

Sheryl Howe

From: "Sheryl Howe" <sahowe@wbt.org>
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Sent: Friday, June 03, 2005 3:10 AM
Subject: My last day in Ethiopia (Week #3: Part B)

Week #3: Part B

FINISHED!

Alright, so it's not finished, but my part is done. I've handed off things to the person who will be supporting the network for the next six months. And the linguist who was supporting the computer system can maybe do Scripture Use Promotion (what he came to Ethiopia to do) for at least the next six months...

Thank you so much for praying for this project. It's just been fun to see things coming together... and working.

You could pray for Ethiopia as the election results are to be announced next week. Pray that it will be peaceful and that whatever party is in power (either the Ruling party or the Opposition) will govern wisely and in the best interests of Ethiopians.

You could pray for the guy who's here for six months doing computer support and for the equipment...

I'm so impressed with me that I finished and let go --- you know how when you work on something a lot and it's your baby and it's really hard to give it up to someone else who refuses to do things exactly the way I do them...

So, this week I went to a mountain/hill/high place overlooking the city. There were two Ethiopian Orthodox churches there. They're fascinating places. The whole country is fascinating. It's not like anyplace else. According to Ethiopians, the ark of the covenant came to Ethiopia with Menelik (the son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba) who then became the first in the line of Ethiopian rulers. (allegedly all Ethiopian rulers up until the marxists were descendants somehow of Solomon). So each Orthodox church has a replica of the ark of the covenant that's kept in the holy of holies, only the priests can see it. It comes out of the church (wrapped up in cloth) on Epiphany. The real ark of the covenant is at a church in the northern part of Ethiopia. They also believe they have the "true cross" --- the actual wood where Jesus was crucified --- and some Queen brought the cross to Ethiopia and she's somehow related to King David, not the King David of the Bible. This was difficult to follow --- this story about King David and the cross. The guy was speaking English, with an accent and not the way I speak English. I've decided one problem is sentences appear to be missing pronouns. So there's a story and in the story is the word "killed" but who was killed? and who killed the person who was killed?

One story was about this particular saint who got seven crowns in heaven because he was beheaded seven times. We were confused by how someone could have their head chopped off more than once so asked for clarification which yielded a lengthy explanation of why the people who killed the guy wanted to kill him. Finally, we figured out that the guy was killed and resurrected six times and then just regularly killed the last, seventh, time. The inside of the church was filled with pictures depicting Bible events and these saints. And it's a unique painting style. It's very Ethiopian Orthodox. My favorite is this one saint who prayed for nine years so, I guess because he was standing the whole time, his leg fell off. So God gave him wings (lots of saint stories involved people getting wings --- John the Baptist's head got wings after it got chopped off...). But the guy was so sad about losing the leg, he cried and created this pool of water which has healing power. The picture is the guy with one leg and wings; he's crying in the picture and off to the side is his leg that fell off.

Trust all is well with you!
 Sheryl