

# MOZNEWS

MOZAMBIQUE OUTREACH NEWS  
1 MARCH 2000

## Issued by Email on request.

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**(Letters and small packages up to 30cm x 20cm x 20cm)**

## **Hello once again from Mozambique.**

It has been a big month here for people living in Mozambique mainly in terms of devastating weather conditions. We hit the world news with floods in Maputo and cyclones up the coast and in Beira. But we are also sure we hit the spiritual news papers as we pounded demons and brought many people through the gates of the kingdom of God. If satan had a newspaper it would read. *"Bad news for demons in Mozambique - Christians are flogging them in Jesus name. Many demon refugees looking for a new country to live in."*

## **Floods and Cyclones**

It has been a terrible month of "natural" disasters for Mozambique. I have to wonder why a country has to go through so much turmoil. 25 years of terrible war, followed by a merciless famine and consequent loss of thousands and thousands of lives through starvation and now major floods and cyclones leaving hundreds of thousands homeless and facing starvation again. In fact the news here is that there has been more damage to Mozambique in one month of flooding and cyclones than in 25 years of war. These people have taken an incredible pounding.

When I asked the Lord about this, He led me to read Kings and Chronicles and there is a pattern there that needs to be noted. When any king of Israel turned to God, the country followed suit and the Lord brought blessing to the whole nation. When the king turned away from God, he invariably led the country away from God as well, and the Lord allowed certain disasters upon the land until the king and country repented. Mozambique's history is that of idol worship, tribal warfare, human sacrifice and more recently communism and atheism. We are currently praying in a certain way, to repent on behalf of those chiefs, kings and presidents who over the past 1000 years have brought disgrace upon this land by turning away from the Lord - bringing it so much hardship.

Anyway, our friends from Dorcas ministries, Jean and Anita are putting together thousands of emergency food parcels and helicoptering them in to places where people will die in the next day or so without some kind of relief. The bigger relief organizations are still reviewing the situation. These guys are hopping on barges and wading into disaster flood zones to get to local churches who will distribute the parcels. Each relief parcel costs \$10US (about \$16 Aus) and includes basic items of food for immediate relief, and a bucket for water and will save a family. This is not specifically a work of our ministry but we will sure help Dorcas if we can and if it saves the life of a Mozambican.

## **This Country Called Mozambique**

### **Where is it?**

Mozambique is the Queensland of Australia - covering Brisbane to the tip of Cape York. It is the South East Brazil of South America from Uruguay heading north, covering Sao Paulo, Rio De Janeiro up to Salvador. If Mozambique was in the northern hemisphere it would be the China and Vietnam of Asia. In

North America it would span from Panama up to North Carolina - encompassing the climates in between including Florida and Mexico. It is a big country, made to look small by being on a vast continent.

(See Picture)

Mozambique has the unfortunate recent history of being the poorest country on the planet - now the fastest growing economy on the continent of Africa as the former communist government adopts Christian principles. It has suffered 25 years of colonial and civil war - 4 times longer than the length of World War II.

### **Life Expectancy**

The current life expectancy for Mozambicans is: Women - 47 years Men - 42 years.

Infant mortality in Mozambique is the highest in Africa. Out of every 1000 babies born, 125 babies die before they reach the age of one. Causes of death are Malaria, Diahorea (Cholera), Tuberculosis and Aids.

### **Poverty**

Poverty is still the major prevailing problem facing the average family in Mozambique. Families survive on next to nothing. Water from wells is murky and usually the well is near the toilets. One still sees people go to the toilet on the sides of the road. When walking on the beach, we have to avoid stepping on human poo.

Beira is a sunny seaside city - but very poor. I realized that I had become used to things here when my brother arrived and described Beira as a city of slums and ghettos. The houses would be condemned any where else.

### **Religion**

Most Mozambicans generally follow traditional beliefs - particularly the belief of pleasing their dead ancestors. Witch doctors instruct them in this devilish practice where upon they usually pick up a demon for their efforts which slowly destroys their lives.

## **Ministry**

We are continuing to see God move in our meetings. Meetings are highlighted by the wonderful power of the Holy Spirit. People are being healed of different diseases - including a man who had suffered from a disease in his lungs which he had had for a long time was healed when we prayed for him at a village area called Macuti.

Most importantly, people are being saved. It is glorious to see men and women and children on their knees turning from their sins and accepting Jesus as their new master. We are careful to get people to renounce their experiences with witch doctors and experiences with ancestral spirits (demons). This can often lead to demons manifesting. But they always submit to Jesus.

Jay has been preaching wonderfully in various churches on "The Real Jesus" - versus the religious Jesus; and on prayer. The people respond particularly well to her very simple and animated style. Our children also participate in the preaching (Actually they are great actors - Kyal Swartznegger and David "John" Wayne). As African's love demonstrative preaching, live drama is taken very well and my boys are very demonstrative.

### **Church Services**

We are looking for a "complex" to start church services. We have presently looked at many halls but we felt the Lord say not to look for a hall but a complex. We didn't know exactly what he meant considering what is available in Beira. But as we drove passed an old unused theater building which we had previously inquired about - the sign read "Complexo de 3 Fevereiro". We were amazed. Our inquiries told us that it is for sale. \$200,000US to back pay the staff who used to work there (where else does the potential buyer have to back pay the previous staff)and \$400,000US to purchase. So a total of \$600,000US will buy us the old theater which could seat up to 1000 I am told. But I felt the Lord say that we were to pay \$17,000US for a property - so we'll make our offer and see what the Lord does. (\$17,000US is about \$28,000 Aussie dollars)

(Photo)

## **Everyday Life in Mozambique**

### **Rough Riding Roads**

The roads here are atrocious when the rain hits them. Pot holes as big as a small bedroom in some places. The cars here take a real beating. Don't buy a second hand Mozambican vehicle. I hope to get something a

little more powerful than our Mozmobile soon. It has been a real gift from the Lord in that it carts many people around and has been where I would be concerned to take a four wheel drive. It seems to manage though in strangely Divine way.

### **Mud Huts**

Most people in villages live in what you might expect - bamboo and thatched grass huts, or mud huts with thatched roofs. Typically African. But wonderfully practical and inexpensive to build. A typical family of husband and wife with 5 - 10 children would live in one of these - varying in size depending on their family. Our typical small 3 bedroom houses in the west are mansions to the average Mozambican.

### **The 4 Armed Policemen And The Gang Of Thieves**

Just to show that there are ordinary days in amongst the days when the Holy Spirit is moving powerfully I must mention this incident. Francis and I went to change money at the Indian money changer. Remember the shop with the back room with the slow turning fans and the Indian man behind a table in the corner - Humphrey Bogart "Casablanca".

We had left the car parked and guarded by a local guard. But when we came back to our car the headlight was gone - stolen. If we thought the thieves were bold, we couldn't believe the ordacity of the guard who came up to us while we were still reviewing the damage, to collect his wage for guarding the car from thieves. Well that was his worst mistake and what followed, alas, took up most of our day and turned out to be a painful lesson for our poor, young guard. He turned out to be a part of a gang of professional thieves. So the Mozmobile became a squad car as Francis and I carried 4 armed policemen around the inner streets of Beira chasing the gang of thieves. Finally we caught the thieves and the Mozmobile became a paddy wagon as we carried the 4 armed policemen and the 4 captured thieves to their hideout to find the hidden loot and then back to the station where we were supposed to pick their punishment. Uh oh! No mission school I've heard deals with this stuff. What would Roley Thorndike decide? 4 young thieves. Death? Life imprisonment? I had to decide without Roley this time. My suggestion was that the thieves wash and paint the police headquarters for a week. The police didn't like that or any of my suggestions for that matter - so they picked theirs: a severe beating with batons and then they let them go. A day in the life of a missionary to Africa.

### **Bribery**

Unfortunately bribery in Mozambique is rife. Traffic police pull over cars and continue to pick at minuscule problems on the car until they find something worth writing a ticket for. Then they will pretend that they are going to write a very expensive fine and ask for the driving license and threaten to confiscate it. What they are doing is silently trying to extract a bribe for less than what the ticket is worth. Most people pay the bribe - but according to Proverbs 29:4, bribery causes a nation to be unstable. So giving or accepting them affects innocent people. So we don't pay bribes. We are trying to get an opportunity to speak to all the traffic police about it.

### **The Grande Hotel**

This amazing building called the Grande Hotel was once the pride of Beira. Complete with circular entry for guests cars, ballroom, rooms with balcony views of the sea and beautiful beach frontage - this was the playground for the rich. Since the war, it has become a huge slum, housing 3000 people who occupy the rooms. There is no power, nor toilets. The paint has long faded and become a dull gray and black (mold) colour. I sat outside and watched as people did their ablutions outside the front entrance. Also the beach in front of the Hotel has become a giant toilet area. Chickens run around, washing hangs over the balconies, people gather around the front because there is no work. I am sure that a subculture has developed there - since the population is as big as a small town. We are planning to start a children's work at the Grande Hotel in an attempt to preach the good news of Jesus to the people in that place.

(The picture is of me outside the Grande Hotel)

## **News**

### **We Are Now Nearly Residents Of Mozambique**

It would be easy to underestimate God's hand in obtaining our "DIRE's" (pronounced - Direee). These are identity and residential visas which must be obtained to stay permanently in Mozambique. In Maputo we have heard of people waiting for up to 3 and 4 months to obtain them. We have heard of people who have even been refused DIRE's. But the Lord granted our children's DIRE's in one working day and our own should be available "tomorrow"- (A word used with various meanings here)

### **Fleeting Family Visit**

My brother Michael and girlfriend Anna visited with us for a week. We took them to Savanne, a small beach, 30kms from our house. The roads were so bad that it took us 1 and a half hours to get there. The trip included crashing through a bridge which appeared safe to travel over. Fortunately 4 men were walking by and helped lift the car out.

It is tough for visitors to get used to the heat and the humidity, the lack of regular power, using a scoop to wash with and the poverty all around.

### **Cyclone Eline**

We had a cyclone hit Beira on Sunday 20 Feb which continued for 24 hours with winds of 260km per hour (This is the speed measured by local instruments). The cyclone moved from the south up the coast causing great damage as it traveled. Maputo, the capital of Mozambique suffered from severe flooding prior to the cyclone. A ministry we love and support when we can - Iris Ministries had to evacuate hundreds of their orphans as flood waters rose up to waste deep.

In Machanga, water levels rose up to the roofs of the houses. People were sitting stranded on their roofs for more than 3 days.

As the cyclone hit Beira, the roar was incredible. We thought our own roof was lifting off. Glass smashed in buildings all around us. We began to pray and felt the unction to tell the cyclone to cease and leave Beira. Francis and I drove out into the cyclone and the streets had become rivers in some places. Big signs with large steel poles were bent over like they were plasticine. Roofs were gone off many buildings. The hospitals were full with people suffering with cuts from flying debris. Power lines were down and we were without power for 24 hours.

But the storm obeyed and submitted to Jesus and strangely left prematurely. The wind died down and the rain ceased and it never came back - praise the Lord. Everything bends the knee to His name. And as for us and our house - we experienced zero damage. We were reminding the Lord through out the cyclone of His word in Psalm 91 ".....no harm will befall you and no disaster will come near your tent".

We know that the Lord intervened because the cyclone came back to pound the coast north of us causing great damage 200 km north at the mouth of the Zambezi River. We continue to thank Him for His protection during that time.

The forecast is that heavy rains are coming from inland Africa. We do not need anymore rain just now in Mozambique.

### **Billy Graham of Norway Visits**

Norway's Bjørnar Helmstad (BJ) held a pastors conference in Beira from 22 - 26 February. Hundreds of pastors attended. He is coming back in May for a big crusade. We hope to help in whatever way we can. He is nearly Australian in his sense of humour and very much Christian Outreach Centre in his big thinking approach. He is a friend of Brian Houston and Ulf Eckman and he has a big work in Pakistan. But we praise God that the Lord has called him also to Beira Mozambique to train pastors and preach the gospel.

### **Beira - Home For Australians**

Jeff and Robbie Housen are Australian missionaries from the Assemblies of God. They have acquired a large property in Beira and are training 28 young men in an intensive course leading to pastoring. They too are on our support list. They are helped by a strong team from Australia - Julia, Isabelle, Max, Liz and Brian. So the Aussies are well and truly planted here in Beira. They are a great help to us in many ways, particularly just to drop in and have a real cup of coffee and a chat in real English (Australian). You can contact them directly on jefrob@teledata.mz

### **Francis' Tip**

Francis N'Sona our Facilitator would like to say, "Whenever bad things happen in our life, like being robbed or death in the family, we have to rejoice because God can restore everything as He did with Job, because satan thinks that if he does bad things to us, we will forget God. If you are hanging onto the rescue rope, which is Jesus, and someone is hanging from your legs, like satan's pressure is pulling you down, you may be tempted to let go of the rope because the going is too hard, but don't leave the rope while you are in the air or you will die. Keep hanging on to God. (Picture)

### **Signing Off**

Well that's another month here in Beira, Mozambique Africa. We are still in our early stages but getting a firm foothold. We are now officially residents. Soon we will be able to invite those who God has called to this country to join us, and soon we will be able to encourage visiting teams to make the trip. But for now we keep preaching and demonstrating the good news of Jesus, seeing human lives changed forever and

experiencing the amazing things the Holy Spirit does every single day. All glory to the King of all Kings - Jesus.

Thank you for your prayer and support,  
God Bless you, Greg, Jay, Kyal and David