

DEC 2015

# Ethiopia

"... That the Word of God would be spread ahead of us and be honoured..."

## LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

*This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light and there is no darkness in Him at all (1 John 1:5, NLT).*

The month of December came with a fresh holiday atmosphere. Soon 2015 will be over, and I wish we could look together to the past year's blessings and give thanks to Him from whom all blessings flow. As my title suggests, where there is a light there is a shadow as well, where there was a blessing this year there was a trial as well.



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### I WALKED MY FATHER HOME

Let us start with June 2014, when God, in His goodness, allowed me to go home where my dad was still well for another month before he was *promoted* in Glory. I thank God with all my heart for this blessing and I also thank each of you who encouraged me in that time of grief. It was not easy and it is still a difficult time for us as a family. It is said that the grieving time brings up the depths of the heart...

### MORE STEPS TOWARDS A STANDARD LANGUAGE

In November 2014 I came back to Ethiopia where together with my friend Simret I prepared some booklets telling the Christmas story in two dialects of Ale. This was a blessing which really gave fruits later this year. This was a good tool to use in presenting the local government officials with the urgent need for a standard dialect for writing the Ale language. Without it, the



Working on the Christmas booklets, with Simret

significant progress, which translators made in drafting almost half of the New Testament, would have been useless.

### DRIVING... THE ETHIOPIAN WAY

My good Ethiopian friend from Addis Ababa decided to replace her car, offering her old one to me at a reasonable price: a 1991 Toyota Surf, for \$22,500. At the beginning of July I became the owner of it. Cars here are extremely expensive. During these seven years here I had never imagined that I would be able to buy one... *you of little faith.*

As a new driver I had to face my fears and learn to drive with special traffic conditions that the roads offer in Ethiopia. The road is equally shared for everyone: cows, donkeys, sheep, goats, chickens, children, people, and finally cars.

After less than a month, in the beginning of August, "my old Japanese" refused to start. After being towed to

Arba Minch to the best mechanic in the area and transported to Addis Ababa on a truck, the problem seemed to be the so called "computer board." Replacing it with a new one would have costed almost \$1,300. God provided someone who could fix the old one for only \$300.

I'm constantly living out my dependency on the Lord, for each breath, each step... and also each time I have to start my car.

### THE GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT YET

September came with the greatest achievement for the Ale Bible Translation Project: a decision for a standard dialect. We carried this *shadow* for the last three years, but now this light has her own shadow: the actual change from the two dialects, in which we had been working to the Golango dialect, is a very messy business. To the *normal* amount of stress, which an interdenominational team experiences during group checking sessions, is now added the stress of having to deal with three dialects of the same language.

Solomon Osoma is a speaker of the standard dialect (Golango), and provisionally hired for the time being, hopefully starting to be on a payroll at the beginning of January, Lord willing.



Christmas booklets in Ale

I urge you, dear brothers and sisters, to help us with your prayers! Pray for us to have wisdom and patience.

### CHALLENGES TO THE MINISTRY

It is a genuine blessing from the Lord to be able to freely work in Ethiopia. However, there are new legislations this year that require degree or diploma from an accredited Bible School in order to renew work permits for those of us who are involved in this ministry. I am praying and also asking you to join me in prayer, asking the Lord to know what to do. The excellent Bible School courses I've taken in Romania are not accredited.



It's almost finished. The inside will have concrete flooring, and the outside still requires a fair amount of work. The outside walls will be covered with a cement mix. The first two rooms are designated to accommodate guests.

### A NEW OFFICE FOR BIBLE TRANSLATION

I want to share with you the joy of seeing my brothers and sisters from the local church of Gawwada town, where we are located at the moment, making progress in finishing up a new office for Bible translation. It does seem to me like a reckless act of love from many of them, like Mary had in pouring all that expensive oil on Jesus' head. The people are happy to give their own resources to see it finished.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Solomon Osoma, Kasahun Kefene, Banie Beliu (our translation committee secretary, a very active supporter of this ministry) – all three are members of the Mekane Yesus denomination; Dawit Ghircea (member of the Orthodox church), Like Mesfin (member of the Kale Hewiot denomination)

This effort of the local community gives great hope for a growing sense of ownership of the Bible translation. Not easy, though! Remember how Mary was criticized for what she did! I would ask of you to bring in prayer especially

those that are opposing the work.

**PLEASE PRAY** for us that we may have the opportunity to be a blessing to them.

### A KEYBOARD – A FAVOURE TO ASK

I do have a special request for the youth group of this church. They were real hard workers in building this office and I know they would very much like to have a keyboard. If you hear of anybody that doesn't need their old keyboard, can you let us know?

The church youth group would be very happy and very grateful! I did not tell them anything and they did not ask me for any help. They are ready to wait and collect money for about two more years to buy a new one.

### PRAYERS FOR A NEW PARISH LEADER

Something more urgent as a matter for prayer: the sad news that the Mekane Yesus parish leader left his position last week. In a month from now, the committee will chose another leader.

Last time the best of our translators, Kasahun, was the only nominee. This was three years ago when I asked you to join me in prayer and fasting for God's



Reading the Nativity story of Jesus

will to be done in this matter and for His kingdom to come and His name to be spoken well of in all this situation.

*Politics*, whether in church or outside, is always present. I am only asking for the wisdom to know how to remain faithful to the only politics that matter in the light of eternity: *...because Yours is the Kingdom, the Glory and Honour for ever and ever.*

### BIG THANK YOU!

Thank you for your time and patience to read to the end of this letter! And thank you for your partnership in the past! I wonder how this year was for you. I would love to hear about your own *lights and shadows*. I'm praying for you with thanksgiving!

In Him, yours, with much love,  
Lumi



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