

Free Grace Evangelistic Association – Zimbabwe

Ndebele Bible Distribution 4 – 7 October 2016

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Dear brethren,

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. To Him be all the honour and glory for causing us always to triumph through His name. Amen. “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;” (2 Corinthians 3:5)

It was with much desire to visit the brethren in Zimbabwe that I left home on Monday 3rd October 2016 for Bulawayo. My visit had been arranged with the Chairman that I go and witness the launch and distribution



of the Ndebele Bible in Matabeleland on behalf of Free Grace Evangelistic Association (FGEA), UK and Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS). Having consulted with FGEA Zimbabwe Co-ordinator (Maxwell Msindo), I travelled to Lusaka and got a Gweru bound bus which leaves Lusaka at 12:30 hours. As the bus was leaving the terminus, the bus crew made announcements through the microphone, and lastly said, “We have a Pastor on board.” Then he said, “Please come and pray for us as we start our journey.” I walked to the front of the bus and prayed through the microphone. I

counted this as of God’s mercies for our journey. We left Lusaka at 13:00 hours. This meant we would get to Gweru late at night. Pastor Msindo had made arrangements with one of the elders from their church to host me for a night. The bus arrived in Gweru 15 minutes after midnight. Immediately I sent a text to Maxwell who also contacted this church elder that I had arrived. The elder came to welcome me and took me to his home where I spent the remaining hours of the night. *(The photo on the right shows Pastor Alex Madzongwe, the FGEA National Secretary and Bulawayo zone Co-ordinator, FGEA Zimbabwe National Co-ordinator Pastor M Msindo and I waiting for our transport to our lodging places within Bulawayo.)*



After spending some time in the morning with my host, I left for Bulawayo to join the team. Upon arrival, I was welcomed by one of the zone Committee members and later we went to join the team which was having a briefing. The photo on the upper left shows zone members with FGEA National Co-ordinator Maxwell Msindo chairing the meeting. After exhausting the logistics business the meeting was called to a close and they offered me to pray the closing prayer. I carried a box of 200 copies of “Which Bible Version - does it really

matter?" with me from Zambia which Maxwell Msindo had requested for distribution. I handed over the books to him, who also handed them over to the zone leadership. This was meant to be part of the distribution alongside the Ndebele Bible.

On 5th October we gathered early in the morning to start our first program on my visit schedule. We met with one of the Ndebele Bible translators Mr Buti Mziya, who was accompanying us for the program. It was such a blessing to meet with him and travel together for ministry. He talked about what necessitated the translation of the version of the Bible now being distributed. He also mentioned some challenges encountered during the translation period such as, interruption of electricity supply, and computers being stolen while they were attending church service on the Lord's Day. He came driving a Morris 1959



model. It was quite refreshing to have this car in sight. It was like "The Old is Better." The photo on the right above shows Mr Mziya and D Musaka, and behind is the Morris car.



The brethren loaded 95 carton boxes containing Bibles in two separate vehicles for the Ndebele Bible launch and distribution in Gwanda and Esibomvu in south Matabeleland. After all the logistics were done, we started off for Gwanda. We got there a bit late for the program. We found ministers had already gathered at Brethren in Christ Church and just waiting for us to arrive. Gwanda is a provincial capital for Matabeleland south. Several ministers from different churches and denominations and invited guests had gathered for the launch of Ndebele Bible distribution, which included 2 chaplains from the police and prisons, representatives from the municipal council and district hospital. 60 boxes, each box contained 12 Bibles were allocated for Gwanda. The photo on the right shows Maxwell Msindo teaching on Bible versions.



The FGEA team took turns in ministering. They taught on Bible versions highlighting the most important parts of Scripture which are under attack. This they did using the booklet "Which Bible Version - does it really matter?" I spoke on the subject, Remaining Faithful to the Word of God; the text being John 1:1-5. The Word is foundational in all that we are and do. The main emphasis



was the importance of the Word in our lives and ministry, and our call to remain faithful in this corrupt generation. Mr Buti Mziya also had a good time explaining what necessitated the new translation of the Ndebele Bible from the original languages, the challenges during the work and the beauty of having a faithful translation of the Bible in Ndebele. The distribution was launched in the Matabeleland south as The Regional Director, National Co-ordinator and Mr Mziya held the Bible up and D Musaka prayed.

The program ended with the distribution of Bibles and “Which Bible Version” booklets.

We then left for Esibomvu which is a rural area between Gwanda and Bulawayo. Since we had delayed in Bulawayo in the morning, our programs were somehow affected especially in Esibomvu. We arrived very late in the afternoon. Some people thought we would not make it to the place. The meeting was held in a local community hall. Here we had to make everything brief because it was getting late. After brief introductions, I was called upon to give a word of exhortation. Then the brethren came in to talk about Bible versions, and lastly Mr Mziya talked about Ndebele Bible translation. We then



started the distribution exercise. As the distribution progressed, some women in the audience started singing for joy after receiving free Bibles. There was so much joy among the rural community for having been



blessed with Bibles, a thing which had never happened to them before. 35 boxes containing 420 Bibles were allocated. Copies of “Which Bible Version?” were also distributed. We were through with our program just before it got dark. The local team had prepared some food for us and those from distant places. We quickly took the meal and then started off for Bulawayo in a dust road connecting to a highway, using a different route from the previous one we used when going to

Esibomvu. The photo on the right shows the joyful group after receiving Bibles and booklets.



Thursday morning, 6th October 2016, the team decided that two of the members should go ahead to Victoria Falls town with 73 boxes of Bibles, while the rest of us go to Plumtree. Then two of us, Pastor Alex Madzongwe and I would join the brothers in Victoria Falls, after Plumtree’s program later in the evening. The Two brethren went by bus. They got there late in the afternoon and were welcomed by the local organising committee. We headed for Plumtree, a border town with Botswana, to continue with our program. We carried 22 boxes containing 264 Bibles. We got there by mid-morning. On our way the vehicle developed a fault of overheating. Nevertheless, we got there safely.

After prayer and introductions, I was invited to give a devotional word, which I did. Then Maxwell Msindo spoke on Bible versions, while Alex Madzongwe talked about the translation of the Ndebele Bible we were



distributing. We then distributed Bibles and “Which Bible Version?” booklets to all the participants. The photo on the left shows the distribution of Bibles.

We went to an auto spare shop where the driver bought flash liquid and used it thinking may be the cooling system has some blockage. They filled the radiator with some more water and we started our journey back to Bulawayo, and then proceed to Victoria Falls town. After driving for some good miles, the overheating continued and even grew worse to the extent of

damaging the sensors for the gauge and it stopped functioning. Later the radiator was discovered to be leaking. The photo on the right shows our vehicle packed by the roadside. We stopped three times before we could get to Bulawayo.



We got to Bulawayo early evening and went to Victoria Falls road to hitch hike. We got into a 7 seater car which had 5 people in it. We left Bulawayo around 7pm and planned to spend a night Hwange, a town 100km before Victoria Falls. After 1 hour on the road we had puncture on the rear left wheel. They changed and put the spare wheel and back on the road. After 2 hours also, we had another puncture on the same left rear wheel. Before the puncture, we had stopped at a service station to buy water; I noticed that the same wheel had low pressure. I told the friend to the driver but he somehow ignored my advice. It was like Paul advising the ship crew not to set sail, but they could not hear. This time it was in the middle of Hwange National Park, and it was late at night. I was told not to get out of the car, there are lions there. After some one hour plus, two men came to our rescue from Hwange with a spare wheel, quickly replaced the punctured one and off we went. We got to Hwange at 01:00am. We were picked from the station by our host for the night, had a bit of food and then we rested. One of the team members in Bulawayo had contacted his friend and made arrangements for our lodging. We thank God for this hospitality.



We continued our journey to Victoria Falls our last point of distribution for the program. We found the brethren who went ahead of us the previous day had started off with the program. We thank God for this arrangement, because it helped us so much after the breakdowns we had. We joined in just when they were looking at Bible versions. We made our contributions; mine was on being faithful to the word of God. We exhorted the brethren to study the word of God not just for preaching purposes, but also for defending the truth of God and a faithful translation of the word of God. The photo on the left shows Pastor Alex Madzongwe speaking to the audience in Victoria Falls town. The program ended with the distribution of Bibles and booklets. A total of 73 boxes were distributed.

There has been joy in all the places where we had been and done the distribution, the folk have been very thankful to God for Trinitarian Bible Society for the grant of the Ndebele Bible, especially now that they have a translation from the original languages, and for Free Grace Evangelistic Association for teaching and facilitating the distribution. All other translations have been taken from the English modern versions of the Bible. Now there is a version like the English Authorised Version. This has been milestone in the Church history in Zimbabwe, and Africa as a whole. It has shown many that FGEA is





committed to deliver the best to the people. In the left photo Zimbabwe National Co-ordinator (Maxwell Msindo) gives a Ndebele Bible to the Regional Director.

We are very thankful to FGEA UK for the support being given to FGEA Africa, both spiritual and material. We have managed to move from one place to another because of assistance from FGEA in the UK. Thank you for your prayers which are of great value. Heavenly records will only reveal such treasure at the end time.

We are very thankful for the TBS grant which has come at the right time, even when the nation is going through an economic crisis. Without it we could have not handed our Bibles to thousands of Christians in Zimbabwe.

I am very thankful to God for the brethren, the FGEA National Co-ordinator, Secretary, Bulawayo Zone committee and all the organising committees in various places for their contribution, and hard work in organising this tremendous work of distributing the Word of God across Matabeleland. They have been planning and working tirelessly, so that our brothers and sisters can receive the best Ndebele Bible translation. Many times, they have been away from home for days, travelled on unsafe roads and at times in awkward hours. The Lord himself is able to reward such works of love.

After our three-day Bible distribution program had ended on Friday afternoon, we went to share a light moment as a team at one of the eating places in town. After the meal, we took a cab and the brethren escorted me to the border with Zambia, and then we crossed over the Zambezi to Zambia. It was here where we bid farewell and then they returned to cross the river back to Zimbabwe.



With Christian love

Duwen Musaka
FGEA REGIONAL DIRECTOR

