

Changed Lives by Paul Liggitt IMM USA

It took over 5 years of lifestyle evangelism to free Elijah Katandika in the Rustenburg area of South Africa, to make the decision to open his heart and decide to yield control to Christ.

On my recent trip to South Africa, my hope was to produce a video interview of a miner who had been impacted by the ministry of the International Miners' Mission. After meeting with the Pastor of the Ikegeng Church, Mohau Mofokeng, he suggested that I speak with a miner named Elijah.



Elijah is from Malawi. Like most miners he is part of a migrant population that travelled to South Africa to find work. He is married with 4 children and a grand child.

They live in a 10 x 20 foot tin home. It is crowded but not a shanty by any means and is the typical for their community. Elijah and his family live next door to the church. Bulelwe, Pastor Mohau Mofokeng's wife, said Elijah became interested in Christianity through the ministry of the church to his children.

Elijah arrived from the mine and the first thing I noticed was a peaceful warmth that shone through his eyes. We chatted thankfully in English. He told me that for 28 years his name meant nothing, but now it does. I learned that he is about 57 years old and has been working in the mine for almost 16 years.

As we moved into his home for the interview, I struggled not to disrupt the careful placement of their possessions. I was struck by the contrast between my lifestyle and Elijah's. Here was a man, approximately

my age, who has been spending from 6 to 8 hours a day underground, who lives in a home the size of my family room, and is not only content but excited because of the new life and freedom he has found in Christ.

We talked about the dangers in the mine and how he travels to the bottom of the mine in an elevator with 200 other men, then walks for 40 minutes to get to his station. Elijah mentioned that there are 11,000 others working in his shaft and that there are 23 other platinum

shafts in the area. I steered the questions towards the changes he has seen since his conversion and that is when he really began to smile. Elijah told me that he used to get into fights with other men and that that has all changed.

He told me that his supervisor recently asked him "What has changed? You are different." Elijah chuckled and said, "I don't even know what I am doing different."

What truly honours God is when those we come in contact with see the changed life as a result of yielding control of one's life to Christ.

Elijah went on to say that he believes that there is an evangelical call on him to reach his friends and family for Christ. He knows well the obstacles they face because of their lifestyle but also knows the power of God that has given him freedom in Christ.



INTERNATIONAL MINERS MISSION

THE SAFETY LAMP

"INTRODUCING MINERS TO THE MASTER"

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CELEBRATING THE WORK OF IMM IN MINING
COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD

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WHERE IS OUR CONFIDENCE?

A challenge for IMM from Ethiopia



Shakisso, Ethiopia – the lure of gold that brought this 'wild west' town into being

GOLD has always been a source of desire, both by those who dig for it and those who wish to own it. Somebody has calculated that the total quantity of gold that has ever been mined in the whole world amounts to some 166,000 metric tons. And where this gold to be found? Mostly it is in some kind of vault. Dug out from under the surface of the earth's crust and then buried again in bank vaults!

Gold is popular today for the very same reasons it was popular in the past: man considers it to be the ultimate source of wealth. Very many place their whole confidence in it. But the Bible challenges this view.

'If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence... this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.' Job 31 vv 24 & 28

Indeed, the Christian believes that there are things that are far more precious than gold.

'Where shall wisdom be found and where is the place of understanding?... It cannot be gotten for gold....' Job 28 vv 12 & 15a

'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold.' Psalm 19 vv 9b & 10a

'You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.'
1 Peter 1 vv 18 & 19

This confidence in the saving power of Jesus Christ is something that the International Miners' Mission seeks to teach and preach to miners and their families in various parts of the world. The IMM continues to develop partnerships with Christian church groups who have caught the vision of 'Introducing Miners to the Master.'



Taxi rank in Shakisso – notice the absence of cars on the dirt high street

Ethiopia

One such partnership has now been established for nearly 13 years. In 1999 IMM Trustee Vicky Yorke flew in a small plane from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia down to the gold mining town of Shakisso in the south of the country. So began a link with the Addis Kidan Baptist Church which has developed and

AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES IN ETHIOPIA

Yes! I would like to support the growing work of evangelism among the gold miners and their families of Shakisso, Kibre Mengist and the other churches of the Addis Kidan Baptist Church to support IMM's work in Ethiopia and enclose a cheque/postal order for £ (payable to the International Miners Mission) for the following:- Motorbike: £ Training: £

Title: First Name: Surname:

Home address:

..... Post code:

Signature: Date:

As a UK taxpayer I would like my gift made under Gift Aid (please tick box on left if appropriate).

Please note that to enable charities to claim Gift Aid the donor must pay an amount of income and/or capital gains tax in the current tax year at least equal to that the charity will claim from HM Revenue and Customs on their Gift Aided donation – presently 25 p per £1.00 and, a donor's full postcode, must be included together with their home address.

If you would prefer to donate by standing order, please get in touch and we will send you a form.

Please return to:

The International Miners Mission, c/o Ian Dring, Honorary Treasurer,
19 Babelake Street, Packington, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1WD



John Massink (far right) is being shown a temporary church building by Kifle Shibre of Addis Kidan Church (middle right)

Girma serves as the pastor in Shakisso and the church is growing. Now we see young leaders are coming on the scene.

In the nearby town of **Kibre Mengist** a daughter-church was established in the suburb of Adola. This church is growing even faster than the Shakisso church. It is very outward looking in its ministry and has established churches in places round-about – Haranfama, Hiyu Komele, Zenbaba, Yerbamuda and Didaguda. This work has not been without difficulties, particularly in relation to the matter of land for the church building and the circumstances have been painful for the



Smiling pastors and evangelists enjoy a ride in the back of a van

church community. However the result of the initial opposition has been wonderful, as government officials have provided the believers with a different plot of land very cheaply. The church is now raising funds to start the construction. Gobena and Fikeru are leading the church as pastors.

Three of these daughter churches of Kibre Mengist need special mention:-

Hiyo Komele was recognised as a local church at the 2010 General Assembly. Most members are artisanal miners and farmers. Over the last 6 months a wonderful 21 new converts to Christ have joined this growing fellowship! The church has its own building.

The second church is at **Haranfarma** about 90 kilometres (56 miles) from



IMM have great confidence in the expanding work of the Addis Kidan Church in the mining areas of Ethiopia. This group of pastors and evangelists need our continued support for further training in their Christian ministry

Kibre Mengist. Over the same 6-month period 8 young men and women decided to follow the Lord Jesus. They are now attending discipleship classes. The third, in **Zenbaba**, some 25 miles from Kibre Mengist, Nigusse is serving the church there. Eight people have recently accepted Christ and Nigusse is teaching them basic Christian doctrine.

A new outreach to another gold mine area is being developed in **Kamashi** some 620 kilometres (385 miles) from Addis Ababa in the opposite direction to that of Shakisso. Here a church plant is being established by a pioneer evangelist called Kelebessa. A small group of miners have already been won for Christ, for which we praise God.”

Challenges

So where does the IMM see its role? Over and above the funds that IMM send out for the on-going support of the pastors and evangelists, there is the need for better transport – as always when the work is developing fast! **COST OF A STURDY MOTORBIKE FOR A BUSY EVANGELIST = £1200.**

Another area of need that was highlighted to John Massink, IMM Representative for Ethiopia, is for the **EMERGING CHURCH LEADERS TO RECEIVE TRAINING** for their service of ministry in the Gospel.



We praise God that many children are following the Lord Jesus and that they are being well instructed in their faith

Some leaders had basic training two years ago, but now there is a crying fundamental need for higher level training.

Planned to take place once a month over a 5-day period, there will be 12 courses in view for the leaders. (Each course will involve a 6 hour lecture every day for the 5 days!)

A teacher will come down from Addis Ababa to provide this excellent training. Such a well-run programme is not cheap and a venue for the meetings and overnight accommodation for up to 20 leaders and potential leaders will cost £960 for one year, i.e. £80 PER MONTH.

The International Miners’ Mission sees these two particular challenges as particularly vital in the overall development of this very strategic work. **THE AIM IS TO DEVELOP EFFECTIVE MINISTRY FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

The ‘gold’ that is surely more lasting than the metal dug out of the ground by miners and then buried in vaults is surely the ‘wisdom and knowledge’ of God imparted to men and women who have found Jesus Christ as Saviour and Master of their lives.

Just a thought! If the work is to continue to be blessed by our Heavenly Father we need to be holding out our hands to Him constantly in prayer alongside these men who are ‘up front’, supporting their efforts and seeking His blessing and strength for them. We know then that there will be many victories won in people’s lives for the Saviour.

Will you join us in this challenge? See over



Main Street, Kibre Mengist – better roads allow lorries and motorbikes to move around