



By Richard and Renee Cook

# Sharing the Hope!

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## Three Wise Men from the East

The woman's face radiated hope and joy as she beheld, for the first time, God's Word in the language of her heart. The book was brought by three wise men from the east... well, how about three pastors from the eastern road traveling to further the work among some people of the Kalahari. In September, Richard saw many marvels as he trekked the Kalahari Desert visiting small settlements of Bakgalagari and !Xoo.

Rev. Dave Long, Rev. Abithini Kabatlhophane (AB) and Richard traveled 1800 kilometers (1080 miles) to 10 villages and settlements, many with only several hundred dwellers, to talk about the possibilities of language development and Bible translation for these two language groups. Over 800 kilometers (480 miles) were dry, wind-blown sand roads with temperatures greater than 100 each day.

Regardless of the heat, in each location they were greeted with joy and enthusiasm as the people learned of the possibilities of writing their languages for the first time.



AB always started the sessions with prayers and conducted the group questionnaire. Then they broke into groups with Dave and AB working with !Xoo (a click language). Richard shared with the Bakgalgarhi the test hymnal that Dr. Kemmynne Monako (a Shekgalgarhi speaking professor at the University of Botswana) and he had developed

containing the Lord's Prayer and a few portions of Bible readings for very preliminary examination of the alphabet in the language.

In each site, someone who knew how to read a little Setswana would volunteer to begin reading the Lord's prayer in Shekgalgarhi. Everyone was fascinated!

Richard then explained how they had developed the material and that this was only a test to

see if they could understand what was written. For an hour, they would read the portions of the Bible, such as Psalm 23 and John 3:16, and sing the translated hymns. They knew some of the tunes since their churches sang some of the hymns, but this was the first time they had words to follow as they sang. They asked for more!

Dateline October 28, 2005

But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me. Micah 7:7

Waiting is never easy! Unless we have an assurance for what we wait. Waiting on our car at the shop or in the line at the vehicle bureau is a challenge. But not so as we wait for God. God's promises are sure! He never lets us down. He sent His Son once and promises to do so again. So we have hope as we wait on His coming. ☺

Please remember  
In your prayers

❖ Praise ❖

the Lord for the  
gift of His Son

the Lord the safety  
and success of our  
survey trip

the Lord for the  
completion of  
another school year  
for the children,  
especially John who  
completed  
high school

❖ Prayer ❖

for diligence of the  
Bakgalagarhi as  
they organize and  
develop their  
language project

for the Longs as  
they return to the  
United States for  
furlough

for the !Xoo as they  
persevere in their  
desires to learn to  
read their language  
and translate the  
Bible

*Prayer  
Requests*

## Attitudes are Changing

During the village visits while they were working with the Bakgalagarhi, Dave and AB conducted individual questionnaires with the speakers of !Xoo to determine their attitudes toward their language. They wanted to see how this compared to the survey conducted 10 years ago.

In 1995, 54% of the speakers of !Xoo desired literacy in their mother tongue for themselves and their children. At that time many thought it better to learn to read

only Setswana or English. Today, all but one of the 90 respondents (98.8%) wanted to learn to read and write their own language above any other language.



Attitudes are changing in Botswana as people come to realize what is possible

with their own mother tongue.

The roads are long and dusty, but the work is rewarding. The Lord's work usually is. Please pray for the success of both these projects as the Longs return to the states on furlough in 2006 and the Bakgalagarhi continue to organize and develop the necessary

associations for language development to take place. ❖



*Merry  
Christmas!*

### CONTRIBUTIONS:

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