker be sent to build a home and stay with them. But this trip alone would fill a letter and perhaps Eugene will write more about it to you.

Sunday was a nice cool day, after nearly a week of very warm weather. The people of Altona had asked for a special service when they could bring a thank-offering to their new Umfundisi—Johanesi Nkosi. They certainly appreciate having an ordained man of their own race and I rejoice with them.

Sunday was set for this occasion, about seventy people arrived and the service began at half past twelve. Johannesi had charge of the service. He spoke for a few minutes, telling the people about his trip to Zululand and then preached a good holiness sermon from Is. 35:8. At the close of the sermon Eugene spoke a few words and then many partook of communion, after which the people stood and thanked the Lord for the blessings He had given them and then brought forth their gifts. It was quite an interesting sight.

The money amounted to about four dollars and twenty cents, and about thirty-five cents that had been forgotten at home, was also pledged. One woman brought a large dish pan full of peanuts, a little girl brought a small dish of peanuts, while another girl came with a bar of soap. A tiny little boy's gift was a box of matches.

Johanesi thanked the people very nicely. He told them that he would keep the money to use to keep his bicycle in running order and to buy food for lunches when he went to a far away place, to take the gospel to the people. He said his wife would grind the peanuts for corn meal bread for lunches for short trips and the soap he would use to wash the shirts that he had soiled on his long trip to Zululand. Lastly the matches he would carry in his pocket and would strike them when he had to repair a bicycle tire at night. It was a good service. I think you would have enjoyed it.

Next Sunday Eugene will be at a fairly near outpost—Prentia. It is about five miles from here, along a native path, towards the Pongola River. The following Sunday he will go to Mfeni, which is, I believe, one of the hardest trips he has to take. Still I am very desirous of attending a service there and of the privilege of visiting our worker Paulina, and I trust that the Lord will enable me to also make that trip some day.

Our work at Altona is going quite smoothly. The Sunday services are well attended and a good spirit present. The Sunday school

has an enrollment of over ninety. We have only three classes as we are short of teachers, but the children seem to be interested.

The day school has now eighty-six pupils attending and the two teachers seem to be giving good service. Recently I have been teaching the children to sing "Holy Night," and its wonderful how quickly they began to follow the tune. Most of the Zulu children sing nicely and our Altona children sing better than ever before, as our present teacher has been training them well along this line.

Our girl teacher has not been able to teach for nearly two weeks because of a severe attack of tonsilitis. She is better now, for which we are grateful.

The last few weeks, flu has been present among us and we have been very busy giving cough medicines, etc., to the sick ones. I believe all are improving. It visited the Mission house and most of our family were in bed for a few days but all are better now except Harold and Kenneth and I trust they will be better tomorrow.

It will be Christmas, I expect, by the time this reaches you so in closing we all join in sending best wishes for a Happy Christmas and New Year to you all. May the rich blessing of God be with you and give you peace.

Yours in His love,
GLADYS KIERSTEAD

THE GREATEST BIRTH IN HUMAN HISTORY

A Contribution to The Highway by
Rev. Peter Wiseman*

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called wonderful counsellor, mighty God, the everlasting Father: the prince of peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there is no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." (Isa. 9:6-7).

The same prophet, Isaiah, said, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isa. 7:14) St. Matthew, in speaking of the birth of Jesus, says, "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matt. 1:22-23).

St. Luke, in the first chapter of his gospel record, relates how this birth is a virgin birth. Thus both evangelists who record the birth of Christ, declare it to be a virgin birth.

The birth of the Saviour, then, is different from all other births in human history. "The angel said unto them, "Fear not: for behold I bring unto you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward men." Thus began the great interest in Him.

The educational world is represented in the wise men; the peasants are represented

in the shepherds; royalty is represented in Herod; nature is represented in her gifts, "gold, frankincense, and myrrh;" the heavens are represented in the star which led the way; the heavenly hosts are represented in their presence and praise; the lower creation is represented in cattle around the manger; poverty is represented in the place in which He was born. This wonderful birth still holds the center of interest. It has not abated by the years, but the rather increased, and the reason is clear, namely, the Person and his mission, for "He is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

St. Paul, realizing the wonders of the gift of Christ Jesus to redeem the world and the glories of that redemption, cries out in his Corinthian letter, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

First, this Gift of God may be noted for its uniqueness. "Unto us a son is given." The gift of redemption: "He shall save His people from their sins." The gift of peace on earth and good will to men! The lovegift: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The generous gift of peace: "not as the world giveth give I unto you." The gift that is meritorious: the merit arises out of the Person, the God-man. In His Deity, all the claims of Deity are met: in His humanity, all the claims of humanity are met: in the God-man, God and man meet. He is the "only mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

Secondly, this Gift of God may be noted for its unspeakableness. "Thanks be unto God for his Unspeakable Gift." Unspeakable in destiny: "The government shall be upon His shoulders." Unspeakable in the wonder of the life—brief but blessed, sorrowful but saving and sanctifying, simple but sinless, finally a victim yet a Victor. He is unspeakable as to character: "the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy." He is blameless! Unspeakable in His saving ability and power. He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

Thirdly, this Gift of God may be noted for its Universality. The gift of the Lord Jesus Christ is for all, the whole world, every nation, people, tribe and tongue. No person is left out of the offer of mercy through Christ. Whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely. "Whosoever will, let him come." "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor that ye through His poverty might become rich."

The Christmas Gift of the Lord Jesus Christ is universal, for He is the great universal Person of history. His sacrifice is as universal as the plague of sin. He died for all. His sacrifice is efficient and sufficient. It is perfect and eternal!

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There is no way to be really and truly free from worldliness except to be filled with the Holy Ghost. We are all either worldly, or other-worldly, according as we listen to the dictates of this world, or the mandates of heaven.—J. O. House, observer.

not Christians long; just as there are lazy business men, but they are not in business long.