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## ZEMA Missions— Africa

God has given ZEMA one of the great open doors in Christian Missions today among the *Zionists* of the *African Independent Churches* in **Southern Africa**. Membership in "Zion Churches" is thought to be as high as 15 million, divided up into more than 4000 Zion church denominations. **These churches took the name "Zion" not from Israel, but from the town of Zion, Illinois, USA**



which sent literature and missionaries to South Africa ca. 1900, thus founding the Zionist movement. Unfortunately, the original missionaries had to return home due to issues in the church, and the new believers were left on their own.

### Syncretism.

Without ongoing teaching from the scriptures the amaZioni (people of Zion) quickly took what little they knew about Christianity and blended it with their traditional African religious beliefs to basically form a new religion. The new movement quickly spread among the indigenous peoples of the southern continent of Africa.



Traditional Zionists believe that their ancestors influence every part of their lives, and must be feared and appeased. Witchdoctors communicate with the dead and, for a fee, prescribe what animals must be sacrificed, what potions must be taken, and what other actions they must take to remove the curse of the ancestors. This is all supported by verses taken out of context from the Bible.

To outsiders, they are widely known for their colorful worship garb and the “circle dance” which they perform to the ever present beating of drums.

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*Sola Scriptura*

*The Scriptures Alone*

*Soli Deo Gloria*

*God's Glory Alone*

*Solus Christus*

*Christ Alone*

*Sola Gratia*

*Grace Alone*

*Sola Fide*

*Faith Alone*

### Isolation.

The Zionists became totally resistant to the influence of other Christian churches and missionaries for nearly 100 years. Basically, the only true converts were those which missionaries managed to separate from their families and culture.

### Reconnection.

Near the end of the twentieth century, Christ Community Church, a direct descendant of the original church in Zion, Illinois, discovered an open door with the amaZioni because of their historical connection. Coming from “Zion” they were afforded the opportunity to work among the Zionists “from the inside.” The result was an immediate reform movement as the missionaries came not to chastise them for being Zionists, but, as Zionists themselves, to bring them the true teachings of Zion.

### Awakening.

With the preaching again the true Gospel of Christ, the Lord began to awaken hearts and thousands are pressing into the Kingdom of God. The witchdoctors are forsaking their practices and burning their paraphernalia.

ZEMA missionaries are establishing Zion Evangelical Bible Schools (ZEBS) throughout southern Africa to give church leaders a foundational education in the scriptures and church administration. The requests are more than can be met. The missionaries, as well as personnel in America, are constantly being called by Zionist leaders to come and start new Bible schools.

In light of the great desire of the amaZioni for Bible training, and the fact that many thousands of Zionists are looking to ZEMA to provide that training, **it is not an overstatement to say that if ZEMA had 20 new missionary couples prepared and arriving on the field today, they would be needed in the work.**

With such an amazing opportunity afforded by this open door, we pray that the Lord of the Harvest would raise up both laborers and resources to fulfill His purpose among the amaZioni. Never have our Lord’s words rung truer:

*The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.*

*Luke 10:2*

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