

ZIMBABWE REPORT – APRIL 16, 2008

One of the pastors in Zimbabwe sends this update on the crisis in Zimbabwe:

Thank you ... for praying for us. We need all the prayers we can get because the situation here now will take God to sort out. We had elections two weeks ago, the president and the ruling party lost the elections (we know because according to the electoral law, the results were supposed to be displayed outside every polling station, which they were and are thus public knowledge). However the government has decided to withhold the official announcement to declare a winner and instead are working towards a re-run of the presidential elections and they are mobilising war veterans, the army, the police, militia forces to beat and cow the population particularly in the rural areas into voting for them. Emotions have been on a roller coaster for the last two weeks, starting from excitement going towards elections, to hope for change, to anxiety as we waited for results, to anger as it became obvious that the expected result wasn't going to be, to fear as we see the army mobilising and now grim foreboding and sheer terror concerning the future. The situation on the streets however is very calm as people try to go about their business to try to find food and cope with the ever rising costs.

Our inflation is officially at 165,000% (unofficially at 265,000%). What that means is prices go up twice a day, sometimes doubling in 24 hours. It costs more to drive or catch public transport to work than the salaries earned, so some people actually just stay at home as it's not worth it to go to work, there is massive food, fuel and general commodity shortages. Taxes were raised last week, and those at the top end of the scale will be taxed at 63% and the lower end at 30%!!!

We were in church today and looking over the congregation, one just sees a people whose spirits are broken and discouraged looking to the pastor to bring the word of the Lord for the situation. Stress levels are high and stress related sickness more prevalent than before. The challenge for the pastor is he too is in the same situation as the people and has to do a lot of encouraging oneself in the Lord first before stepping out to try and encourage the people too and sometimes barely managing to. We can only pray to the Lord as King Jehoshaphat prayed, "*We don't know what to do, but our eyes upon you*".

Thus, we really appreciate your praying because it will take God to bring us out of this mess. God is indeed on the throne, He is sovereign and His will shall be done. He rules over the affairs of nations, He raises up kings and brings them down again. His purposes for Zimbabwe shall be accomplished. Despite all this, my family and I are keeping well and continue to trust in the Lord. My fellow pastors in this district are all keeping well too and send their greetings and appreciation for your prayers.