

India



India Activated Bomb

By Johnny Smith
(SGA, son of John and Smyth), India

The date? March 17th through 21st, 2001.

The place? Shangri-la! Situated in the mountains of southern India, where the air is clean and fresh; the stars are a few thousand feet closer; the surrounding nature seems to breathe life itself. The Home there welcomes us into their paradise,

where we will be for the next four days.

The occasion? The time bomb for the field of India is about to explode with the Expansion Program (a.k.a. winning new *Activated* disciples), and we'd all been called together for a strategy and planning meeting!

DAY 1 – From around the country we start arriving, from north and south, east and west, and anywhere in between. There are a lot of new faces, but also reunions in different corners for those who haven't seen each other in years. The total count is done—seventy-eight delegates have arrived! That's seventy-two young people and nationals, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine, plus six FGA attendees.

Most of the day is left free to get to know each other, sleep after the long bus ride up the mountain to this gorgeous abode, and eating the delicious food supplied by the most dedicated staff, or engaging in some active and vigorous soccer or volleyball.

5 p.m. starts the keynote meeting. Our precious Mama and Peter heard about our meetings here, and to all of our great excitement and joy, they sent us three heavy and challenging keynote prophecies for these era of action meetings. Thank you to our wonderful king and queen! These prophecies are to be the life, blood, and highlight of these meetings!

One of the prophecies talks

about making the impossible possible and in walks "Demitri" (Tom Cruise, complete with M:i-2 soundtrack), who seems to be on vacation but receives his sunglasses, which when placed on tells him to meet at "Zone 9" code "Shangri-la" sixteen hundred hours, and to there receive his commission details. The sunglasses self-destruct within five seconds, as "Demitri" learns to count.

The spirit of challenge gets heavier as the Keynote continues, ending with a call to arms a call to work, a call to lay aside the weights that so easily beset us and run the race, a call to get on board or be left behind. A call to fulfill our purpose and destiny as young people in the Family to make the Expansion Program happen and to not be content with the way things are, that this field cannot make progress to the extent that the Lord has promised without us committing to excellence—committing to the *Activated* vision.

We end the meeting with a desperate prayer of commitment after which the Lord poured down in



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such great abundance for over one hour, His beautiful Words of life.

At 8:30 p.m. we all meet together in the dining room for a time of rousing inspiration and praise to the Lord. Our instructions from the Lord were to make it a time of loving Him and loving others. The musicians lead us on out the door, out into the lawn where we go back to our Gypsy days of dancing! And then once again back inside the dining room where we have a Praise Time charade!

After some announcements about details of our stay here, we finish off the evening by singing "My Family, My Family." Everyone spends some time fellowshiping and drinking some tamarind juice (a new experience for many).

DAY 2 – The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. with some active inspiration by the inspiration team for the day, as well as some new prayer ideas put into practice.

We read some prophecies sent from the Folks for the entire field of India, which were at that very time also being sent out to all the Homes in India. This was a message on the present state of the work in India. After reading the prophecies we then get down to the nitty-gritty of what the Lord is saying. It's as if these words from our Lord are a deep and expanded mine loaded with precious jewels, and as long as we keep digging we keep receiving. The prophecies highlight mindsets and so a white board went up, we scribble on it different mindsets that we share that are not according to the Word. The floor is open and we come up with a pretty big list of mindsets to do away with in order to fulfill the *Activated* vision.

An impromptu skit follows about mindsets with Mr. Excited, thrilled



Our list on the whiteboard: "Faith = Believing + Action." Also on the board is a list of the necessary keys for

such an endeavor—the code to unlock every solution, the means to bypass all impossibilities, the power to overcome evil, complete access to all of Heaven's power.

A personal testimony is shared of the Lord's answer to a desperate prayer to stretch and grow in faith by reaching across the veil.

The M:i-2 soundtrack fills the air, and in walks "Demitri" once again, to meet up at "Zone 9" with his general, who informs him of his mission, gives him the pictures of those he must fight against, and explains that he is not capable enough to undertake this mission on his own. Demitri has asked Charlie for one of his "angels," who then enters and joins forces with Demitri. The general, in a serious and somber tone explains to them that they cannot do this mission in the armor of the past but must take on new uniforms. They put on the *latest* uniform—provisioned shirts with printed logos: "Get *Activated!*" on the front and "Mission Impossible" on the back, only the "IM" in "impossible" are somewhat faded!) Still, Demitri and Charlie's Angel cannot do it alone and enlist the help of the audience, T-shirts begin flying out towards the audience; everyone puts one on to join in "**Mission Possible!**"

The prophecies we read also talk about pitfalls and roadblocks to unity and the *Activated* vision. We list them—familiarity, complacency, lack of faith, lack of communication, etc.

Another set of prophecies from the Folks is read, which are the *Activated* vision prophecies for India, with tremendous counsel on fully living the *Activated* vision and what it really means.—The "big picture," not just in relation to *Activated* and follow-up, but in each of our lives and in our Homes.

In walk four men, soldiers in an army, each of them with their own mindset of how and when to fight the war. It's a tearful moment when one of the generals gets killed due to a lack of unity; the others pledge to remain united to stand and fight as one. "The Song of Victory" plays in the background, as they finish and win the fight, carrying their dead comrade on their shoulders.

Our next meeting is at 4:30 in the afternoon; the meeting is on faith and what it means to stretch our faith. We read a compilation from the Feast GNs as well as some of the Era of Action GNs. This word, "faith" comes up a lot throughout the meetings, emphasizing the importance of it, and how the impossible can become possible.

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The direction of the meeting veers towards the nature of youth. We are introduced to the concept of upcoming workshops days. The platform is set—we need to pull together and then see what applies to us and our personal situations. People who have a fruitful ministry going that is bearing fruit are

encouraged to pray about how to share this with the body the following day so that we can all benefit. We need a lot of new ideas in order to get the job done!

This evening is a special Loving Jesus night. The room is arranged with candles and flowers. A beautiful picture of Jesus is the focal point of the room; a spotlight shines on His face. Several of the delegates received new praises kisses to Jesus, as well as from Him; these are read aloud, interspersed with songs. The evening climax is a personal, intimate moment with Jesus that everyone shares while instrumental music plays in the background.

DAY 3 – Today our focus is “Putting Skin on the Era of Action.” It begins with the reading of a prophecy received from the Folks again, entitled, “Encouragement and Counsel for the Delegates.”

Our goal today is to see how in one day we could be living the *Activated* vision and Expansion Program. We discuss outreach, scheduling, praying for the sheep, evaluating what sheep we have on the line and where they are at, teamworking, identifying our individual talent and focusing on it, faith, hearing from the Lord about everything, CTPs, keeping logs and stats, databases, starting small, finances, PR albums, COLs, youth meetings, Bible classes, teach others to teach others, etc.

Happy, from the Delhi Deaf Home, then shares a testimony of how the deaf work has grown from a small group of catacombers meeting together regularly, until now today, they have a network of one thousand five hundred people in seventeen different cities across India who are all attending classes every Sunday!

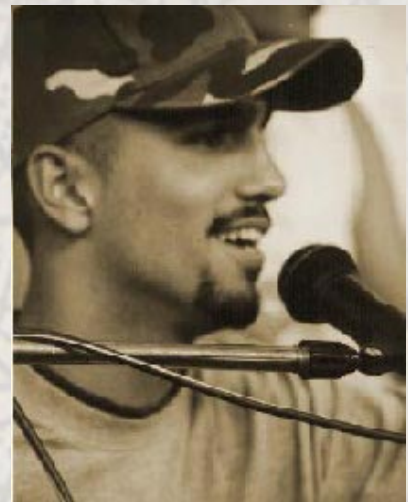
Then the floor is open for people from other cities to share testimonies of what they are doing in their Homes. It's inspiring to hear from many different Homes and exchange ideas and notes on what is working!

That afternoon at three, the grounds are filled with sweaty bodies and heavy breathing, as the sun beats down on the groups of people. One group is intently determined to play their soccer game, while the dust swirls around them cloaking them into oblivion from the rest of the team. The other group is heavily into the latest championships of volleyball—the “Valley” Homes versus the “Mountain” Homes. Thank God for our two-minute showers after this!

After our sweaty exertion we continue with practical tips on “Putting Skin on the Era of Action.” We talk about prayer, mail ministries, having a vision of where we're going, not slowing down on getting new subscribers for *Activated*, sending regular e-mail, praying with people, building bridges between us and other religious communities, answering questions, etc.

Steven (Indian national) shares with us some of his testimony of being won to the Family and how he was a catcomber for nine years, during which time he won many more to the Family. Incidentally, many of the people he won to the Family are present at these meetings. It was awesome to see! Joy (new disciple) also shared how she had joined the Family and was a live-out for nine years before that, during which time she met many who she connected to the Family and one of them was also here at the meetings! Rahul, another national, then shared how when he was getting to know the Family, what really helped him was SGA Renee phoning him every single day to read a *Daily Might* to him. The testimonies went on.

It's open forum in smaller groups this evening. We share what the



Lord has shown us about going back home and putting into practice all that we have discussed and read while here. We have prayer together that we will not lose the vision!

DAY 4 – The morning meeting presents a challenge: “Me? A bellwether? I just can't seem to get away from it.” The Lord and Dad are calling us individually to take up the challenge! The prophecy from Dad on being a bellwether, hits me right on, highlighting going back home and teaming up with our younger brothers and sisters in fulfilling the Expansion Program! It also gives me good practical tips on being a bell-wether to the JETTS and junior teens, enumerating things we can do together, so that we all can share a part in of all this action!

Testimonies are shared from different young people who have been involved with helping to shepherd the younger ones in their Homes and lessons that they have

“What am I doing in my Home to make it a Home that is living the New Wine and following the Lord closely?”



The key passage from the Lord states: “The buck stops with you, Boy!”

learned from it. It's inspiring to hear of those who are hearing the call and answering it!

We then read another convicting prophecy about spiritual responsibility. The key passage from the Lord states: "The buck stops with you, Boy!" I ask myself the big question, "What am I doing in my Home to make it a Home that is living the New Wine and following the Lord closely, making it a positive and loving atmosphere?"

A short interval in the meeting soon ends and the class continues. We delve into Bible exploration, journeying with Christians of times past and their dedication, using the sample of Paul and how he "became all things to all men" (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). At the same time, Babylon is exposed, along with a warning of the "falling away" of Christians who don't "trash their trinkets" and head for the spiritual mountains.

It's quiet time now (2 p.m.); we are all taking time to desperately seek the Lord as to what our personal prayer requests are. The days of the meetings are coming to an end and the Lord has promised to all of us that whatever our hearts' desire, He will grant it unto us!

By 4 p.m. all seventy-eight of us are divided into groups in order to share our prayer requests together, laying hands on each other and beseeching the Lord for His power and anointing to do the job ahead which we feel so incapable to do!

We gather back together in the dining hall for united prayer! The Lord's Spirit pours down with such

magnitude and abundance, sending us spirit helpers to introduce themselves and their help to us—Mahatma Gandhi, Pandita Ramabai, Sadhu Sundar Singh, Samson, executive angels and missionaries who have passed on. The air is electric; no one wants to stop. The Lord's beautiful words are giving us just the counsel, guidance, and encouragement that we need!

Just when we all think it's over and time to go fill our rumbling stomachs, the Lord has more for us! Who cares about food, anyway? We all receive a very special



gift, a prophecy in an envelope, received for each one of us personally! What a treasure! Tonight was a complete high on the Spirit!

After dinner, the evening begins with a prayer of love to the Lord asking Him to come down into our presence and dance with each one tonight. The Lord then responds in prophecy telling us that tonight we will have a celebration of love as we dance together and that He is pouring down some Heavenly music to ring in our ears, as we love one another!

We have an incredible amount of talent in our midst and it's on display tonight. First there are the Dragon Brothers, straight from Japan with their magic. We are entertained with exotic dances. A team of guys enlighten us as to the battles they face in rescuing damsels in distress while trying to maintain their "manlihood."

There are other talented musicians in our midst: sax players from Russia and Iceland, who play some jazz while we

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all experiment with dance steps. Somebody received a song in prophecy today and performs it for us all. Then there are the local dances—the bottom shaking, bottle dance from Brazil, and the *aluripo* dance from southern India, giving us a cultural taste for the evening! We dance on into the night until even the "die hards" begin to drop! What an evening, and what a Family we have!

DAY 5 – It's a day of farewells and goodbyes, as people start catching their buses and beginning their journeys down the winding mountain trail.

But first, one last short meeting. There are floppy disks for every Home, complete with EC3 letters (Executive Counseling Correspondence Course, follow-up form letter), *Reflections*, sample classes, sample database files, prayer lists for sheep, classes to go along with the *Activated* mags, classes to go with the *Activated* booklets, the Foundation Stones and more. Everyone is taking these home with them and will start using them in the feeding of their sheep and building a work and local church. We have a little show and tell, of the latest *Activated* mags, and some new children's story books in the works!

Announcement: "Everyone, as anxious as you are to leave, we've got one last job to complete—taking a picture of all of us in our 'Mission Possible' T-shirts!" (You have no idea the coordination it took to take that picture, and that wasn't even all of us!)

So came to a close what is to be the beginning of a new start for all of us! Our lives will not be the same again and by the grace of God neither will the field of India!



Captions:

Photo #1 *Activated A!*

Photo #2 David (19) and Mark (SGA).

Photo #3 Audience shot during a meeting.

Photo #4 David (19, of Andrew and Joy) leading inspiration.

Photo #5 Available boys! Vijay, David and Rafael.

Photo #6 Audience shot during a meeting.

Photo #7 Japanese Aaron and Ivan.



By Sharif, Joanne and Rima

Nigeria

Embrace of Africa

Who are we?

Let's begin our article by first introducing our small team here in Lagos, Nigeria.

Elaine (21, Pisces). One of Elaine's passions is the absolute immaculate state of our Home. She has the gift of transforming a shack into a mansion, and keeping it that way. Lose your shoes? She is sure to have put them where they belong for you. She is probably the most faithful soul you will ever find. In keeping with her French heritage, Elaine starts her own trends—Caterpillar boots with short evening dresses—but hey, maybe one day it will take off and be the rave. She is our computer enthusiast; she does our TRF, our monthly newsletter and sends all our follow-up e-mail, etc. Lover of beautiful horses and doritos.

Sharif (22, of Joanne, Scorpio). Sharif insists that he is of Italian blood, but we'll never really know about that! Our gym and fitness freak, we faint regularly when he flexes those biceps (it's only polite). Our technical support, fixes the computer when we screw it up, and a patient teacher of computer skills for the thousandth time. Handyman, plumber, electrician, yielded driver and chauffeur. Doting husband and father of two. As well as the above, Sharif is our finance deacon and Home businessman sorting out our accounts, and all the rest that goes into being an official NGO (nongovernmental organization).

Eve (22, Cancer). Of Eve it was once said, "Let us rinse our eyes in your beauty!" That about sums her up. Eve bakes the most heavenly pastries and pies. She is our telephone deacon; she loves people and can make just about anyone feel comfortable with her. Being the eldest of nine brothers and sisters Eve is always available to help out or lend an extra pair of arms; very close to an angel. She never stops laughing, so you can imagine our Home is never quiet.

Rima (23, Aquarius). Rima could be compared to a Mother Theresa for



the African children in the way she loves caring for them. Our British member, she is a lover of animals, books, and tie-dyed t-shirts. She's desperately trying to learn how to drive, and to speak Hausa (the dialect of the northern half of Nigeria). Despite that fragile, breakable look about her, she'll undoubtedly prove she's as tough as nails. She is most persuasive, both in her speech and her fluttering eyelashes! Also our faithful outreach teamworker.

Joanne (23, of Sharif, Aquarius). We marvel at how she manages to use the phone, feed the baby, get dressed, watch Tristan (her toddler), and choose Sharif's clothes all at once. It's great to be on a project or road trip with her. She's practical, yet has a lot of faith, and can always come up with a witty comment about a situation that will send everyone into fits of laughter. She has inspired friends of ours to term her "Mother," even though many find her the youngest looking member among us.

Josh (24, Virgo). We are blessed to have Josh living with us, as not only is he one of our team, but is also a VS for West, East and Central Africa. We have our own private in-house VS, so we try to be on our best behavior, ha! Josh loves witnessing and fundraising. He loves to work too hard, show rich people what they're rich for, talk his way out of challenging situations, play around, and receive pity when he quotes his famous "I'm so tired I can hardly eat!" at dinner. He is a lover of fine things, and his motto is: Uphold the standard!

Although the next three folks are no longer part of our team, they helped make it what it is today so we won't forget them. Thanks for your time here with us guys!

Phebe (23, Pisces), now in Europe, who always had time and a word of encouragement for everyone.

Brian (20, Aries), who moved on to Kenya recently, was willing to do anything at any time just to please the Lord. He was always cheerful!

Andy (18, Capricorn), presently in Croatia, and who was the most faithful personal witnesser, ever. He never passed anyone without giving them tracts or getting them saved.

The history of us

Most of our team has been in Africa here for about two-and-a-half to three years. Josh and Eve, however, have been in Nigeria for five years. Shortly after our arrival, two families who had been here for a while were able to teach us the basic ropes and tricks of the trade to life in Nigeria, before moving on to Uganda later down the line. Their departure brought our Home population down from twenty-five to eight.

For three years we lived in a large house, situated in a new development area. That was until our house was robbed (see *Grapevine* #86 for more details) at the beginning of last year.

For the next three months we stayed

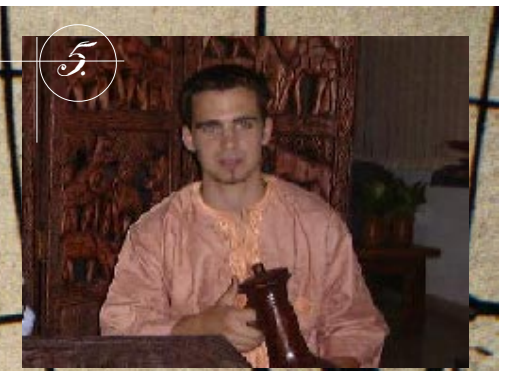
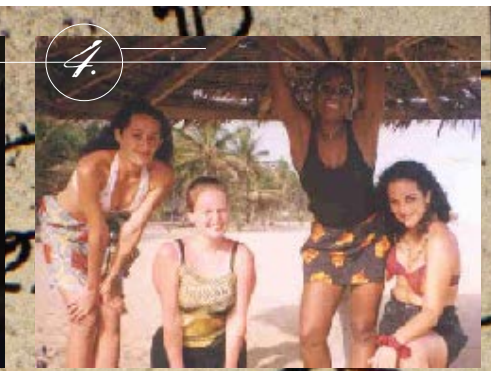
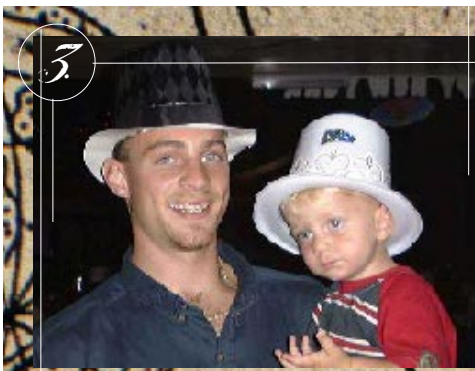
with friends as we prayed and house hunted. During that time the Lord taught us many deep lessons which we otherwise might not have had the blessing of learning. It also made us appreciate each other more. The Lord gave us a beautiful house, better than we ever could have hoped for, right in the city and for an incredible price. Miraculously, due to nothing but prayer and the Lord's tender love for us, our future house's rent for the next whole year (\$5,000) was provided in only four days. We moved in. By then our personnel had reduced to its present number of six members.

During our first year, we made various trips to the surrounding countries, which include Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Zaire, Ghana, Guinea, and a few others.

CTPs on the rise

With our CTP projects we work in three different states here in Nigeria. Sharif and Elaine mostly work in Ibadan, in the southwest of the country. At the beginning of the month we all pitch in to

1. Sharif in traditional wear.
2. Elaine.
3. Brian and Elaine on the beach.
4. Joanna, Tristan and Carmen



get the program rolling and working by establishing monthly pledgers who help by supporting our projects monetarily or, as in the case with three of the largest chicken farms in the area, by each donating a delicious chicken dinner once a month. We mainly work with four homes there—the Ibadan School for the Deaf, which houses 300 deaf children. Mrs. Oyesola, who runs the school, actually started it with her husband by adopting one deaf child at a time. Slowly they saved enough money from their farming for her to go to the States and learn how to teach deaf children, something no one had ever heard of in Nigeria sixty-five

years ago.

Her husband died four years ago and she now runs it on her own. We bring them food and supplies every month, as well as medicines, clothes and other miscellaneous items. At the beginning of the year Andy and Sharif built a small poultry farm together with the older deaf children, teaching them everything as they went. The local poultry farm donated a hundred day-old chicks when the coop was completed. They now raise, breed and sell their chickens and eggs to bring in the much needed money for their school.

We were also able to find sponsors for four sewing machines, so rather than beg when they leave the school they can have a trade and can in turn bring in money for their families. Elaine and Rima are in the process of helping them build a small brick oven so they can bake bread with the flour we donate. Poverty is a huge problem here, so training them in money-making vocations helps to improve the lifestyle of these beautiful children. We endeavor to make our CTPs indigenous, so if we have to leave they can support themselves.

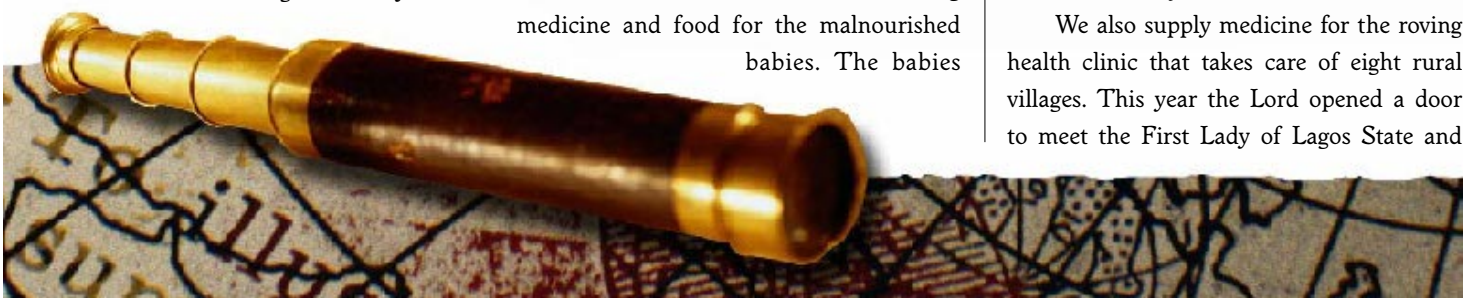
We do a similar thing at the Cheshire Handicapped School. Then there is the Motherless Babies Home where we donate goods, medicine, plastics, as well as thousands of hugs and kisses. There is an Irish hospital run by precious nuns who have given their whole lives for these destitute people, many of whom would otherwise die without them. We bring medicine and food for the malnourished babies. The babies

are left at the hospital door by poor families whose mothers have died in childbirth. They are so appreciative of any help we can give them

Josh oversees the care of the project in Engug, the east of the country, where he has done much of the same as the Ibadan team. He has set up a barbering saloon to teach young, unemployed, handicapped boys hairdressing. He renovated buildings, such as dorms and classrooms, dining rooms, and built baby beds, so the orphaned babies wouldn't have to sleep on the mud floors. Local sponsors also paid for the making of artificial limbs and wheelchairs for dozens of amputees.

Rima and Joanne are simply addicted to Kaduna, a state in the far north of Nigeria. The projects there have included finding sponsors to pay for teachers to start up adult literacy courses; the illiteracy rate in the north is extremely high, especially amongst the women. To date we have started and paid for eight courses that run throughout the year. This includes supplying books, pens and pencils and chalk for the schools. Because these village schools are in a place where all the houses and the schools are made of mud, anything made of plastic is rare to see and the older lady who began this project and those of our group are probably the only white people these villagers have ever seen. Taking photos of these projects is quite a feat, as many believe if we take their photo it will take their souls away.

We also supply medicine for the roving health clinic that takes care of eight rural villages. This year the Lord opened a door to meet the First Lady of Lagos State and



*For the next three months we stayed with friends
As we prayed and house hunted.*

we were able to assist her in her goodwill mission by donating over a hundred boxes of cereal, milk, etc., to many destitute homes, motherless baby centers and handicapped schools. We gave her a *Fear Not CD* and have been able to continue to feed her since. This also gave us excellent PR, through appearances on TV, in newspapers, on the radio, etc. with her.

University crazy

A daily tracting blitz at the university for about two weeks began our university Bible studies. While we tracted, one of us would hold a Bible study with whoever was interested. The frequency of the classes helped to sift out those who were really serious for the Lord from those who just wanted to taunt us or be seen with white people as a status symbol. After the initial blitz, we began having classes twice a week. Those who came faithfully and memorized the assigned verses were given a *Treasures*, a *Word Basics* and a *Memory Book*. We then gave them all a large stack of tracts to pass out and a stat sheet to turn in every month with the numbers of souls won, tracts distributed, people witnessed to, etc.

At this time we had to go with our faithful witnesses and teach them how to *personally* witness, as Nigerians love to preach. We've been helping them learn that it's more like being a friend to those they meet and not lording over them in a self-righteous manner.

When riots broke out regularly at the

university, we couldn't go to that part of town as it was unsafe. Instead we worked out with the owner of a small mall near where we lived to let us give Bible studies twice a week to students. This proved to strengthen our outside witnesses. Only the ones who were real serious about the classes would make the biweekly commute to this place. They now take the tracts to the university for us and win souls and invite others to join our Bible study group.

We held one area Bible camp for ten days. Students from Liberia, Nigeria and Ghana came for this training seminar. We also have another area seminar planned.

Medical camps

Joanne: One week out of the month we go to a different state (there are 36 states in Nigeria) to work together with a Nigerian organization called Pro Health, which is a team of doctors from various private practices who donate a week of their time at one stretch to practice free. All the projects are held in very rural villages where there are either no medical facilities or very little. These people are usually desperately poor farmers, teachers, families and tribes.

For the one week that the team is there, everyone that comes receives free operations if needed, free medicine, dental procedures, eye operations for the removal of cataracts (which are very common here), and other medical needs. A few weeks prior to the medical camp the local government announces it on the radio, TV and

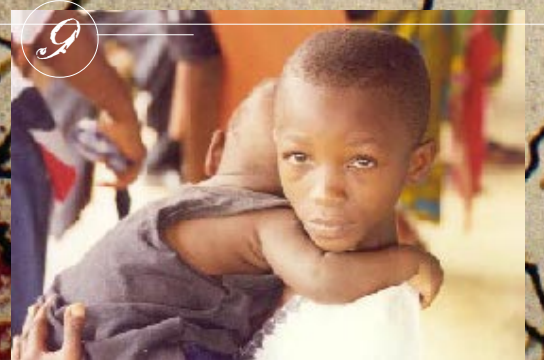
newspaper. Not everyone who shows up needs medical attention, but being so poor they all want to get the free medicine to sell, if nothing else. Some of the people who show up have the strangest sicknesses and growths, though, because they're so desperately poor and isolated from society and due to a lack of finances their ailments get worse over the years, until they develop into something huge and complicated. For example, a leg that was broken and left for seven years without being set.

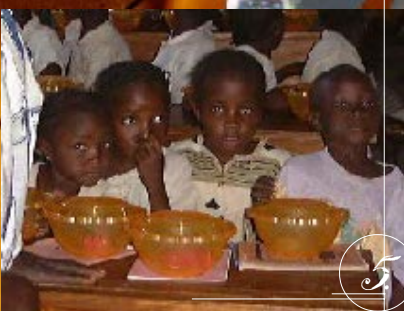
Hernia is a big problem here since kids work from a young age doing very hard physical labor, like carrying wood or food supplies to market, farming with crude tools, etc. On one operation the medical team removed a 6-kilo growth. It was so large because it had been left without treatment for so long.

At one medical project I attended, 15,000 people showed up for consultation. With that many people it can tend to flare up very easily with so many ethnic



1. Tristan 2 years & deaf child
2. Josh in traditional wear
3. Shariff and son Tristan (2)
4. Girls at the beach
5. Sean in traditional wear
6. Eve with child recovering from free surgery
7. Phebe prays for medical patient
8. Phebe with orphans
9. Edo state children





backgrounds. Military presence or police forces are sent by the local government to keep the peace during the medical camps, and for our protection. The roughest job is handing out the cards that are required to enable the patient to see a doctor and get treatment and medicine. Thankfully, none of us have ever had to do this job. However, one Nigerian man, the brother of the man in charge of Pro Health, gets this job. As these people are so desperate he has frequently been stripped and beaten up. He tries to give the cards to those who really need help. I guess these people are very desperate, because they know that if they or one of their loved ones does not get treatment then, when it is free, they may never get it again or may die before they can get help.

One night at 1:00 a.m. a few of us, together with the Pro Health staff, decided to sneak out and give

cards to people who had walked for days to get help, as they slept on the ground waiting for the next day of consultation.

We snuck around giving the cards to children, mothers, babies, the elderly and sick who needed it, so that early the next morning those who really needed help could quickly

be seen. It was so successful and we didn't get mobbed, as no one had expected us. The next night we decided to do it again! Lord help us, we should have prayed before doing that. Word had gotten around that we had done it the night before, so by 1:00 a.m. the next night the crowds were waiting for us.

We had gone by foot to be stealthier, but we were soon swarmed, and once the mobs began to go crazy there was no escaping. It was only Phebe and I; that was scary! In these villages, there is no light but the moon and stars. After we gave out all the consultation cards we had to run. The mob ran with us nearly all the way to our bush hotel. In the middle of the dirt road were some army men with huge guns, so we figured if we just got to them they could hold the mobs back, but when we reached them they began to chase us, too, wanting cards as well.

Thankfully we made it to safety! Some of the other doctors were stripped to their underwear, and got a bit banged up. At first we felt angry with the crowds, like how can they be so ungrateful when we are trying to help them. Then as I prayed about it I figured that if my child were sick and that's what I had to do to get her help or she might die, I probably would do the same thing. Makes you thankful, huh?

It moved us to tears to know that there are people out there who have so little. We help mostly in the pharmacy, filling prescriptions. By saying pharmacy I mean a four-walled room with boxes of medicine everywhere with one small table to sort it all on. The windows are barred, and we are locked in to keep us from being mobbed. We sometimes assist the surgeons, that is if you can stomach it in a hot African climate. There is always so much to do and so many people to help, it can get to be overwhelming and can be discouraging at times that there are so many we cannot help. But that's why we have to remember to be faithful not to get caught up so much in the "serving" that we forget the most important part of giving out tracts, getting souls saved, and praying with those recovering from the surgeries. That by far is the most far-reaching, long-lasting



thing we can do for these poor people.

It is rough going on these projects as the accommodations are so primitive. The food is not so edible and the hours are long, but if we are faithful to preach the Gospel and give as many tracts away as we can, the witness is worth it. Soul winning is so rewarding here as these people have so much fear from the traditional healers (witch doctors) and their own traditions, so the prayer we share with them may be the only true witness they will ever get.

Nigerian secrets

Nigerians are some of the most hospitable, cheerful and generous Africans I have ever met. On one medical project I attended, at the closing ceremony, a very old lady, well into her 80s, came up to give us girls six eggs, two plantains and one live chicken, all stuffed in a plastic bag. This may not seem like much, but looking at her clothes and the toll hard work had taken on her body, it was probably two-thirds of all she owned.—She was giving us a small fortune compared to what she had as a token of appreciation for the free medical assistance we and the medical team were giving to the people

of her village.

On the other side of the coin, though, Nigerians are not meek people. There are frequently riots over fuel prices, fuel shortages, political matters, etc. When this happens it's almost as if they get possessed. As was the case with the armed robbers who robbed our house, they can get themselves so hyper and into an evil spirit to where they can't be reasoned with. In a case like that, you can only get out of there as fast as you can or hope you are not in the wrong place when it breaks out.

We have prayed for the releasing of the good spirits to help us know where to be and how to understand and anticipate the moods of the Nigerian people. There is a lot of suffering here, and poverty being so extreme, people work so hard for so little. A wife may have her husband disappear one day without a clue where he may be, leaving her to provide for her family alone. The sad thing is that many of the village people are

often kidnapped and taken for traditional sacrifices or offerings. *Juju* (witchcraft) is still widely practiced here. People greatly fear the witch doctor, even people who say they are Christians. That's why they need Jesus so badly.

Nigeria is an oil-producing country, which makes it extremely rich, but only a small percentage of the people ever know that wealth. You will find that 92% of the population is among some of the poorest in the world. It could be a well organized country and run smoothly like some countries in the Middle East, as it has the resources to produce more oil than Saudi Arabia. However, corruption is the main problem. The last



1. Huts of the Pamedaki people.
2. Highway on the way to medical camp.
3. Delivering food to Motherless Babies Home.
4. Elaine with orphans.
5. Fulani children with donated bowls.
6. Josh and handicapped boys.
7. Elaine assists dentist.
8. Children from Kaduna.
9. Village in Kaduna. (Nigeria)





three Nigerian presidents stole some 14 billion dollars from the country, leaving it relatively crippled economically.

Daily necessities are not always so reliable. Water comes and goes.—It may shut off from time to time for anywhere between two hours or two days to two weeks. You never quite know whether you will have it or not. The electric problems are huge and complex—every house, office, restaurant, everything in fact, has its own problem. You may get light for only two or three hours a day or all day for three days straight and then none for a full week. Paying your electric bill is just as complicated; our bill is not according to how much electricity we consume but rather what the electric board deems good for that month. Some months we consume less kilowatt-hours, but pay a higher fee than the previous month where we paid less but consumed more. Setting aside a correct amount of finances to pay our bills is quite the feat for our finance man.

There are no traffic lights; people drive in both directions on the same side of the road if they feel the urge. Poor Josh and Sharif have had to take on some rather “cowboy and Indian” style driving techniques. A driver’s license is bought here, not earned through a knowledge of driving. Potholes range in size from teaspoon

size to car size, which serves to make driving here even more perilous, as if there is one such pothole in the lane of an oncoming car, the driver will most likely swerve entirely into your lane and then as your mirrors scrape you are relieved to find he has decided to move back to his own lane. All this to say, we have had to take our time on the road very seriously, and have had to be in prayer full time.

Trucks blaring large signs of, “Goods only, no passengers!” are overloaded with 50 or more people often only standing on the back bumper or trailer hitch of the truck. Not to mention the goats, monkeys, sheep and chickens tied on the top of the truck as well.

Nigeria has only two seasons—the hot season and the rainy season. During the latter, as the roads have no drainage, the rain in places may reach up to the windows of the cars.

You learn to do without those extra specials here, such as places to buy socks, shoes, and underwear. So when someone travels they always lug something back for everyone, including a special treat of chocolate or French cheeses.

Water is fatal; not even the locals drink it. Thank the Lord the big U.S. oil company, Chevron, donates all our drinking water every two weeks which we store in our 5,000 liter tank, which saves us a lot of boiling and filtering.

Fuel is cheap here but there are regular scarcities; in fact, there is a nationwide scarcity as we write this article, which means you have to buy fuel on the black market, which is very pricey. Or during those times we only go to the most important appointments or walk. It certainly makes

us appreciate the times when fuel is available.

Malaria is rampant here, so after dark we generally stay inside. Thank the Lord He has kept us quite healthy and recently we have not had too many cases of it.

Why are we here?

After hearing all this you may wonder why we’re even here. We have at times asked ourselves the same question, but the conclusion is always the same—the sheep are well worth it. People here are so hungry for the Gospel, we are often mobbed when we give out tracts. This explains why we have been on the tract shiners list frequently.

Soul winning is sheer joy here, people will gladly receive a prayer rather than money if we tell them we are missionaries. Any Word, even old tapes like *Climb That Mountain*, are gobbled up immediately. We would love to have the *Activated!* tools here, but getting them into the country is probably the biggest difficulty we face. However, if we were able to get a container of books shipped here, they would all be sold before they hit the ground.

Lessons

The main lessons we’ve learned as a team have been in the use of the new weapons—prayer and hearing from the Lord in prophecy. Our weakness has now become our strong point since the robbery we experienced last year.

After a few close brushes with sickness

1. Josh, Sharif, Rima, Eve with the first lady.
2. Josh and street boys in Senegal.
3. Village kids in Kaduna.
4. Wells constructed for clean water for village children.
5. Joanne, Phebe and Crys.
6. Fulani girl.
7. Crys assists surgeon.
8. Dan & Josh delivering sewing machines.

and danger we evaluated whether being here in Africa is worth our lives. Winning souls and disciples, yes, but not just being here for the "African Adventure." This has kept us on our toes, counting every day as if it were our last. Another biggie which is of ongoing importance is that of loving and appreciating one another and not allowing little idiosyncrasies and annoying habits we all have to get between our loving and seeing the Lord in each other. Being our brothers' keeper, in short.

Scary Stories

Sharif: During the last presidential elections, Christina (no longer with us) and I were in a part of Lagos finishing up some business and were heading home. We were crossing a bridge which took us from the main industrial area to Lagos Island, which is the heart of the city.

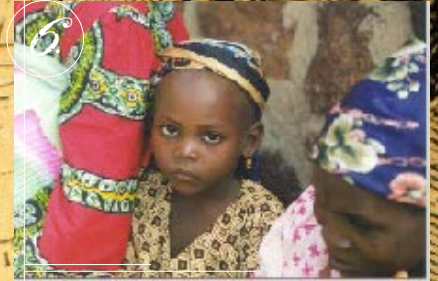
We had just about reached the other side of the bridge when we saw the traffic in front of us stop and people telling us to turn back. Before we had time to think we were trapped by traffic coming from behind us. Hundreds of people were abandoning their vehicles and running from whatever was happening several cars in front of us. We later found out that at that very moment the election results had been announced on the radio and that the losing presidential candidate's supporters were causing a major riot.

I knew something wasn't right. We needed to get out of there fast. I maneuvered the car, trying to get out

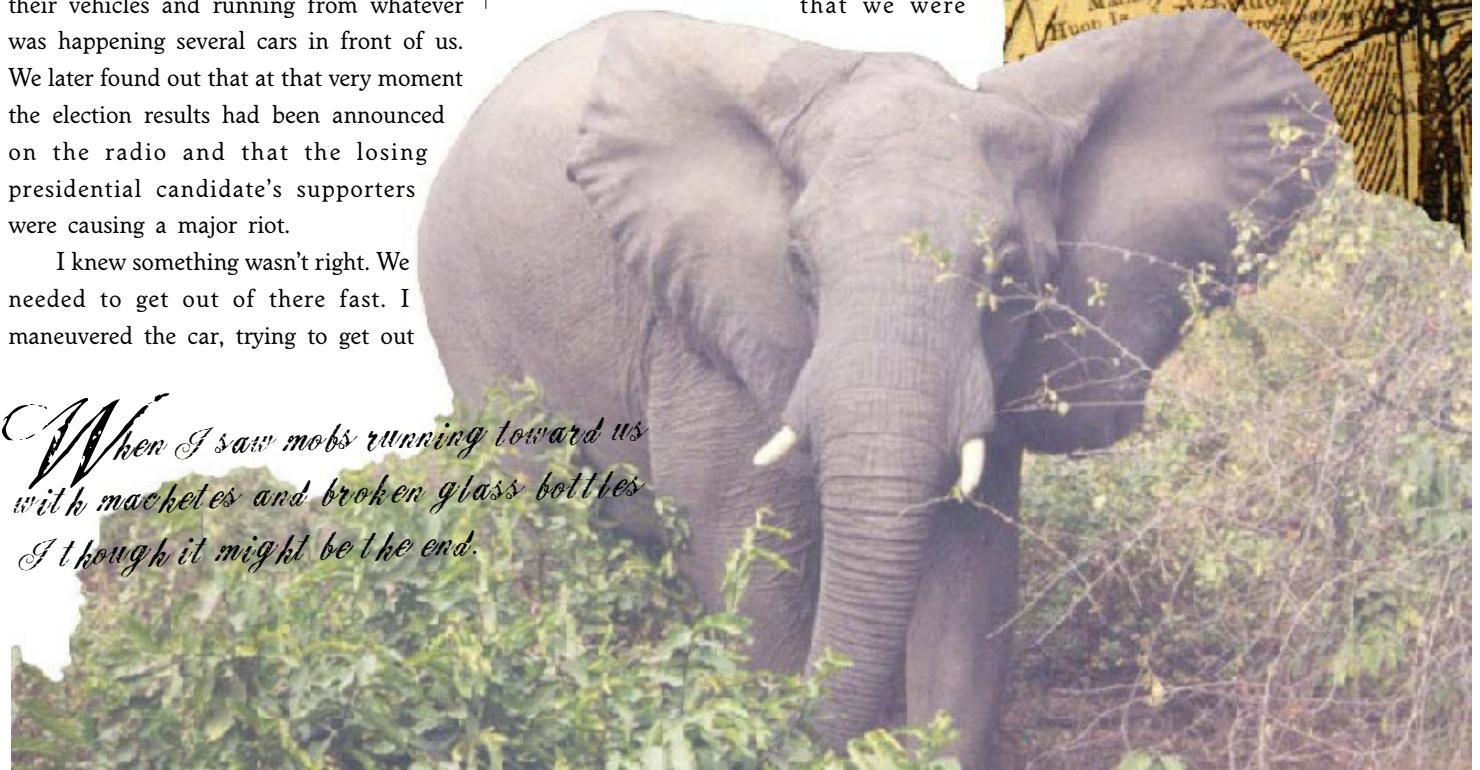
of our situation by getting into the opposite lane, but the two feet high curbs on both sides of the three-lane bridge hampered that idea. All the while the traffic behind us was continually growing; it seemed impossible. This was all happening in a matter of minutes, although at the time it seemed like an eternity. I continued with all the other panicked drivers to push against the traffic behind us now a few hundred meters long.

I was extremely scared, but I tried to remain calm because Christina had only been in the country for a few weeks at that time and seemed to be even more upset than I was. When I saw mobs running toward us with machetes and broken glass bottles I thought it might be the end. I had to make a decision as to whether we should abandon our vehicle and flee on foot or to try to escape with the car. After a prayerful split second of reflection, I decided to stay with the car for a little longer.

I must have hit a dozen cars, bumping and scraping against the other vehicles, both occupied and abandoned, that were blocking us. Both of my legs were shaking and my heart was beating at a record speed. I managed to continually reassure Christina that we were



*When I saw mobs running toward us
with machetes and broken glass bottles
I thought it might be the end.*





going to be okay. Whether she believed me or not, I don't know. Throughout the entire ordeal I was praying desperately for the Lord to do something miraculous to save us. The bumping and scraping continued for a few minutes, all the while the angry mobs were at our heels, edging closer and closer.

Finally, after squeezing between vehicles we were amazingly able to reach the other side of the bridge safely. Boy, was I relieved! We waited for a few hours for the riot police to disperse the mobs before we attempted to cross the bridge again.

That was one of four dangerous riot situations that I have narrowly missed. Thank the Lord for His amazing protection. I'm sure the angels are working overtime for us here in Africa. Most of the scary situations I have been in happened while I was on the road. Driving here is a very dangerous and serious job. We have to be on guard all the time, and have eyes at the back of our heads. Traffic rules are barely acknowledged and most drivers aren't aware that such things exist.

The "Task Force" is a branch of the local road and traffic law enforcement department, who very often throw nail boards in front of your vehicle and hassle you for money. We have lost a few tires in such situations. The Lord is able to get us out of every one of these situations, mostly by witnessing and explaining to them that we are missionaries. Reacting in anger in those types of situations only makes things worse.

Another time around Christmas, our whole team was doing a long-distance drive to the north of Nigeria for a holiday at a game reserve. We were driving on the interstate highway (if that's what you can call it), when we heard something that

sounded like a loud knock on the vehicle, like an exploded tire. We kept going, not wanting to stop on the jungle-bordered road until we came to a gas station. When we got there we discovered a huge dent in the side of our four-by-four. This usually is a tactic used by a gang of armed robbers hiding in the bushes; they shoot metal catapults at any fancy car driving by. Their plan was that the noise would scare the occupants of the vehicle into thinking that there was something seriously wrong with their car, and when they'd pull over to check it out, the gangs would attack them. Thank the Lord, in our case, it missed the windows and hit the door, or it could have seriously injured us.

The quote, "The world knows enough Hell, let's show them a little more Heaven," definitely applies here. The local people's lives are so difficult; many resort to this way of life to make ends meet. But love conquers all, and is by far the best way to get yourself out of any dangerous situation you would encounter here. I am still here, happy and healthy, I'm sure only by the Lord's constant and miraculous protection and guidance!

Pidgin English

Nigerians in general speak English, or so they call it, but it is actually pidgin English and at times impossible to understand unless you have spent some time here. Below are some of the most common examples, as well as their meanings.

This sign is seen everywhere in Nigeria as a warning for AIDS. It reads, "AIDS no dey show for face. Hold bodi or use condom." Translation: AIDS is a disease that you cannot tell someone has by looking at their face, so abstain or use a condom.

Since morning I nevah chop. = I haven't eaten since this morning.

I won go ease myself. = May I please use the bathroom.

Oga don go! = The boss is out.

How now? = How are you?

Na wata dey hungry me = I'm thirsty.

"Wetin you carry? Only you need

1. Andy building mini poultry farm for deaf school.
2. Elaine assists US dentist.
3. Rima in Sierra Leone.
4. Sharif teaching handicapped kids to sew.
5. Phebe in Kano serving food to orphans.
6. Joanne giving medicine .
7. Youroba boy .
8. Elaine, Rima, Phebe, Eve, New Years'.
9. Joanne (of Sharif).
10. Tristan (2) kissing "himself".
11. Josh, Christmas '99.
12. Andy, Josh, Sharif, New Years'.



know.” This is an ad for a credit card, the translation is, “If you carry a credit card no one will know how much money you are carrying.”

A traffic sign in the mainland reads: “Use foot bridge—*garri* dey sweet-o.” *Garri* is a local starch food resembling playdough. The translation for this sign is, “Use the overhead pedestrian bridge when crossing the road—*garri* is so tasty, if you die you won’t be able to eat it anymore.” A sign in front of a small local hospital reads, “We treat weak and dead penis and watery sperm.” In other words, we help in the treatment of impotency.

They even have the news in “special English.” In some parts of the county they read, write and teach from textbooks in pidgin English. We may have spelt a few of the above Pidgin words wrong, having never been properly taught, ha!

Nigerian Cuisine

One of the two best dishes is *suya*, which is barbecued meat pieces cooked in ginger, peanut and chili powder, eaten hot with a small loaf of bread. The bread is ripped open with your hands and you use it to pick up the meat and freshly sliced onions and tomato. You dip it in more chili powder and pop in your mouth. The other is *kalishi*, from the north of Nigeria, which is pounded cooked dry meat like strips of paper, also extremely hot.

In general, Nigerian food is very hot and spicy, as well as extremely oily. The oil they use is generally palm oil, which is a bright red color. They use dried, ground fish in most of their traditional soups and dishes, making them very strong tasting. If

you were to make these same soups without that addition they’d probably taste okay.

Nigerians like to eat every part of the sheep, goat or cow they cook. We have been invited to friends’ houses to eat, and being the honorary guest they make sure to give us the choice meat, such as the eyeballs, the cow and goat feet. Goat head, ear and tail are also considered “choice meat.”

In some places where we have done CTP trips or medical camps, the locals of those tribes eat what is called a “grass cutter.” It basically looks like a huge rat. Thankfully, none of us have ever had to taste it, as far as we know, that is. Nigerians take great pride in their food, and there is always more than enough to go around.

Shopping and bargaining

Doing our weekly fruit and vegetable shopping was once a daunting task, but now we have all mastered it to varying degrees. As soon as you get to the market, everyone starts saying, “Welcome, my customer! Make me happy today.” With lit in hand, we go from stall to stall bargaining for the best deal on each item. Because we are white the prices start at three times the real price. A good rule to stick by is that whatever price they first quote you on the item, you can usually get it for a fourth of the price.

At Mrs. Sunday Omomho’s stall, you ask how much she’s selling her pineapple for. She replies 200N (it’s 100 Naira to the dollar). You say, “No, it is pineapple season. It’s no good for that price, at all.” She says 150, you answer, “Why you cheat me? You know I am a missionary.” To which she replies, “I can’t cheat you, I am a Christian



now.” The irony of it all is that the week prior she would’ve said, “I can’t cheat you now; I’m a Muslim.” What can you say?

So you walk away to the next stall. She then shouts, “Take it for 100N!” You say, “50 is my last.” She says no. Fed up you walk away with finality in your step. Her bluff has been called. She shoves the pineapple in a bag, chases you down the lanes of fruit and vegetables and says, “Oya, pay money now!” The deal is done. And all that for a pineapple. Each week the same dialogue continues. Even though we’ve been buying from her for three years, she will still start at three times the price and slowly, begrudgingly come down 50N at a time.

Monthly bulk shopping is the real life threatening journey, into the heart of the mainland. As far as the eye can see, in this place and in every direction there are people and motorcycles. There are carrier girls carrying huge loads of shopping on their heads, stacked sometimes as high as the

All in a day's work

height of the one carrying them. In addition, they almost always have a baby tied to their back with a piece of colorful cloth. Where they get their strength, I don't know. It's there that bargaining begins all over again, but there is a twist—Nigerians are the master con artists.

As an example, one day Sharif had to buy a hundred boxes of bottled water for our medical project team. He had checked it briefly, and all the bottles appeared to be well sealed. We then headed off to the office of one of our contacts. He looked at the twenty-five boxes of water and proceeded to ask us where we got it from. Sharif replied, "The Marina Market."

A look of horror crossed our friend's face. "Don't you know they fake that water?" he said concerned. He then had his office clerk bring a few of the bottles to his desk. He opened three bottles and they were all good. Thank God. We thank our friend for the warning and head home.

That night Sharif had a check to look over all the boxes. Lo and behold, exactly half of the boxes are fakes! They were all plastic shrink wrapped at the top, but if you took that off, the inner hard seal was only glued on and fell off at the slightest touch. Poor Sharif, he had to go back to the Marina on Sunday to find the cheaters and get them to replace the water. Fortunately, they relented and took them back. There were other times when we had to have an armed accomplice with us to get them to oblige. The desperate need for prayerfulness is once again painfully obvious.

Rima: The brakes screeched as we hit them hard to save ourselves from running over an old man on his knees in the center of the road that led directly up to the hospital. He seemed to be laughing, crying, and shouting all at once. *Too much palm wine*, we all thought, as we shook our heads knowingly, while honking loudly to encourage his speedy departure from our necessary route.

We had been in this small village for nearly a week, with thirty-five doctors working all hours administering free medical care for the rural dwellers. In the hospital, the doctors were concentrating on cataract operations, in most cases, removing them from both eyes, thus restoring the sight of the patient.

We were growing a little impatient with this old man, as he now began to kiss the ground dramatically. *Potent stuff*, we thought, again thinking of the alcoholic liquid which must be responsible for this show of odd behavior. He then started yelling and as we strained to hear; the truth of the situation slowly dawned on us. With tears streaming down his cheeks he shouted, "I can see! I can see!"

This was a moment that will be forever etched on our hearts. After being kept in the hospital for observation following his dual-cataract operation, his bandages had been removed. We had witnessed his return into the beautiful world of sight!

Statistics and numbers are important to judge the outcome of projects we do, but

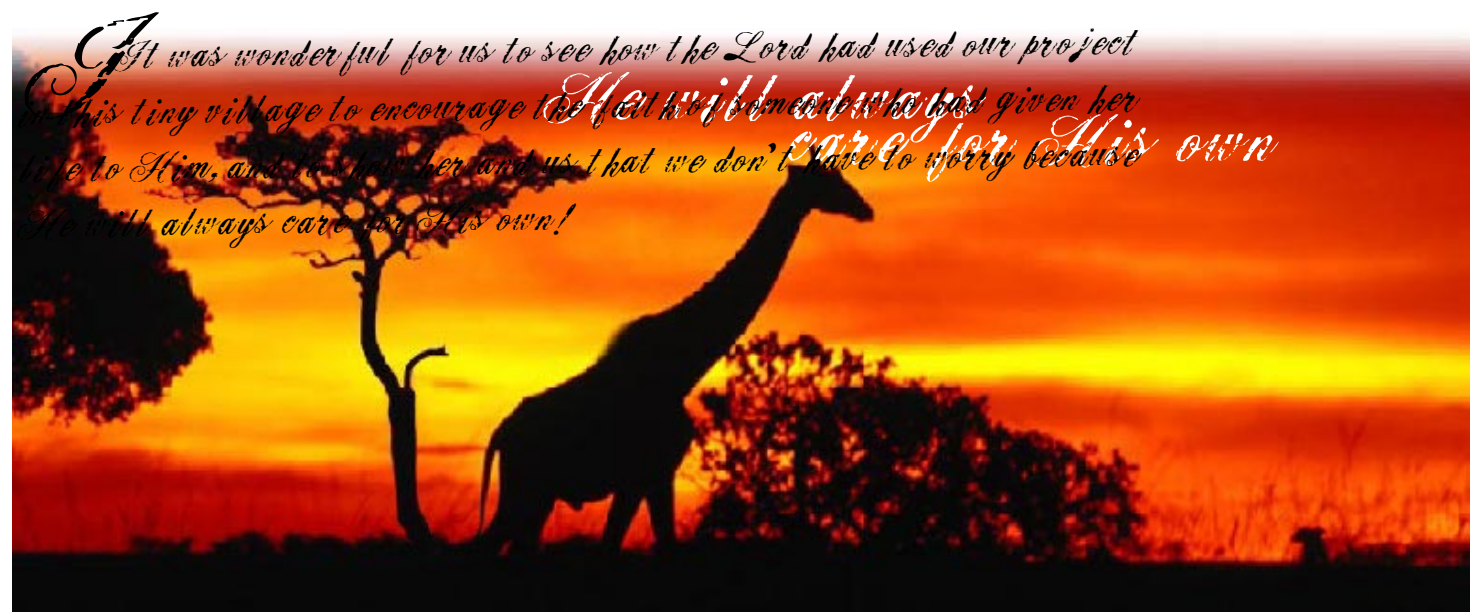
what truly counts are the little lives that are touched in a big way.

On one of our projects here we helped a hospital run by Catholic sisters with donated medicine and supplies. These nuns have dedicated their lives to God and are most of the time far removed from their friends, families, and villages, which is a very big sacrifice here in Nigeria. While talking to the head sister and telling her of our latest projects, we mentioned about our last medical program in the east of Nigeria. When we told her the name of the village that had received free medical treatment from the team of doctors she suddenly burst out into a string of "Praise Gods" and "Hallelujahs." We were surprised by her sudden enthusiasm for our work, but Nigerians can be very zealous, so we took it in stride and smiled appreciatively.

She then explained: "The village where you held the medical program is *my* village. Over the last few months I have been feeling very discouraged, because here I am on the other side of the country serving God and helping the poor while my own people are suffering.

"But now I see that my people are getting more help than I could ever give them. I know that God is answering my prayers and telling me that as I give my life to help others He will look after my own people one hundred fold!"

It was wonderful for us to see how the Lord had used our project in this tiny village to encourage the faith of someone who had given her life to Him, and to show her and us that we don't have to worry because He will always care for His own!



Adventure of a Lifetime

By Lydia and Alie

FZ: The following account was written by a mother and daughter, and took place in November 1999 regarding the events that transpired in the country they were residing in at the time. There is no mention of the location where this adventure took place, due to the sensitive nature of the country involved.

Alie: The whole trip started out as an idea. When we heard about the chaos on the road in another city. My mom, Lydia, immediately had a burden to go and help, but because we were already on the road, she put it out of her mind for the time.

The situation at the time erupted when the government of the country gave a province the option of becoming independent, or remaining part of the country. This particular province had been requesting independence for a long time. The vote results were unanimous: independence! Parts of the

government were not pleased with this. The rumor that began spreading was that the military were supplying the pro-national militia with weapons. The militia was very organized, and once you were on their hit list, it was only a matter of time before you were no longer seen or heard of. They began looting the capital of the province, burning and killing as they went. People fled in search of safety.

The threat of the militia was very real! If for some reason, they wanted you, they got you. A priest we knew was taking care of a group of teenagers whose parents were actively involved in the struggle for independence, and had already disappeared. The militia was also looking for them. Two of the nuns we were living with had just crossed the border and were also wanted for hiding people. They told us how they fled out the back door into the jungle, while two guys from the militia sat in the living room waiting for them. The stories we

heard were very terrifying. Many people I spoke to had family members, relatives, and friends killed during this time.

A lot of the people wanted to go back to the main city of the province, though, and we'd see truckloads of soldiers escorting the people back across the border. However, if they were unaccompanied by soldiers, the militia would stop them and send them back.

There were a number of other NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) working in the province. Most everyone was working with the Catholic

ART BY NYX

Church, because they had a good knowledge of the area.

Lydia: The events had made national and international news. When we got home, our friends and sheep started to ask us, "Are you going to this area to help?" After praying about it, the Lord told us to go. However, there were the questions about the journey—we needed plane tickets to fly to the capital, we then would need to take an eight-hour bus ride to a town two hours from the border. The Lord miraculously put it in the hearts of our friends to sponsor the tickets for the two of us.

At the time we had been working with some nuns who ran a handicap center in our city. We called them and heard that the head nun had already gone to the war-torn province to help. The Lord said it was another clear sign that we were moving in the right direction. When we phoned her she was super happy to hear from us and we ended up staying with the nuns during our time there, working alongside them.

Since that province is predominantly Catholic, it worked to our advantage to be working with the nuns; as everyone sort of revered them, it added to the safety factor. However, we had something more to offer than just the humanitarian side of things, and by the end of our trip, people looked to us for spiritual feeding. I was even able to take personal time with some of the nuns, and help to work out some personality clashes they were having. When we left, they were all crying and thanking us for our sample

and for how much of an encouragement we'd been to them. It was so sweet.

I got one of the nuns to translate the salvation prayer into the local dialect and I took that paper with me wherever I went I would use it to pray with people. Many times people would ask us to pray for their kids, and I would use the opportunity to pray with them.

Alie: A normal day for us while there ran as such: Reveille at 5:00 a.m. (well, 6:00 a.m. if you skipped morning mass), grab something to eat, get your stuff together and out you went.

We'd get to a refugee camp and usually start by walking around, assessing the living conditions, passing out medicine, etc. Then we'd get the kids together and give them haircuts. The poor things had very matted, dirty hair! Then came the real adventure—showers! It was quite a feat running after a few dozen naked kids, trying to shampoo and soap them and avoid getting soaked yourself.

After the excitement was over we'd pass out cookies and milk or juice, sing songs and try to get them all saved. Everyone loved the posters and it was nice to be able to pass them out so freely. Other times we also had clothes, blankets, food, and tarpaulin to pass out. We were usually back by 7 or 8 p.m. Everyone would be in bed by 9:00 p.m. And I was like, "Hey, where did everyone go?" I got used to it, though.



Lydia: Sometimes it was so pitiful to see the way the refugees were living. There were even a few babies born in the most horrid conditions. It made me cry to see them all dirty and laying on a pile of rags. So we'd bring baby clothes and vitamins for the mother, and try to help them get set up better. Most of their makeshift homes were just thatched roofs and a straw mat on the ground. Because it was the rainy season the air was thick and humid, and many people were sick from the damp and cold.

Alie: I also spent a lot of time in the administration office; filing data of all the refugees onto charts and listing amounts of aid received, etc. There were adventures as well, though...

One time we were traveling at night to another village two hours away (they got more and more remote as you went on!). Before we left, the nuns gave me a rosary and said, "If the militia ever get you, the first thing they'll do is feel around your neck for a rosary. If you've got one, they're less likely to kill you." So I put it on and off we went.

It was raining and there were five of us sitting on top of sacks in the back of a pickup. We were driving through a bamboo jungle, and had already been harassed by the militia once a little while back on the road. The jungle was pitch dark except for the pickup's headlights. I was sitting in the back praying desperately for the Lord's protection and that no militia decided to stop us on our endeavor. This particular area was not exactly safe from the



stories we had heard.

All of a sudden, the pickup stopped. I heard a voice saying, "Jump, jump!"

Needless to say, I jumped from the vehicle. With pounding hearts we walked to the front to see what the problem was.

Lydia: I was praying in the front of the pickup while riding beside the priest who was driving when he said in an alarmed voice, "My brakes aren't working!"

I immediately exclaimed: "Try the hand brake!"

"No, it's not working either!" was his frantic response.

The first words that came out of my mouth were, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!" We were going fast downhill, on a winding mountain

see him so thankful and sober, we knew was only the Lord.

Alie: In the middle of a dark jungle road we waited. The only light came from the headlights. Before too long, by a miracle, another vehicle passed our way, and the five of us girls were able to get in and go on. The two guys stayed there with the stuff. We got to our destination—the local church. The priest from there went to help our distressed friends, and to fix the car.

In this remote place, there was no electricity till 10:00 p.m. Running water would've been a dream, bathrooms all the more so. The bathrooms, if they could be called such, consisted of a few thatched leaves on a wooden frame, about chest high, and a bucket of water, to wash with

after you'd done your business. For the duration of our time there, I didn't drink cold water, it was all warm, and we ate fish three times a day almost every day!

Anyway, some of the villagers put us up that night and I can tell you that I was truly happy to be alive! The next day we spent passing out rice, sugar, oil, and staples to a

couple hundred families.

Another adventurous experience we had was when we were on our way to a camp a ten-minute drive from where we were based. I was in the back of a jeep, and I happened to be sitting by the door. We were driving through the center marketplace, when we heard gunshots from behind. I began to pray desperately. Pulling over was, without question, the thing to do. Murphy's law at work, as soon as the trigger-happy guys in a white jeep were directly behind me, my door accidentally swung open. I came face to face with an M16!

At that point manicured fingernails were the last thing on my mind—I broke two of them by digging them into the window frame and pulling the door shut. Their attention was directed somewhere else, TTL.

Again, thanks to the Lord's protection, I remain alive.

In all, though, the trip was an unforgettable experience, and something I would do again ... anytime (if the Lord wanted me to)! And definitely a witness of the Lord's protection.



road, with a jungle on one side and a ravine on the other! Logic told me we were dead.

When talking about this incident later with the priest he praised me for my calmness. He said, "As soon as you said 'Jesus,' I felt like someone took control of the steering wheel, and guided my hands. I was already thinking, 'If we go off the cliff, we'll all die. If we go down into the jungle, all the people in the back would be thrown out, and we would crash.' Then by a miracle the car stopped, just before the next downhill!" This guy was generally quite light-spirited and usually joked around a lot. To

was truly happy to be alive! The next day we spent passing out rice, sugar, oil, and staples to a



postcard

from Port Harcourt

Have you ever been to an African church? I have, and it changed my life—at least in the sense that I will never again picture only old folks, padded pews, and corpulent organists when the word “church” is mentioned. My mental picture will now include the young and the anxious, the jumping and the praising, the drumming and the shouting. Naturally, they will be Africans!

Church has never been a favorite activity of mine. But when I was invited by a friend to accompany her to her church, I accepted, knowing that I could probably benefit from some personal experience with the local church scene.

As I entered the church I remembered that learning a second language had once appeared on a list entitled, “The 10 Best Things To Do During a Boring Sermon.” I found this ironic, as the person who had invited me to this church was the same person who is trying to teach me Ibo (a local language). I chided myself for having forgotten to bring my phrasebook, but as it turned out, this Pentecostal church wasn't exactly like other churches I'd attended elsewhere. For starters, instead of

an organ, it had a bunch of native drums accompanying the singing, thus rendering the environment less than ideal for study. Leading the singing was George, my former driving instructor. He had always impressed me as being half-asleep when he worked with me, but there he was in church, hopping around like Mick Jagger on speed. As far as I could see, he was getting more rallied up than anyone else in the entire congregation—except for maybe one woman to my right who appeared to be experiencing an aftershock of an earthquake, measuring 8.6 on the Richter scale. Whoever said, “Religion is the opiate of the people,” had never seen what a little religion could do for George!

When the singing stopped for a moment so George could catch his breath, somebody shared the main points of a prophecy they'd received with the congregation. I was impressed that they practiced hearing from the Lord, but I wondered how well they were doing with the other new weapons, as we

know them. They praised the Lord a lot too, but I doubted if they used any of the more “advanced artillery” like we do. But then they sang an Ibo song, the title of which roughly translated as, “God's Lover.”

Okay, so they sing *Loving Jesus* songs, too, I thought to myself. Then finally, before we were dismissed, one of the elders announced: “Husbands, today your wives be for the Lord! Today your wives will stay here in the presence of our Mighty Lord ... with me!”

So they live the one wife vision, I admitted to myself, as I checked one more point off of the list of areas in which I was priding myself in being spiritually superior.

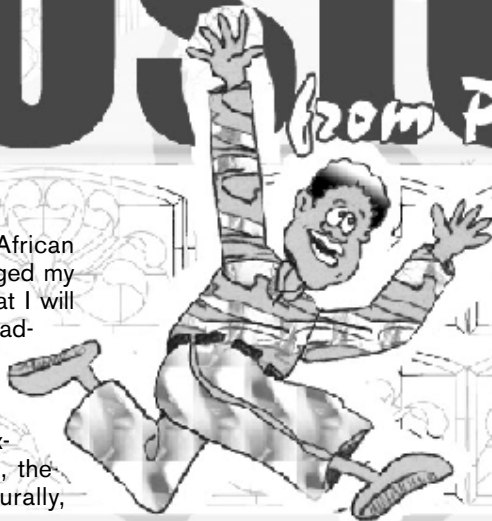
Through this experience, I was reminded that although others may not do everything exactly like we do, we should remember that what the Lord looks at is the heart, and that as His children we should endeavor to do the same.

The happy ending is, I'm invited to go back again next week!

Anam Aga Chuch*

By Tim E. (22)

(I'm going to church)



Art by Eyre

The History of Nothing is Impossible!

by David Komic

Part 2 18th, 19th & 20th Century Heroes from the 'Nothing is Impossible' Hall of Fame!

1 Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), 'FOUNDING FATHER' of AMERICAN-KITE-FLYING-IN-STORMS' (An early X-sport)

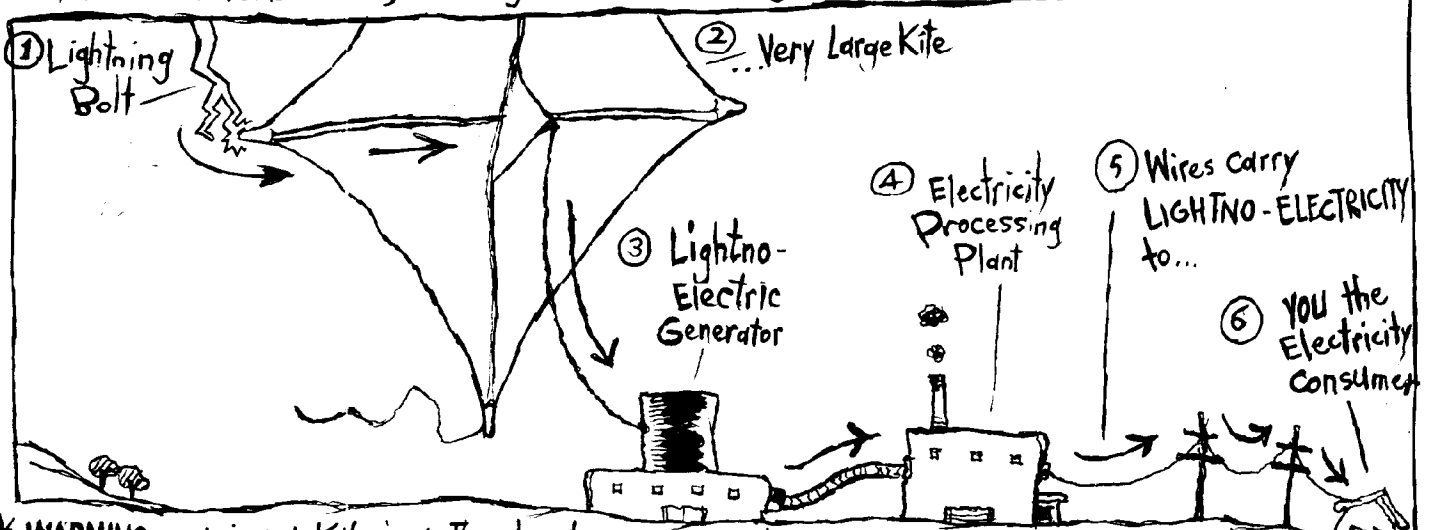
"IMPOSSIBLE!" cried the (with all due respect) imperialist, scone-eating, British scoffer-persons of his day. "You'll NEVER be able to fly a blinkin' KITE in a blinkin' THUNDERSTORM."
 "Oh YEAH?" Benjamin Franklin replied as he frolicked, kite-string clutched tightly in hand, →



→ through the driving, water-drenched rain. "Watch THIS then!" he shouted exultantly, his body lit up like a 7000 cubic-Watt lightbulb, not so much from the euphoria of the moment as from the 7,000 cubic-Watt lightning bolt searing through the storm-soaked Kite-string into his somewhat startled FOUNDING FATHER BODY.*

NO! Zine reader... Benjamin Franklin didn't fall for the YUCKY "I" word. Instead, laughing in the face of 'Impossibilities', he invented 'FOUNDING FATHER'S Kite-Generated ELECTRICITY'™ ("Goodness In Every Kite!")

Below is an ACTUAL drawing of Benjamin Franklin's legacy, the LIGHTNO-ELECTRIC POWER station.



* WARNING: Flying a Kite in a Thunderstorm is Highly Dangerous. Only attempt this experiment under the supervision of a FOUNDING FATHER

2 **THOMAS ALVA EDISON** (1847-1931) INVENTOR



Just about EVERYONE had said it was IMPOSSIBLE that young Thomas ALVA Edison would ever amount to ANYTHING. And to add INSULT to INJURY, he was even called 'ADDLED' by NUMEROUS actors on the Story Time tapes

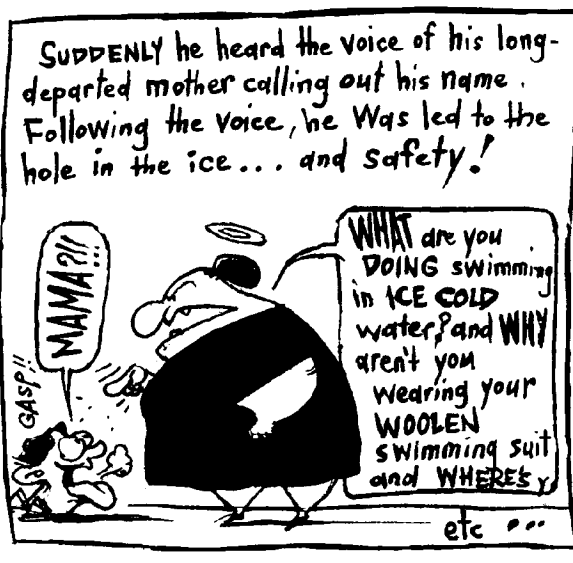
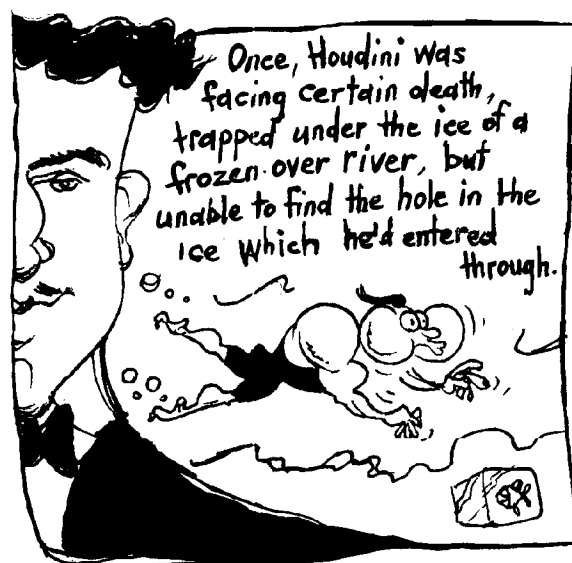
he grew up to become one of the GREATEST INVENTORS of the WHATEVER. MANKIND would stand by helplessly watching its papers being blown off the table by the slightest breeze. NO LONGER would MANKIND suffer its door being slammed by the slightest breeze (after the slightest breeze had just blown the papers off MANKIND's table) NO LONGER would MANKIND have to endure little bits of food stuck between its teeth. And ALL THANKS TO THOMAS ALVA EDISON. Bravo, I say!

Now, I don't know if you've ever been called 'ADDLED', Zine reader, but believe me, it HURTS. It's worse than 'YUCKY' and is almost as YUCKY as 'IMPOSSIBLE'.

'THE HISTORY OF NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE 2' CONTINUES after this totally UNNECESSARY INTERRUPTION. eoi

3 **HARRY HOUDINI** (1874-1926) World-Famous Magician.

HARRY HOUDINI, whose name escapes me, was also a believer in 'NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE'...



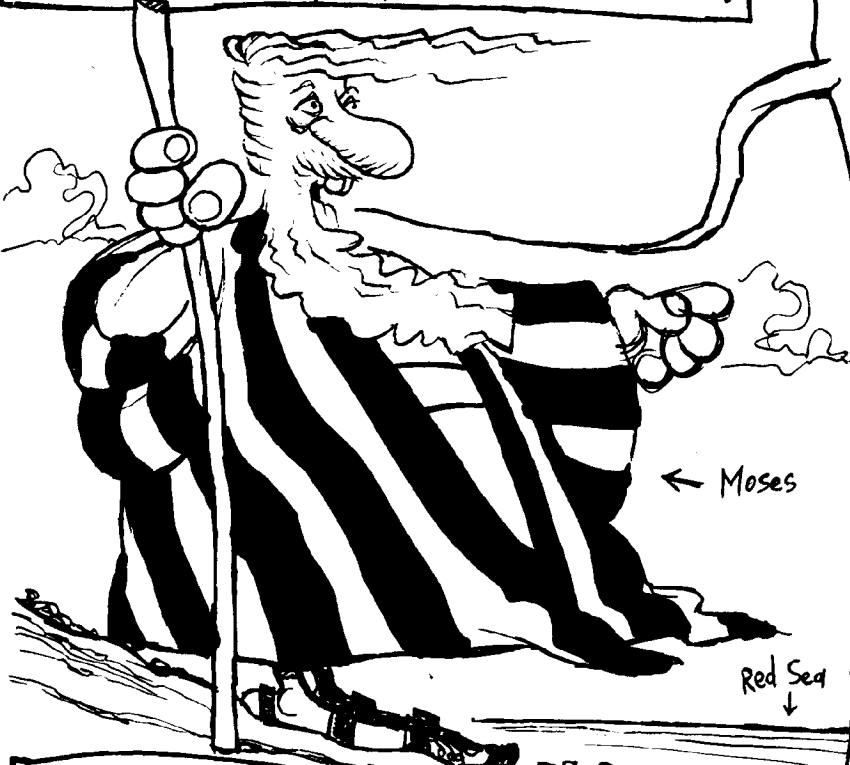
But Thomas ALVA Edison had the LAST LAUGH when NO LONGER and the TOOTH PICK

the PAPER WEIGHT, the DOOR-STOPPER

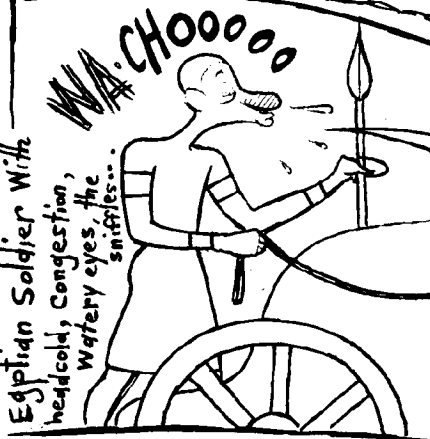
Special Biblical FEATURE.

What would have happened if **MOSES** had fallen for the yucky 'IMPOSSIBLE' word?

3.



oh LORD, we KNOW it's just IMPOSSIBLE that the entire RED SEA would just PART for us just to WALK THROUGH, like we KNOW that could NEVER happen, but I was wondering if you could at least give the entire EGYPTIAN ARMY (which is at this very moment bearing down on us) a NASTY case of the FLU! THE WORKS, LORD!!! -- HEADCOLD, CONGESTION, WATERY EYES, the SNIFFLES!!! That they may all return to Egypt to get two weeks bed-rest that we might all escape AROUND the Red Sea because I know like FOR SURE it would be totally IMPOSSIBLE to just WALK THROUGH... etc etc etc



Egyptian Soldier With headcold, congestion, watery eyes, the sniffles...



subsequently...

IMPOSSIBLE Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics depicting the PHAROAH'S ARMY/ CHILDREN OF ISRAEL/ RED SEA INCIDENT 'if' MOSES had SWALLOWED that whole 'IMPOSSIBLE' load-of-HOGWASH- word.

Answers to LAST ISSUE'S Special 'SCRATCH' n' SNIFF' feature:

The MYSTERY Fragrances were:



- Fragrance #1 MICROSCOPIC FLAKED-PAPER-PARTICLE 'SMELL'
- Fragrance #2 INFINTESIMALLY SMALL-FINGERNAIL-PARTICLE 'SMELL'

But NO!!! Moses DIDN'T SWALLOW the HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS, 'YUCKY-STUFF-INFESTED' 'IMPOSSIBLE' word!



Thank you LORD!! THAT'S more LIKE IT!!

