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Report: END OF AN ERA

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When Joel and I attended the funeral of 78-yr-old Sis. Ngubane, the aunt of Zipho, I realized that it marked the end of an era which began more than thirty years ago.

Rejoice phoned me. "Our deaf brother has been hit by a runaway taxi."

Helen and I went to the hospital where she went inside the curtained cubicle where our brother was being attended by doctors. Helen held his hand to see if there was any reaction, but there was none.

When she came out of the cubicle, she found a young man waiting for her. Lihle, who knew who Helen was, wanted to know why she was there. She explained and then gave him the first lesson of our correspondence course.

The funeral of the deaf brother was the saddest I ever had to preach. Funda, my interpreter, broke down and Bro. Masuku had to take his place. But from that contact came a harvest.

Lihle and his extended family lived in a rural area called KwaKhoza, just a short distance from our house. We began home studies and conducted at least two tent meetings. And a number were baptized.

But it was when the terrible AIDS epidemic was reaching its peak, and fathers and mothers were dying.

Helen and I realized that many of the young people we were working with were in great need. So we took two brothers, including 8-yr-old Zipho who became our foster son, into our house, and housed about six teen-aged girls (Sister Ngubane's daughters and nieces) in the two-room cottage behind the church building.

And—one girl died in the Lord, and 30 years later all the others except two are attending faithfully.

OMICRON RECEDING—COVID restrictions are still in place, but the figures show that the latest wave of the virus (Omicron) is receding and is about finished.

I am hoping that all COVID restrictions will be lifted very soon. We must still wear masks in public, keep social distances, limit the number in gatherings. Schools are having trouble because the social distancing means children cannot sit close to one another, thus the classes are reduced in number—and students sometimes are going to school only half-time. The assemblies of the church have to be smaller because the chairs are spaced apart. So we are waiting for the announcement that the restrictions are over.

My booster shot of the Pfizer vaccine is due next month. I am feeling fine.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT—I began teaching the Sermon on the Mount last Sunday. I am using Paul Earnhart's book as a guide, and it is wonderful. I am praying to instill some of that wonder in the students of my Sunday morning class. Pray for us, please.

I continue to thank you brethren for your financial support, your prayers, and your letters of encouragement. What a blessing you all are!