



THE SCHLEHLEINS

Missionaries to the Tsongas of South Africa



VICISSITUDES AND VISAS

The Ups and Downs Continue in Ministry and Life

God is sovereign over rainy days, a sinner's faith, male pattern baldness, demonic activity, sparrows, chariot wheels, bodily afflictions, World Wars, and Donald Trump.

He's also sovereign over the suicide noose.

Earlier this year we relaid to you the untimely death of one of our dear church members who took his own life. Pain and doubt followed. But God uses sin sinlessly, and from the ashes came life.

A few weeks ago, the churches from Elim and Mbhokota gathered to rejoice around nine baptisms. Three of them stemmed from Given's suicide. The testimonies of God's grace through Christ went on and on and on.

Remember the young man who awakened to the swinging rope above? He made a profession of faith, as did two ladies who came to hear a week of gospel preaching during the funeral arrangements. Given's name had long since disappeared inside those church walls he had helped to build. Now his name sprung forth like an evangelist from the grave.

Months earlier I preached Given's funeral, the tears so thick I was in danger of quitting the sermon. This time, in the very same place, the tears flowed from those who found life in the death of God's Son.

8 Days and Counting

Lady Astor once told Winston Churchill that if he were her husband, she'd poison his coffee. He replied: "If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

Over the years, we've wondered how much the people in our

village and church love us. We've known our fair share of those who would certainly like to flavor our cup of Joe. "If we had to leave, perhaps never to return, would they miss us, remember us?"

We may find the answer to that question sooner than we would like. Our three-year visas expire on the last day of September. We've done this process before, this time submitting the mountain of paperwork months ago. Still no answer, and the clock is ticking. These days, it is much more difficult for foreigners to remain in South Africa. The requirements are as confusing as they are capricious.

If our visas are not accepted, here are the consequences. The \$1,300 we spent for visa application is not refunded. We must leave the country immediately. We are not allowed to return for at least year, if that.

Two of the seven applications have returned, so we'll take an hour drive tomorrow to find SA's answer. If "yes", we'll have to wait for the rest. If "no", the plans begin immediately for the hasty trip stateside.

Like socks with sandals, life was awkward during our early years here. Now this is home. We're asking God to let us stay.

Pray...

1. That all seven of our visa applications would be approved.
2. That our church leadership would become precocious.

Even if we don't leave now, we'll have to leave some day.

Trusting and Trembling,
Paul and Melinda