

“Letter From M.O.M.”

The Bi-Monthly newsletter of **Moving On Ministry**

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www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon

Swaziland Special Edition – Feb. 2006

“I Can Only Imagine”

As you receive this volume of **Letter From M.O.M.**, we are back from our Africa mission trip. In this **Swaziland Special Edition Volume**, we are putting some more of the testimonies of “How God Changes Lives” as well as some of our own written articles. This time, it is with the People of Swaziland Africa.



Bob and Linda in Swaziland

Watch our website

www.MovingOnMinistry.com

We have also become affiliated with International Prison Fellowship

www.PrisonMinistry.net/movingon

The current trip we went on was organized by **Dream For Africa** and you can read about the programs available, expenses and results on their website at;

www.DreamForAfrica.com

Addresses to contact our Ministry Volunteers

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Volunteer Work:

I do it like I am paid great and dearly for it. For surely, the price Christ paid, was dearly and great!

Replenishing

God's Word promises to restore the years of the locust, or more simply the years previously lost.

Joel 2:25 And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

Chaplain Bob's Life

Many of those receiving this newsletter have asked for another printout of the testimony of Bob from past life to volunteer chaplain with jail and prison ministry and evangelism for church commitment.

I would like to share a story of the seeds planted in my life and the insight as I look back.

The greatest influence in my life I would have to say was my earthly father. This man would do what ever he could to provide for his family. The greatest reference of his nature was my mothers dearly love always for him.

When I was probably 8 to 12 years old, I had a Sunday school teacher named Malcolm that worked on planting Godly seed in my life. As I look back, I am sure there was the appearance of the seed going dormant, or even dying. As I entered middle school years, I bounced through a variety of churches because of going with friends and relatives. Still, any seed that may have been planted was basically "dead."

As I was finishing my high school years, I started a job in a restaurant where I met a black man, Otis, that was the dishwasher. He let me know that he was an ordained pastor. I thought I want nothing to do with this man. Otis would take the garbage out to the room to empty and would stay a little longer as he pulled his New Testament out of his pocket and read for his break. Then (the nerve of him) he would come back in and share with me about God's love for me and God's purpose for my life. I would tell Otis that I did not want to hear about it. I explained that my relatives would use the Bible and religion to tear apart and slay one another. I further explained that my

feelings were that he read the Bible in the garbage room and that was where it belonged. God should have taken my life for a statement like that. I now am thankful that God did not remove my life on earth, because I would not have been going to be in His Heavenly presence. But God had another plan and had not given up on me. I was accepted to California State University Humboldt and moved to Eureka, CA. I have to admit that this was really God's country, but I still did not have a personal relationship with Him. As I looked for work, I found an opening in the service department of Sears. I was hired to do television and stereo repairs. The manager of the shop came to me and let me know that he was a pastor of a local church. Again I thought "*I'll stay away from him*" but that was not God's plan. I began to think "*either this man has something real or he is totally nuts.*" I decided that I would ask some questions, and so we would spend lunch together in his Volkswagen and discuss Bible reality.

In January 1971, at the age of 23, I finally told Him, **God I accept you as Lord and Savior and want you in control of my life *but* (1) do not expect me to go to some God forsaken country like Africa as a missionary, (2) don't expect me to work with youth, and (3) never expect me to be involved with inmates, jail or prison ministry.**

As I went on in life, thinking I had cut the best deal I could with God, he started to reveal to me that he wanted me to release some of those things "I" was holding on to and fully submit my life to Him. This happened over an extended period of time and it seems God knew just the right timing and speed for me to grow (you might realize

because He is the creator/builder). As I released those fears I had and let God have control of those objects, there continually were burdens being lifted. I now tell people that while people were getting high on weed in Humboldt County, I was getting high on the Spirit.

I became involved in teaching youth and running a youth group. While dealing with the youth, I noticed one principle that can be applied with our relationship with God. I took a group of youth out gold panning. All day long I watched the young men panning the gold. At the end of the day, I noticed the young ladies had the bottles of gold going home with them. When I asked how that happens, the ladies said that the men did it because of love and labored for the ladies. We actually get to take home the “Gold” at the end of “our day” while God was the one laboring for us all those days.

I had a friend that invited me to do jail ministry with him. I told him that I had told God “no” and he said that was probably a good reason to do it. I have been involved in jail/prison ministry for about 3 ½ years now and can truly say it is my greatest blessing that was almost missed because of “trying” to say NO to God. Later in life, God revealed His progression pattern for me to follow;

1. Sin
2. Salvation
3. Separation
4. Sanctification
5. Soul Winning
6. Stewardship
7. Service

Many people try to separate from the temptations of the world before receiving salvation. Others try to receive all God’s blessings (sanctification) before they have separated from the sin of the world.

Read Ephesians 4 thru 6 and see if you can see this pattern revealed. Notice that 1 John displays the same progression, as does Colossians.

Now to get back to the “*but*” three exceptions I *had* to turning my life over to God. “*But #3*” was not doing Jail/prison ministry. Well, I have been blessed with 3 1/2 years of involvement as a volunteer with what God has called me to do. “*But #2*” was to not be involved with youth ministry. I have volunteered as Sunday School teacher, Youth director, AWANA Club boys director at 2 different churches, and organizer for youth outings. The final one, “*But #1*” was to not go to some God forsaken country like Africa as a missionary. I had made this known to those around me and one Wednesday afternoon, I had a pastor tell me that he thought I would have my passport by then. I said “Oh, you read my testimony in the newsletter.” That evening at our church we had a guest speaker from Cameroon Africa. He then told of being involved with jail ministry too. As I went to talk with him after the service, he said he did not know why, but God told him to give me something – a snakeskin checkbook cover. Those that know me, know my snakeskin boots are a trademark. Four incidents in one day? “*OK, God, I will go.*”

We then met **Bruce Wilkinson** in Tulare, CA, who had quit his ministry of **Walk Thru the Bible** and moved to Africa to start a ministry called **Dream For Africa**. We decided it was time to sign up

As you will see on the pages following, we gave that “*but*” to God also. Yes, we are back from our mission trip to Swaziland Africa, and truly blessed by the experience.

Dream For Africa



1 Chronicles 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested."



Four things Jabez prayed for.

1. That God would bless him indeed. Spiritual blessings are the best blessings: God's blessings are real things, and produce real effects.
2. That He would enlarge his coast. That God would enlarge our hearts, and so enlarge our portion in himself, and in the heavenly Canaan, ought to be our desire and prayer.
3. That God's hand might be with him. God's hand with us, to lead us, protect us, strengthen us, and to work all our works in us and for us, is a hand all-sufficient for us.
4. That he would keep him from evil, the evil of sin, the evil of trouble, all the evil designs of his enemies, that they might not hurt, nor

make him a Jabez indeed, a man of sorrow. God granted that which he requested. God is ever ready to hear prayer: his ear is not now heavy.

Here am I Lord, Send Me . . .



Many have read my testimony of "**God I accept you but . . .**" (Volume 10 - article on "The Path Inspired") and asked about where I am with my Africa trip. Well, Praise God, the wife and I will be going for 10 days the beginning of 2006, and may be there or already have gone as you read this. We stepped out on faith and were raising support for the trip. Destination was Swaziland near the southern tip of Africa. The thoughts are joy, fear, love, release, faith, unknown, newness, commitment, release, following, calling, and a million others. I think the wife and I may feel much like Jonah did when asked to go to Nineveh. We also know that the only answer you can give is "Yes Lord, here am I." Please pray that we raise support for our calling. We believe that "where God guides, He provides."



Orphan as "Head of Household"
(Often 6-8 years old)

So, what was Swaziland like?

So, The Question – “What Was it Like ?”



History of Swaziland

It is clear that the land which is now the Kingdom of Swaziland has been inhabited since the Stone Age. There are also relics of nomadic bushmen, of Sotho and the Ntungwa-Nguni clans. Centuries ago, a great migration from Central Africa occurred. A sub-group known as the Nguni, which today includes the Zulu and Xhosa, branched off from the main stream of this movement to follow the East Coast. The first steps towards the creation of the Swazi Nation were taken around 1750 when Nqwane III led his people inland to settle in, what is now, Southern Swaziland. Nqwane absorbed, or drove out, other people to establish himself in this area.

His successor, Sobhuza I was troubled with raids by the Zulu's to the south and re-established his capital near present-day Lobamba which has remained the heartland of the Nation. Mswati II succeeded Sobhuza I and inherited a Kingdom twice the size of Swaziland today. Still troubled by the quarrelsome Zulu's, he established his capital at Hhohho, in the northern mountains, conquered territories as far afield as Carolina, Barbeton and Hectorspruit and welded his people into a nation. They were known as the people of Mswati-Mswazi to the Zulu's, hence the name "Swazi" today.

During the 1840's white adventurers, hunters, traders, cattlemen, missionaries, began to arrive in the area. They were

received peacefully by the Swazi's but, during the reign of Mbandzeni, it became clear that many of them were simply fortune-hunters, greedy for land and trading concessions. Then, in the late 1800's, both the Boers of the old South African Republic and the British sought administrative domination over the Kingdom. This was a confused period where little was done to resolve the problem of the fortune hunters and the present Northern, Western and Southern borders of the country were defined without reference to the Swazi's.

During the Anglo-Boer War, in 1899, King Sobhuza II was born and after the death of his father, Bhunu, his grandmother, Labotsibeni, assumed the Regency until the King came of age. After the war, Britain ruled Swaziland for 66 years as a Protectorate.

Upon ascending the throne, Sobhuza II continued his mother's struggle with the British to recover land, belonging to the Swazi Nation which had supposedly been ceded to concession holders by King Mbandzeni during the 1800's. A system of dual control persisted; the British Resident Commissioner and his district officers, on the one hand, and the King, the National and Inner Councils, and the local chiefs, on the other. However, constitutional changes suggested by King Sobhuza II in the years

leading up to Independence in September 1968 were eventually accepted.

After Independence, it was recognized that the Constitution, created with western thinking by the British, did not suit the traditional needs of Swazis. King Sobhuza II ruled Swaziland from 1921, when he ascended the throne, until his death in 1982. His long rule is remembered for the wisdom of his insistence on the maintenance of traditional tribal values at a time of modern development



The new King is said to love his people, and his people love him. **Mswati III** (born **Makhosetive** on [April 19, 1968](#)) is the [king](#) of [Swaziland](#). He succeeded his late father, [Sobhuza II](#), in [1986](#).

King Mswati III was crowned king of Swaziland on April 25, 1986 at the age of eighteen. He thus became the youngest ruling monarch in the world. His father [King Sobhuza II](#) died in 1982, at the age of 82, and to date is still regarded as the longest reigning monarch. He ruled from 1921 to 1982



King Mswati III on Right



King's Wives

His wives are:

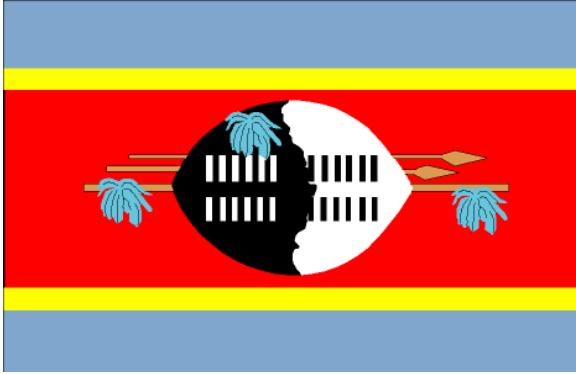
- **[Inkhosikati LaMatsebula](#)**—Ritual wife. Has a degree in education.
- **[Inkhosikati LaMotsa](#)**—Ritual wife. **United Nations Goodwill Ambassador** [2]
- **[Inkhosikati LaNganganza](#)**
 - Daughter: *Temaswati Dlamini* (1988)
 - Daughter: *Tiyandza Dlamini*
 - Daughter: *Tebukhosi Dlamini*
- **[1986 Inkhosikati LaMbikiza](#)**—(born [16 June 1969](#) **Sibonelo Mngomezulu**) Daughter of [Percy Mngomezulu](#); an advocate, received her degree from [UNISA](#). LaMbikiza is involved in the [Swazi Royal Initiative to Combat AIDS](#) (Rica). The initiative involves the recording of songs by Swazi, [South African](#)

- and international artists and the proceeds of the sales are allocated to programmes aimed at helping people affected by [AIDS](#).
- Daughter: *Sikhanyiso Dlamini* (1987)
 - Son: *Lindaninkosi Dlamini* (Lindani) (1989)
 - **Putsoana Hwala**—(born 1974 ??) Known as **Inkhosikati LaHwala** She left the king in 2004 and moved to [South Africa](#).
 - Son: *Bandzile*
 - Daughter: *Sibahle*
 - **Delisa Magwaza**—(born 1974 ??) Known as **Inkhosikati LaMagwaza**. Has since left the king.
 - Daughter: *Temtsimba Dlamini*
 - Daughter: *Sakhile Dlamini*
 - August 2000 **Inkhosikati LaMasango**—(born 1981 ?? **Sentengi Masango**)
 - May 2002 **Inkhosikati LaGija**—(born **Angel Dlamini**)
 - June 2002 **Inkhosikati LaMagongo**—(born **Notsetsele Magongo**) Niece of Chief **Mlobokazana Fakudze**, Chief at **Mgazini**.
 - November 2002 **Inkhosikati LaMahlangu**—(born 1984 **Zena Soraya Mahlangu**) 18-year-old High School student Zena Mahlangu disappeared from her school on [9 October 2002](#). Her mother, **Lindiwe Dlamini**, learnt that her daughter had been taken by two men, Qethuka Sgombeni Dlamini and Tuluani Sikhondze, and reported the matter to the police. She was told that her daughter was at the Royal Palace

- at **Ludzidzini** and had been "assigned Royal duties".^[3] She demanded that her daughter be returned to her custody, and threatened to sue. Zena was 18 and had agreed to be taken by the King, but remained silent. The matter went to the High Court, but Swaziland Attorney-General **Pshheya Dlamini** intervened.^[4] Mahlangu was announced as engaged to King Mswati in November, and she stayed at the Royal Palace; there has been no contact between her and her mother. She was officially made King Mswati's bride in a traditional marriage ceremony in May 2004.
- May 2005 **Inkhosikati LaNtentesa** (born 1981 **Noliqhwa Ayanda Ntentesa**), betrothed November 2002, married in a traditional function held at Ludzidzini Royal Residence [May 26, 2005](#).
 - June 2005 **Inkhosikati LaDube** (born **Nothando Dube**) a Miss Teenage Swaziland finalist at age 16, chosen at the **Umhlanga** (Reed Dance) ceremony on [August 30, 2004](#) while she was a grade 9 pupil at **Mater Dorolosa High School**. Married [11 June 2005](#).

Fiancées

- September 2003 **Nomonde Fihla** at age 18.
- January 2005 **Colile Nosiphe Magagula** (Titi) ^[5] at age 17.
- September 2005 **Phindile Nkambule** ^[6] at age 17.



Swaziland Kingdom Flag

Known as the “poorest country in the world.” this small kingdom has a reputation for short lives and orphans. The people are dying of starvation. The purpose of our mission trip was a humanitarian one. We went to help plant gardens.

There were 107 of us that came from California cities of Reedley, Dinuba, Visalia, El Cajon, and Tulare, and Atlanta, GA.



Volunteer and Village Chief with his wife.

We worked with the Chiefs in many areas (16 teams). Each chief was in charge of 9 areas under his rule. Most chiefs would have from 4 to 7 wives, each wife at her own house, with some distance between each of the wives.



Planting the Never Ending Gardens

We would take a vehicle out to remote village sites (sometimes doing some walking in) to meet with the locals to plant beets, green peppers, and tomatoes.

The object of this ministry was to show the love of God to these individuals thru works, not words. We were there to show love and help these people to grow crops to help build up a better immune system.

Sometimes the gardens planted would be what we call a “community garden,” meaning that they were planted to serve several families.



A larger area would be cleared and the soil tilled for the planting of more seedlings. This trip, the plants being planted, were tomatoes, green peppers, and beets.

When the larger gardens were planted, the locals would be there

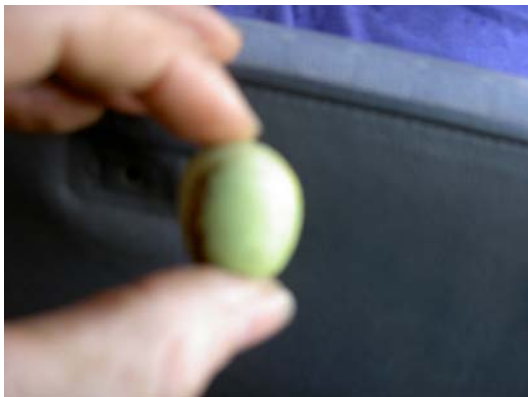
hoeing along with those on the mission trip.



The larger gardens would require a lot more trips to the creek to get water to water the plants. Water almost always had to be brought in.



Most animals were found to be undernourished. Many could be found covered with ticks.



There was a fruit tree that produces the marula fruit. These fruits were

predominately squeezed for their juice, which would be allowed to ferment and then made into a wine. Many a time did we see individuals sleeping or dancing from the effect of the marula fruit that had been used to make wine.



The Typical Home



For the most part, the individuals in our areas lived in mud huts with thatched roofs. There were varieties

of these, with some being made of rock, concrete block, or wood walls. The roofs were sometimes seen made with metal, shingles, or plastic siding materials. The insides were usually hard dirt, which the individuals swept daily to keep clean. There was usually a small table to serve the potage from. This was made from grinding the maize (corn) into a mush. Sometimes potatoe leaves were added.



Clothing was considered a valuable item. Often the individuals were partial or completely naked, and in all ages. Shoes were most often not seen, and the individuals walked barefoot. Even when playing sports, such as their national sport of soccer, they played barefoot.



But thru all these conditions, they still always smiled and showed joy within their life.

The reason for this joy was their dedication to God. They would walk from 2 km to 4 km (1 ½ to 3 miles) to church.



The church we attended was made of irregular boards that the light and elements came right thru.



The inside of the church was lined with plastic to block some of the elements. Yet, those attending considered themselves very lucky. The children that had walked so far to attend a church service in this

make shift building, could be heard to sing the words of Christian songs with great joy.



The power of prayer could be realized with these people.



When asked why they got results in their prayer, they answered it was because the hospitals were too far away and too expensive for any of them. They said they had to depend on God, because He was all they had. We realized that though we went to these people to give unto them, we were actually receiving more from them than we could ever give.

After the service, we were presented with a magnificent meal that these people themselves would probably never see. We realized that there was too much food for us and we decided to share plates between ourselves.

Looking at the children, that were not eating, but just watching, we ended up offering our meals to these little ones. They would sit down in the dirt and share the plate between about 4 children.

Pastor Jeffrey gathered with us after the service to express his thanks. The offering taken up was the largest they had ever had.



And yet the understanding we had gained, far surpassed the money given to help with a building program for a better church. We realized that we in America are so blessed. We take so much for granted. These people would have a major chore just to get a drink of water.

As I stood there chatting with the pastor and those attending the church, I thought of the inmates I dealt with. The inmates had secure walls around them. They had a roof over their head. They got three meals a day. They did not have to walk 1 to 3 miles to fetch water so they could have a drink. I then wondered who was really in the "prison" and realized that as we perceive it, is what makes it a prison or not.



The time of year that we were down there was summer, with summer being November to March – opposite seasons with southern hemisphere. The children were out of school for December and January for summer break. Also backwards from the northern hemisphere is that most rain falls in the summer months temperatures will be **HOT!!** This will be no vacation – we will be working in the hot sun for long extended days and hiking into the “bush” to reach remote huts and orphans.

The country (poorest in the world) consists of 6,641 sq. miles. This land is divided into 4 districts of (1) Hhohho, (2) Lubombo, (3) Manzini, and (4) Shiselweni. The population of 1,096,000 people speaks as their official languages Siswati and English. The general population is 38-85% H.I.V. positive. The main currency is the Lilangeni, but the African Rand is acceptable with a rate of exchange of \$1 USD = 5.8 Rand.

Field Stories

Current “Feeding the Multitudes”



My wife, Linda, was with team 16 made up of 6 individuals and would pick up a 7th person to guide to the homes throughout the village. They had stopped for lunch at what seemed a secluded spot. They only had 7 of the small box lunches we would take out into the field with us. We usually did not get to eat the lunches, since there were people around us starving and malnourished. As usual, when they stopped, the people seemed to appear out of nowhere. There was soon a gathering of about 25 people. Linda said, we have to share our lunches, these people are starving. The leader, Daniel agreed, and they took the 7 lunches and shared them throughout the group, and all were filled.

The Chief’s Wives

One of Linda’s trips consisted of planting for 7 houses that were spread a distance apart. As she went to the first hut, she picked up a lady that showed

her where the next hut was located. They planted gardens, chatted with the resident, and moved on to the next home. Again, the same thing, time after time with planting and chatting. When they got back to the lady's hut, she asked if they could plant her a garden. "Of course" they said. This lady then told her that she was sure God had sent them, because the 7 homes just planted were the 7 wives of the chief, and they had not talked. All was much better now in the relationships.

taken as sex slaves to work prostitution in the city. She was unable to move her arms or legs. When found by individuals with "Dream For Africa" she was taken to a hospital and hooked up to an IV to build her strength back up

She was prayed over and today she is Re-united with her two sisters and



a clean bill of health.

Miraculous Healing



Many of those trying to survive, live in the dump. This is the story of an 8 year old girl named Liliani. She weighed 12 pounds. She was malnourished and hepatitis and HIV/AIDS positive. She was living in a garbage dump.



She was left for dead and to fend for herself, while her two older sisters were



Facts and Blessings from Swaziland

The trip to Swaziland was sponsored thru “**Dream For Africa**” ministry founded by **Dr. Bruce Wilkinson**. Individuals were required to raise money for the trip, or to pay their own way.

AIDS – is already a pandemic for the **40 million people** living with HIV/AIDS in the world. **26.8 million** of the HIV/AIDS individuals live in the sub-Saharan Africa, as compared to **1.2 million** that live in North America. AIDS is devastating Africa by killing **274 people** every hour, **6,575 people** every day, or **2.4 million** Africans each and every year. HIV/AIDS threatens the very survival of a continent. Africa is host to 70% of the world's HIV / AIDS population. In Swaziland, **42.6%** of the population is HIV-positive. The average life expectancy in Africa is 47 years, but in 9 countries it is less than age 30. Swaziland has life expectancies of 38 years for women and 41 years for men.

Although sub-Saharan Africa is home to 10% of the world's population, it carries 66% of the world's people who are infected with HIV.

The South African national HIV prevalence rate has rocketed from 1% in 1990, to **25% today** (remember that Swaziland is above the average by having 42.6% infected individuals). Swaziland is the #1 AIDS infected country in the world where **nearly ½ of the people are infected** with HIV/AIDS.

4,000 South African teachers died in 2004 of AIDS. **12%** of all teachers are infected.

30% of all pregnant women are infected with AIDS, thus resulting in infection of the child during birth.

Swaziland has **5,000+ households headed by children**, with ages of household head being as low as 6-8 years old. In 2004, Botswana had 600 families registered with the government whose head of household were **6 years old**. These individuals take care of and provide for their younger brothers and sisters.

Zambia is home to **660,000 orphans** in a country of 10,000,000 people, and is expected to climb to 10%, or 1,000,000 orphans by 2010.

In August 2005, it was thought that there were 70,000 orphans in Swaziland and it was projected that there would be 120,000 orphans by the year 2010. In October 2005, new statistics were released estimating that there are **132,000 orphans in Swaziland today** out of a total population of 1,000,000, or 13.2% of the population. Currently, no projection for 2010 has been made.

Kenya has **1,700,000 orphans** (5.7%) in a country the size of California and a total population of 30,000,000.

So what about the life expectancy of children in Africa?

- Every **14 seconds** a child is orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Africa.
- 14,000,000 children are orphaned **TODAY** in sub-Saharan Africa alone.
- The World Health Organization predicts that there will be 43,000,000

HIV/AIDS orphans by 2010 globally.

- **Every 3 seconds a child dies** of starvation/malnutrition – no one is there to provide them with food.

Past news articles on Swaziland, the King, and Family

Swazi women ignore sex ban 09/30/2001 (SA)

Mbabane, Swaziland - Frustrated by the high rate of HIV infection in his country, Swaziland's king ordered all his young female subjects to don a symbolic chastity belt, a tasselled scarf signalling a 5-year ban on sexual relations.

Yet nearly three weeks later two scarfless teen-age schoolgirls waited for a bus on the streets of the capital, Mbabane, and openly questioned their ruler's edict.

"Five years is too much," said Sipiwe Nkosi, a 14-year-old wearing a maroon school uniform. "If they had said two years, we could have observed the tradition."

Nearly two decades after this tiny mountain kingdom was last subjected to a sex ban, young women in traditional rural areas - where powerful local chiefs enforce the king's will - appear to have accepted the order. But it is nearly impossible to find a scarf among the thousands of newly urbanised girls in Mbabane and Swaziland's manufacturing hub of Manzini.

Nkosi's mother went to the trouble of buying her one of the multicoloured tasselled scarves. But it sits unused in her home in a suburb just outside Mbabane.

"I can't even go to school wearing it because my friends would laugh at me," she said.

Lungile Dlamini, 16, who attends a different school, agreed.

"If they wanted us to embrace this tradition, it should not have been imposed on us," she said.

Protecting 'flowers'

Describing teen-age girls as "flowers that should be protected," King Mswati III announced on September 9 the reinstatement of the traditional chastity rite of *umchwasho*.

Many Swazis, already confused and annoyed by Mswati's order, were infuriated when soon after announcing the *umchwasho* the 33-year-old king announced his engagement to a 17-year-old girl, who would be his ninth wife.

Under the tradition, in place for the next five years, all unmarried girls under the age of 18 must wear the multicoloured, woven scarves signalling they are not to be touched by men.

Banning young women from having sex is a long-standing Swaziland tradition that is enforced intermittently. It is up to the king to decide when to issue a chastity order.

If a boy violates *umchwasho*, the girl and others in the village are to march to

his house and throw their scarves at it. The boy's family will then be forced to pay his chief a fine of one cow or R1 300 (\$145). No one has been fined yet.

Unmarried women over the age of 18 are to wear red and black scarves, which allow limited sexual contact, but not intercourse.

Mswati said the umchwasho was necessary to combat the frightening HIV-infection rate in the country. More than 25 percent of adults in Swaziland are infected with HIV, according to UNAids. The disease has already killed tens of thousands of Swazis.

Different times

The last umchwasho, decreed by Mswati's father, King Sobhuza II, was largely adhered to when it was enforced in the early 1980s. But Swaziland was a vastly different country then.

The cities were smaller and far more heavily influenced by the conservative values of the rural areas. Girls wore long skirts and even though some of the more urban girls were embarrassed by the chastity scarf, they still wore it, hidden beneath their clothing.

Now, Mbabane boast buildings 12 stories high and nearly a quarter of the 1 million Swazis live in the cities, where teen-age girls show off their constricting designer jeans, skintight tank tops and platform shoes.

"The tradition now has lost meaning," broadcast journalist Comfort Mabuza said.

Queen Mother Ntombi Thwala defended the sex ban, saying the tradition would help promote moral values in unmarried women.

But teachers and women throughout the cities decried it as misguided and bizarre.

Philile Mamba, a 23-year-old student at the University of Swaziland, wondered how effective umchwasho could be in stopping the spread of HIV in a country where young girls were still forced to marry sexually experienced men far older than them.

"By eradicating this practice, we would have taken a giant step toward combating HIV, instead of just having wool hanging down from the girl's head to her shoulders," she said. "Why can't we channel all the resources into educating young girls to uphold their self-esteem ... (so) they are able to say no to sexual advances."

"I think we are missing the point here," she said. - Sapa/AP

Swazi king ends no-sex rite 08/18/2005 (SA)

Mbabane - Swaziland's absolute monarch King Mswati III has ordered an end to a five-year no-sex rite for teenage girls, who had to pledge chastity and wear woollen "do not touch me" tassles in a bid to halt the spread of Aids.

Reports said Swaziland's maidens would forsake their tassles and the "umchwasho" chastity pledge on August 22, ahead of the annual reed dance

ceremony, where the king was expected to choose yet another new bride.

Nkhonto Dlamini of Swaziland's maidens said: "I have it in command from his majesty to order all the national flowers (maidens) to converge on Ludzidzini (royal palace) on Sunday so that they can drop the woollen tassles on Monday.

"The woollen tassles will be burnt to mark the end of the ritual introduced by the monarch in 2001."

40% of adults live with HIV/Aids

Introduced by Mswati in September that year, the rite was aimed at reducing the spread of HIV/Aids in the country with the world's highest infection rate, where close to 40% of adults lived with the disease.

Breaching the chastity vow before marriage was punishable and any person who violated a maiden was fined one cow, or about \$200.

But, the practice had been attacked by social workers who said it was ineffective.

Mswati himself breached the ban and was fined a cow for picking a teenaged girl as his ninth wife.

Parents of young Swazi men said they were also glad to see the end of umchwasho, which they said left them impoverished as they had to help their sons pay for their transgressions.

The annual reed dance, where bare-breasted maidens perform before the

king, would start on August 28 and last for two days.

Swazi king picks wife # 13 **09/25/2005 (SA)**

Mbangweni - Africa's last absolute monarch, Swaziland's King Mswati III, has picked his 13th wife, a palace spokesperson said Sunday.

The 17-year-old Phindile Nkambule, who finished her final exams in June to allow her to join the royal house, was unveiled as his next wife-to-be at a traditional reed dance ceremony at the weekend.

"Nkambule is here to perform royal duties. So as to what form of duties, I am not mandated to disclose that but she is a guest of the king," palace spokeskam Ntfonjeni Dlamini said.

The public came to know of Nkambule when she participated at the reed dance at Mbangweni, south of Mbabane, where some 4,000 bare-breasted maidens danced before the 37-year-old king to allow him to choose his next wife.

According to custom, the king, who rules by decree, will marry Nkambule once she falls pregnant.

In June, Mswati married the 16-year-old Nothando Dube and currently has 12 wives but two of them have absconded.

Swaziland is a small country wedged between South Africa and Mozambique where the majority of its 1.2 million inhabitants live on less than a dollar a

day and suffer under severe food shortages and record-high Aids rates.

Mswati has been repeatedly criticised for living lavishly and spending exorbitant amounts on parties and gifts for his string of wives who have bore 27 children for him.

King's brother jailed for rape
01/20/2006 (SA)
(the day we were leaving)

Mbabane - Prince Mbuyisa Dlamini, elder brother of King Mswati III of Swaziland and a senior member of the Swazi royal household, has been sent to jail for seven years because he raped a nine year-old girl.

In his finding Justice Joe Gumede on Thursday strongly condemned Dlamini's act in the Mbabane magistrate's court.

"Those who commit this type of crime have to receive heavy sentences because they really do not deserve to be part of the community.

"What you did, has brought shame on your own head and also on the heads of your children.

'Won't mention the royal family'

"I will not even dare to mention the royal family," Gumede said.

The victim was Dlamini's niece, his sister's grandchild.

He raped her during a visit to the girl's house near the hamlet of Ngwenya in the west of Swaziland.

In his judgement Gumede did not mince his words when he reminded Dlamini of what exactly he had done.

Dlamini caused "pain and suffering when he penetrated her and tore her vagina without any qualms about her rights and dignity, the worst aspect being that she was in no position to defend herself".

Gumede said Dlamini had to thank his stars that the case had not been heard in a higher court.

Had that been so, Dlamini would have received a life sentence but the director of public prosecution had decided that the hearing should be held in a lower court.

Dlamini, 56, pleaded bad health as a reason for a more lenient sentence but Gumede disregarded his plea.

Family of the victim indicated that they regarded the sentence as satisfactory but said the girl had gone through serious trauma and physical suffering.

The case received extensive attention in the local media. - Beeld

