

I have a tonne of things I need to be doing, but I just returned from my Thursday morning ladies' Bible class and I want to try and describe my morning to you.

Rudzani phoned me; would I go pick her up in town at the taxi rank? I had just completed packing my basket (bible, lesson material, whiteboard markers/eraser, hand fan, and bottled water), so I grabbed my car keys and headed out the door, asking Dave to open the gates for me. (Its like Fort Knox around here, a common situation in any neighbourhood in South Africa.)



But she wasn't there! So there I sat, a white woman surrounded by a sea of black faces. I felt somewhat ridiculous for I had been asked to wear the traditional dress of the Venda and hoping no one would notice. . . Suddenly a voice spoke out, "Good morning! You look so beautiful today!" And then another and another. (If she didn't turn up soon, we would have a party and I was the main entree!) And then, suddenly, there she was, holding her beautiful new baby boy (2 months old and allowed "out").



Back on the road we travelled up the mountain and through the mountains and back down the mountain into dry country. A beautiful morning with green mountain scenery and then downwwn the mountain side to a suddenly hot, dry and windy day. In Africa you never know the weather from one area to another in only 40 miles.



An hour later we arrived. I gathered all of me up (there always seems to be more than I want to admit to!), and we climbed the footpath to the old garage where we meet for class. Today, I asked them to read through some translated material I had typed up and to please inform me of any little correction that needed to be changed. They did! By the time they were through with the paper, I decided I needed to learn more of the Venda language.

For revision work, I taught them how to make the simple game of "concentration" after each had drawn their own set of cards. We had a great time attempting to play the game, but I had forgotten that children do a MUCH better job with this game. I then emphasized that whenever we use "games" in teaching the Bible, we find ways to reinforce lessons learned, and not just to have fun playing. (It always amazes me that kids will get so excited to make a match that they don't seem worried about the grilling I give them when the match is made. And they dig in for more! Well, I'M certainly not complaining.)

After the closing prayer, you never saw such scraping of chairs to be the first to hold the new baby. I dug out my camera and we had a grand time, each one wanted their photo holding the new baby. I told them that when I share these photos with their sisters in America, they will think, "My! her class was FULL of babies!"

Laughter, shared laughter is so very heart-warming. So share with me now. These are your African sisters who come in week after week hungry to learn more and more of what "Sister Joanne can feed us!" And it is they who feed me.

Love to each one,  
Joanne

Paulina



Anna



Angeline

Martha



Josephine



Anna & Ruth

Want to see a close up of their traditional dress? Actually, I would call it a blanket, it is so heavy! Cloth (reminds me of mattress ticking) is doubled, and then patchwork, and machine embroidered. Notice the ties which usually sit on one shoulder. If you notice, that "dress" ends up every-which-way! Those who can afford it, also wear the same as a skirt underneath.

