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KwaSizabantu's response to the present onslaught against it and those who over the past 50 years have lived, learnt and worked there

These past few weeks have been a time for deep prayerful reflection concerning our roots and Jesus Christ's perspective on what is happening at the moment.

We have drawn deeply on Scripture and how the Holy Spirit touched Rev Erlo Stegen and his co-workers all those many years ago. Central to this is what Jesus revealed to them from His Holy Word, as recorded in the book, "Revival Among The Zulus".

We have been forcefully reminded that "There is nothing in this world that we need fear more than God. Even if the whole world were for us, but God against us, we would be fighting a lost battle."

That without dealing with the sin in our lives, God is the one to be feared, not the press or various agencies of the state.

That the Good News is that there is always hope and grace available to us in this regard. "For what purpose did Jesus come to this earth? What does the name Jesus mean? He came for the purpose of saving us from our sins, and that is what His name means." And that this saving involves "spirit, soul and body."

We were also reminded that: "I don't believe that it is necessary to pray for revival. Revival is the result of a life according to the Scriptures, which we should be living daily. This means constantly progressing in intimate fellowship with Him, the living God. He wants His church to be a pure bride who radiates His glory."

"It will become a majestic cedar, sending forth its branches and producing seed. Birds of every sort will nest in it, finding shelter in the shade of its branches." Ezekiel 17:23

Trustees: EH Stegen, BE Ngcamu, L Dube, ED Stegen, A van Eeden

As we read in Matthew 5: “

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden... In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. ”

This in these past few days has had a direct impact upon how we respond to the vicious smear campaign against us and how certain state institutions appear to be allowing themselves to be used against us. In grappling with this question, Rev Stegen wrote of his own experience before the revival came: “Elijah had to appear before a king who considered him to be his enemy. Elijah stood before a dictator, a man who feared nothing, who killed whom he wished, and cursed whom he wished. And yet Elijah could say, “King, it is the God of Israel before whom I stand!” Even before a mighty, worldly king, Elijah was conscious of the presence of God.

I couldn't claim that of myself. I was subject to the opinions of men. I wasn't concerned with what God would say, but with what those people thought of me. When I stood before the congregation, I stood before men and not before God. I danced to their tune! When I realised that, I felt it would break my heart!.... “For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ!”

And so the conviction again that we are accountable to a far higher standard than mere people. If we have sinned against God by not loving to the uttermost even His most humble creation, we have to give account to Him. After all Jesus died for every single person in the world, because of His love for them. And of course, unlike secular institutions like the press and commissions and the criminal justice system, He is all knowing and all seeing inclusive of the content of our hearts. It is this profound conviction about their own accountability for the sins in their lives which led to Rev Stegen and his co-workers being used so powerfully by the Lord during the revival at Mapumulo in 1966.

However, for now we are still in the world and Scripture is clear that we are to be exemplary citizens of this world and where it is not in conflict with what the Lord requires of us, we must submit to the secular authorities. As indeed Jesus did during His trial.

But during His trial He reacted differently to Herod and Pilate. He answered no questions of Herod. Obviously because He knew Herod was not interested in truth, only his own agenda.

Jesus answered Pilate's questions, but always on His own terms.

Our task is to discern in the present attack on the Mission, who is Herod and who is Pilate. Quite clearly much of the press is a Herod, not interested in truth but only in furthering their narrative and pushing up their sales. We will not answer their questions going forward, unless we are convinced that a journalist is actually interested in truth.

The state institutions we must submit to, and accord them dignity and respect. This does not mean not insisting on natural justice and being afforded the same protection and respect that others are receiving, which the Constitution requires of all state institutions.

At the moment we are dealing with two state institutions. The SAPS and the CRL.

It is the Mission who approached the SAPS and has given its full co-operation to the SAPS.

The CRL has approached us. Quite clearly in its treatment of us thus far it has woefully failed to comply with its constitutional mandate and duty in the manner it has dealt with us. (For details in this regard see the attached letter marked "A".)

Central to our "own terms" is the allegation by the "star" witnesses in the video "Exodus" part 1, that over the years the Mission has been complicit in allowing and covering up multiple ongoing rapes, even up to the present moment. There are other allegations, but this is by far the most grave allegation which demands immediate attention by all state institutions, not least of all by the SAPS. This is the Mission's main motivation for laying charges of criminal defamation and crimen injuria (CAS 139/09/2020 & CAS140/09/2020) as a result of the allegations in Exodus. To compel the SAPS to investigate whether or not there have been multiple and ongoing rapes at the Mission.

The reasons for insisting that this allegation be the starting point for all state institutions are three-fold:

1. If true, justice demands the immediate prosecution of the perpetrators and redress for the victims.
2. If not true, then those cynically using what is a profoundly evil problem in our society, violence against children and women, to further their own self centred agendas, must be brought to book.

3. Furthermore, if not true then the whole pack of cards must collapse as regards their other allegations.

WE MUST EMPHASIZE THAT WE HAVE LAST WEEK ALREADY SUBMITTED OUR WRITTEN RESPONSES TO THESE ALLEGATIONS IN THE SAID EXODUS VIDEO, TO THE SAPS, THE CRL RIGHTS COMMISSION AND TO THE INDEPENDENT PANEL. FROM THEIR LATEST STRATEGY REFERRED TO BELOW, THE PRESS OBVIOUSLY HAS ALSO RECEIVED A COPY OF OUR SAID WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THE ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING ONGOING RAPES AT THE MISSION.

We note that already some of the press and other parties are trying to shift the focus away from this allegation of mass and ongoing rapes, for obvious reasons. They now realise the outrageous and evil nature of these allegations and that there is not a scrap of evidence for them, so they are trying to shift the goal posts.

We will not in any way be a party to allowing them to shift the goal posts. Before anything else is addressed, this allegation of mass rape must be addressed. The accusers and makers of the first part of Exodus chose to include this allegation in it, no doubt for sensationalist reasons and to get viewers to subscribe so that they can see the other instalments. They must be held accountable first and foremost for this allegation, given the extreme gravity of it.

In this regard we completely share the view of Matthee AJ in S v Dayimani (ECD) CC 12/2007 as regards the monstrous evil of rape:

“I have an aversion for adjectives and exaggeration, but in the light of the statistics highlighted above I can without fear of contradiction state that our Province and indeed our Country faces an evil of gigantic proportions especially when it comes to the barbaric dehumanisation and brutalisation of girl children by means of rape.”

We might add that if regard is had to what unlocked the beginning of the revival referred to above, it is inconceivable that Rev Stegen and his co-workers would or could ever have been complicit in multiple ongoing rapes. It was either Hitler or his co criminal, Joseph Goebbels, who said: “The bigger the lie, the more

people will believe it.” It is to us tragic beyond words to think that there are people who actually believe this monstrous lie about Rev Stegen and his co-workers.

Before we conclude we must briefly deal with the suggestion that the present leadership of the Mission are motivated by generating profit for themselves. Once again, we rely on the book on the revival.

“At the Mission over 20 projects are being run to generate funds. **KwaSizabantu mission has a principle not to solicit funds or send out letters appealing for donations.** The 430 hectares of land are used for intensive farming for use at the mission and to sell. The projects include aQuelle water, agriculture [including green peppers, hothouses, avocado plantations, vegetables), schooling, the CYPISA programme for addicted persons (with capacity of more than 700 persons at a time), care for HIV patients, carpentry, plumbing, electrical workshop, conference facilities for up to 10 000 people]. These projects also are central to ministering to the whole person, spirit, soul and body. For example, fundamental to this approach is the imparting of wide ranging skills which allows people to provide for their families through work with dignity.

Income generated from these enable the mission to provide a ministry to a wide range of people and needs, more often than not at no cost to the people receiving the ministry. Some examples include drug addiction, school, youth camps, community outreaches (including skills development) and support.

All this is to the honour and glory of Jesus Christ. Who is working so mightily in His resurrection power in spite of the fact that there are times of great opposition, negative assessments, misinterpretations, and sometimes defamations (according to Matthew 5:11). This should come as no surprise, as wherever God is at work the devil is also there to do his dirty counter-work. He is always upset when his prey is snatched from him and his kingdom interfered with. Erlo Stegen and his fellow co-workers are determined, by the grace of God, to stand on the principles of the Bible alone despite opposition or praise.”

We conclude with an observation by Rev Stegen in his book on the revival: **I am of the opinion that the depth of God’s work can be measured by the amount of opposition encountered.**

At the same time, and as already highlighted, we are to be reminded of his reflection on Matthew 5 which highlights the inevitability of persecution BUT at the same time that the reward which follows such persecution will only follow where we have been light and salt in this world:

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden... In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. ”

Rev Stegen and his co-workers focus all our minds in this regard with his further reflection, already alluded to above, on Matthew 25:

“On Judgment Day, He will put the lowliest person before us and measure our relationship to him lowliest person we know, the very lowliest, and then measure the love that we have for that person. We can’t be a fraction closer to Jesus than we are to that person. That’s how Jesus will judge us one day. What a shocking day that Judgment Day will be! May God grant that we are shocked now.”

Central to such lowliness is a sense of profound powerlessness. And no one in our sick society is more powerless than abused women and children. It is thus clear that every single person at the Mission, AND the wider South African society will be judged in the light of Matthew 25, not least of all what they did about this sickness in our society, namely the abuse of women and children.

In this regard we repeat, it is because of this that we will not allow anyone to co-opt us into allowing the makers of Exodus and those aiding and abetting them, from shifting the focus from the allegations concerning alleged ongoing multiple rapes at the mission. To allow ourselves to be co-opted in this manner would be to aid and abet the exploitation of the “lowliest” in our society.

In conclusion, let us “bear witness to the fact that there is no greater power than that of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The sceptics we challenge with words of Philip to Nathaniel: “Come and see!”

The KwaSizabantu Mission Leadership Team

6 October 2020



DE WET WEPENER INC
ATTORNEYS

Our Ref./Ons Verw. KSB/MDW	Your Ref. / U Verw.	Date / Datum 2020-10-04
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Att: Prof LD Mosoma

Chairperson

CRL Rights Commission

maureen@crlcommission.org.za

cc: NWhittaker@crlcommission.org.za

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: INVITATION TO A FACT FINDING MEETING REGARDING ALLEGATIONS
MADE AGAINST THE KWASIZABANTU MISSION.**

We thank you for your letter dated 3 October 2020 and wish to respond as follows:

1. As previously mentioned, we would be happy to meet with the CRL Rights Commission (hereafter “the Commission”).
2. However, we are now even more concerned about the Commission’s objectivity, impartiality, transparency and independence (as clearly required by the Constitution), after having received (via third parties) the attached correspondence. Please confirm if this correspondence is what it purports to be.

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3. Firstly, the attached correspondence commences with a “profound(ly)” apology to the press for the short notice. When we raised the short notice given to our clients, even though our client was the accused party of inter alia being complicit in a number of rape matters, corruption and money laundering, to name the most serious allegations, there was no apology, merely a telling us that urgency justified the short notice. This whilst the short notice does not even begin to comply with natural justice and section 35 (3) of the Bill of Rights.

3. Linked to this is that when the Commission first wrote to our client this past Friday, in response we forwarded to the Commission the transcript of the “documentary” “Exodus” wherein these false allegations were first aired AND our client’s detailed response thereto. From the subsequent correspondence from the Commission it is patently clear that the Commission has simply failed to apply its mind in any manner whatsoever to the said transcript and our client’s detailed response to it, which included a number of affidavits.

4. Secondly, the attached correspondence refers to “hearings” which will be conducted from 5 to 7 October 2020. We have not been invited or informed of such. Instead we have been invited to a meeting with the Commission on 7 October only (no mention of hearings, the media or other parties being heard). This notwithstanding that we patently have a direct and substantial interest in such “hearings”.

5. Thirdly, it appears that the Commission will hear media submissions first (without KwaSizabantu Mission being invited to attend whilst the “media is invited to attend and cover all these sessions”).

6. Fourthly, it also states that “the CRL Rights wishes to get to the bottom of these abuses” (sic), thereby indicating that the Commission has already decided that abuses have been proven (without having heard the KwaSizabantu Mission).
7. Fifthly, it states that “the Commission will be listening to several victims” on Monday 14h00 – 16h00, again, without KwaSizabantu Mission being present but all media present and covering the proceedings.
8. The unqualified use of the word “victim” as above clearly shows that our client already has been tried and convicted by the Commission without them receiving any hearing whatsoever.
9. Sixthly, the same applies to the Commission’s phrase: “The CRL Rights wishes to get to the bottom of these abuses by listening to the voice of journalists first.” Linked to this is how the letter is ended: “Thanks to all the media for the great investigative work. Justice will ultimately prevail.” As already stated, it thus has already found that there have been abuses by our client, even though it has not heard our client. In addition, the deference to journalists is breath taking. Over the years there have been a number of examples where “investigative journalism” has been found to have been fundamentally flawed and/or manipulated by various interest groups. The most obvious example being the so called Rogue Unit at SARS “expose” a few years ago. As it turned out, respectable and experienced journalists allowed themselves to be manipulated and used by the Gupta brothers and their fellow criminals. Such deference to journalists by a chapter 9 institution, which must be characterised by complete

independence and a rigorous and dispassionate assessment of **all** parties, is deeply worrying.

- 10 . Seventhly, it is astonishing that the Commission aims to meet the SAPS and the NPA before it meets our client. The only conclusion can be, once again, that it has already decided on the guilt of our client, notwithstanding that it has yet to meet our client. And again it must be remembered that here we are dealing with allegations which carry a sentence of life imprisonment, and yet the Commission comes to a conclusion before even meeting our client.
11. If there can be any doubt left that the Commission has already made up its mind before it has heard our client, it is the manner in which the letter is ended, already referred to above: “Thanks to all the media for the great investigative work. Justice will ultimately prevail.” There can be only one meaning here. Furthermore, given the shortness of time obviously the Commission could not yet have tested the evidence of the journalists themselves, and yet commends them for their good work. In this regard we also once again mention the Commission’s failure first to apply its mind to the said transcript and our client’s submissions, before it blindly commends the journalists for their “great investigative work.” **From the said submissions, it is absolutely clear that the journalists in fact have been gravely derelict in their duty.**
12. **If the contents of the attached correspondence are indeed true, we submit that the integrity and independence of the Commission, as clearly required by the Constitution, has been fundamentally undermined and**

that it has disqualified itself by its own conduct to fulfil its constitutional duty in the present matter.

13. This prejudice is compounded by the short notice and lack of particularity in the allegations “of cult, rape cases and money laundering and corruption” (sic) against KwaSizabantu Mission mentioned in your letter of 1 October 2020.
14. In addition, the explanation of the use of the word “veracity’ in the Commission’s first letter to our client rings hollow if the latest correspondence is confirmed as being authentic.
15. Notwithstanding all of the above, and even if the said letter is authentic, and if nevertheless the Commission still is of the view that it has not disqualified itself, in a show of good faith and in the spirit of transparency we are still prepared to invite Commissioners of the Commission to visit and meet with KwaSizabantu Mission on 7 October 2020. Obviously if the said letter is not authentic we also would be willing to meet the Commission.
16. To this end we are even prepared to arrange the necessary transport, meeting facility, refreshment etc.
17. We must insist, however, that the visit to the Mission be limited to the Commissioners and administrative staff of the Commission **only**. In addition to the obvious reasons which emerge from the above paragraphs for this, the Mission is still in phase 4 of lockdown and as such must be very cautious of an excess of new arrivals. Amongst other reasons for this is that at any given time

we have people on the Mission struggling with severe addiction problems. Such people more often than not have compromised immune systems.

18. However, AND CRUCIALLY, we submit that natural justice and the *audi alteram partem* rule as entrenched in the Constitution, dictates that, in order for us to respond to allegations and thus make the said meeting a meaningful meeting, we first need to receive the following:

18.1 We should receive full particulars of the specific allegations which our client is to answer. This must include sufficient particularity to enable our client to investigate and then respond meaningfully to the Commission.

18.2 Once we have received the said particulars, we should be given reasonable time to investigate and then respond to such specific allegations.

18.3 In other words, there should be compliance inter alia with natural justice and section 35 (3) of the Bill of Rights. Here we need to remind the Commission of the severity of the criminal allegations against our client which makes compliance with section 35 (3) imperative.

19. **We undertake to respond promptly to any such particularity, as we did to the allegations in the video, ‘Exodus’.** This notwithstanding, our view is that by its own conduct the Commission has made it all but impossible to comply with natural justice and still have the meeting this coming Wednesday. However we await the Commission’s view on this so that we can assess our client’s position. Having said that, our client is of the view that it would be good if the Commission visit the Mission initially simply to help acquaint itself with the Mission. Our client would be more than

willing to arrange that for this coming Wednesday. However such a visit obviously can only be constructive if the Commission comes with a genuinely open and transparent mind. It then will be in a far better position INDEPENDENTLY to decide on the way ahead, as opposed simply to being led by certain journalists.

20. We must emphasize again that our client has responded to the allegations contained in the foundational video, “Exodus”, such as they are, upon which the Commission seems to justify its decision to have hearings. And that the Commission was sent these submissions last week already, immediately after it informed our client of its desire to meet our client – as indicated above, at that stage there was no hint whatsoever to our client of hearings being held this week, starting today.

If the Commission applies its mind to the transcript and our client’s response to the allegations therein, it will see that the allegations therein have no foundation in fact. We would thus encourage the Commission first to study the said transcript and our client’s response before deciding on the next step. The said proposed visit referred to above by us, also would help in this process. That is what natural justice requires of the Commission.

21. We also once again inform the Commission that last week already we in effect by laying charges with SAPS of criminal defamation and crimen injuria encouraged the SAPS to investigate the false allegations in the said video, “Exodus”. Given the nature and severity of the allegations, as already stated,

some of the alleged offences carrying a sentence of life imprisonment, the SAPS clearly is the correct arm of state to drive this investigation. **This also will ensure a fair process for all parties, unlike what is happening at the moment.**

22. We reiterate our commitment to transparency and co-operation with any organ of state, including the Commission. However, we must insist that the process be conducted in line with natural justice and basic fairness as prescribed in our Constitution.

23. For the sake of completion, attached also find our latest submissions to the Panel appointed to investigate the allegations in the said video, "Exodus". It deals with Kwasizabantu's non profit ministry to drug addicts. You will then have all the submissions we have forwarded to SAPS and the Panel.

Yours faithfully,



M de Wet

Attorney

Kwasizabantu abuse issues: hearings in Durban next week: see invites to media below:

Dear ...

Apologies for sending this message so late. I am profoundly sorry about it. The challenge was that when I arrived home, our area was affected by loadshedding.

The CRL Rights Commission will be conducting hearings in Durban on Monday next week till Wednesday. The process will unfold as follows:

1. Monday; 05/10/2020 (10h00 - 12h00)

There will be a meeting with Journalists from different media houses who at one point or another covered the story of Kwasizabantu.

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We kindly and humbly request media houses to please avail journalists who covered this story to meet the CRL Rights Commission on this date and during this time. The CRL Rights wishes to get to the bottom of these abuses by listening to the voice of journalists first. We will also appreciate confirmations beforehand.

2. Monday from 14h00 - 16h00 the Commission will be listening to several victims. We request the media houses to share with us any other names of victims if they have them.

3. Tuesday - morning (09h00 - 12h00)

The meeting with the victims will continue until midday on Tuesday.

4. Tuesday- afternoon (14h00 - 16h00)

The Commission will be meeting with the police and Provincial NPA.

5. Wednesday

The Commission will be meeting the leaders of Kwasizabantu Christian centre.

6. The media is invited to attend and cover all these sessions. We request journalists who intend to come to please confirm.

Thanks to all the media for the great investigative work. Justice will ultimately prevail.

Rgds

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