



Far Trekkin'

News from Rob and Eshinee Veith

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On a break while listening to the final recordings... L to R: Daniel Mbalunda, Rob, Rev. Johannes Tolu, and Hijja Tolu (seated).

Dhimba New Testament recordings completed!

Eshinee and I spent the last part of June and the first half of July in Opuwo Namibia completing an audio recording of the Dhimba New Testament in partnership with the Bible Society of Namibia. Opuwo has been suffering a drought. We spent the three weeks braving literal sand storms as we recorded audio in three different venues.

This was my sixth trip to the town, the third to record the New Testament.

My sixth trip, Eshinee's first. In our early days of ministry, we would often travel together and assist each other in projects. As the Shiyeyi translation work picks up speed, her project responsibilities have meant that more and more of our work has had to be done separately.

For this trip, though, we decided that I really needed the help!

On the previous sessions, I would record four hours a day in the morning. Every hour I recorded would generate two to three hours of

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At year 10, the goal remains the same

by Rob

One of my professors said it's easy to write an article about a place you visit for a week; you can go for a month and write a book. But after you've spent several years in a place, you don't know what to say. Your experience of the exotic has become normal. I pondered this on a recent trip to Opuwo, Namibia while standing in the queue at the grocery store to buy some bread and peanut butter. These recording trips have become, if not routine, at least normal. I mean, we all wait in the queue at the grocery store to buy bread and peanut butter, right? Then I realized that everyone else in the store with me was dressed

traditionally, which is to say the women were wearing only loin cloths and their bodies were covered with red-brown mud. My experience of the exotic has become normal.

My first trip to Opuwo occurred just over ten years ago. It was my first time traveling in Africa. I had come with Kedra Kinney (then Kedra Larsen) to record some new songs taken from the Gospel of Mark. Kedra took a great picture of me recording a Dhimba choir. I'm recording with a Marantz digital recorder and a Røde NT4 stereo microphone. A Sunday school class in Bellingham, WA raised the money for the microphone. While it's still

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Recording a Dhimba singing group (2006). Photo by Kedra Kinney.



Daniel in the "lion's den." Or, more accurately, in a makeshift sound booth between two filing cabinets.

DHIMBA

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editing time. So, for each recording day, I would generate eight to twelve hours of editing work. To stay on schedule, I would work 12 to 16 hours every day. After about eight hours of solid work, my productivity would begin to decrease. So, even if I could physically work 16 straight hours, I wouldn't get 16 *good* hours of work. I would have to work straight through every weekend to catch up on the editing and usually needed a day each week to just focus on editing.

Eshinee's presence proved a tremendous asset! She ran the recording sessions five hours each day, then spent the remainder of her work day working remotely on the translation project. While that generated about ten hours of editing work for me each day, I kept pace because I wasn't *also* running recording sessions. Each day, she would record and I would sit in another room and edit.

For the first time, I didn't have to work myself to exhaustion and I didn't have to work straight through the weekends.

Over the course of three weeks, we managed to complete the Dhimba New Testament audio. 800 new minutes of audio from 130 chapters in the New Testament. Rejoice with us in the completion of this giant project! Soon, the Dhimba people in Namibia and Angola will be able to listen to the word of God in their own language.

OPUWO

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my go-to microphone for recording choirs, the rest of the recording rig has gotten smaller. The Marantz recorder, in particular, hasn't seen much use in recent years, replaced by a Zoom recorder which takes up much less space in my gear bag.

Four of my six trips to Opuwo have been to record the New Testament in Dhimba. For these trips, I use a Zoom H4n, which takes up 20% of the space and cost 60% what my original rig cost. Sometimes, when I have to pack light, the Zoom H4n is my entire recording studio!

On that first trip, it didn't occur to me to bring high quality monitors. In my first Africa recording session, I tried to play back a song to the choir on the computer's speakers, but I couldn't get them loud enough for everyone to hear. I borrowed some battery powered computer speakers which played solid distortion... discouraging everyone. When I went back to the US, I bought a great sounding inMotion 9 battery-

powered speaker. This speaker sounded great and was plenty loud (we even used it as a portable PA when speaking in the US), but it weighed a lot. And it ate four C batteries at a time. As weight limits for international travel became more and more restrictive, I decided I needed a new gadget. The new one (had it less than a year) is an IK Multimedia iLoud. Weighs about 20% what the inmotion weighed and runs on an internal rechargeable battery.

The photo below shows my current editing rig, used in Opuwo to edit recordings of the Dhimba New Testament. The iLoud (left) allows me to follow along with the readers. I usually have it set up split screen... English and Dhimba. I can also take notes silently on the iPad. You can see the new monitor speaker to the right.

Even though the technology keeps changing, the goal remains the same: to make God's word accessible to people in the language of their hearts.



The New Testament editing setup (2016).