

Date: July 17

Location: Nhando Village, Zambezi Delta, Mozambique

MA Staff Member: Matthias Reuter

“When you start to follow God, you leave your old ways behind.” YWAM missionary Eliza physically turned to face the opposite direction before continuing. “You turn away from your old ways and change directions into a new way, into God’s way. And when you do that, there may be some things that you have to change in your life.”



Twenty-seven-year-old Ulga listened intently as Eliza spoke and the longer she listened, the more certain she became about what must be done. Even though the thought of it filled her with dread, she knew she must trust God instead of her ancestral traditions, and this was the only way to do that.

As someone else stood to speak, Ulga silently slipped through the back of the crowd and started walking home to retrieve her family’s amulets.

In the villages of the Zambezi Delta, most children and adults wear amulets, a thin piece of colored thread meant to protect them. These amulets are sold to them by witch doctors, and they tie them anywhere around their bodies: ankle, wrist, waist, and neck. However, with the promises of protection also come a series of threats of what will happen to the villagers and their families if they fail to wear the amulets.



With her family’s amulets balled tightly in her fist, Ulga approached the group again. With every step, her heart beat harder and faster as questions of uncertainty filled her mind. *What will happen without the amulets’ protection? What will the other villagers say? What will my family say? Will the witch doctor’s threats come true?* Despite the uncertainties, Ulga silenced the questions in her heart and became more convinced of what she must do.

Ulga approached Eliza and showed her the pieces of thread she held in her hand. “I listened to what you said and I am ready to turn away from my old ways and follow God’s new way. I am ready to burn our amulets. Now I will trust God to protect me.”

Together they walked to a small patch of grass, and Ulga lit it on fire. She let it burn for a moment before dropping the amulets into the fire as well. As they burned, Eliza placed a hand on Ulga’s shoulder to pray, thanking God for Ulga’s faith and praying that others in this village and throughout the Zambezi Delta would also turn from their old ways and follow God’s way.

