

News letter from Duane and Nadine Howe
Missionaries to Brazil

Note from Pastor Kevin: Duane has been ministering the gospel to the jungle people of Brazil for more than 30 years. He has been a guest speaker in our fellowship during his furloughs to the States. Tapes of his messages are available in the tape library. His newsletter this month is very interesting as it describes how some of the jungle people believe the lies of voodoo magic. As you read his letter, the following writing of Paul should come to mind:

II Th 2:9-12 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (NKJ)

A dear friend from New Zealand wrote telling about a race of people in Papua New Guinea who lived in trees, basically because they cannot get along with anyone. If they lived here in Brazil I can guarantee you that they would have "ants in their pants" from such a lofty and leafy home. They would also probably feel like certain swinging creatures are "monkeying around" too much! Well, thanks, Sue, for the note about them.

The Culina have never lived in trees. But they have lived in some very flimsy shelters with palm frond roofs and usually their house on stilts so everything that spills or doesn't have diapers can just let it run down to the ground through the cracks in the hard split-palm bark floors. There were no walls, at least in the first shelters that we ever saw. We were always amazed that they didn't try to protect their mosquito nets from the driving rains...but, then, maybe that was the only time the net got washed. After living with them for a few months we were immersed in culture and suddenly realized that wall-less houses are necessary because these folks HAD to know what was happening in the village. They want to see the approach of a would-be attacker from a distance, so they lay in their hammocks and look out through the dirty net and see if friend or foe is coming down the pike.

When we first went to the Culina in 1969 they talked incessantly about something called "dori". (door-ee). Dori was not a nice thing. I decided to study into the nature of Dori. It took a while, but I soon discovered that Dori was a yellow bit of wood pitch. The shaman kept several of these wrapped in a very small leaf basket tucked in the palm fronds of his house. The Dori has two main uses. If someone gets ill in your village the shaman can get out the pitch pieces and pop them in his mouth. Then he will suck and suck on the sick person's abdomen or wherever and vomit up the Dori. The witchdoctor pokes around in the vomit and finds the Dori and then shows it jubilantly to the people. He has just cured a person by sucking a curse out of that sick man or lady.

The other use of the Dori is to cause a curse. You do this by putting some of the pitch pieces in the palm of your hand and grind them to powder, then face the

direction of the one you want to curse...he can be in the next house or he can be hundreds of miles away. Then the shaman blows the dust into the air in the direction of the one he is cursing. POOF! Magically it goes through the air and into the body of the person and solidifies. It is now a Dori in the sick person's body requiring that local shaman to suck it out.

One day I had gone alone to a distant village to learn language and culture and tell these dear people, as best I could in my limited Culina, about Jesus. I arrived and they treated me royally and gave me a whole shelter to myself. I was not aware that I was actually hanging my hammock in the local shaman's house. But one morning a lady came up the trail from the river and suddenly stopped and vomited blood. This caused total confusion and people running to her side and others shouting for the shaman. I observed from my hammock and knew this was a lady with tuberculosis. It was treatable.

Suddenly the shaman leaped into my house and just inches from my head was shuffling through the palm fronds for his little bag of Doris. I watched wide-eyed. He found them and popped a few in his mouth and then raced to the place where the woman was now laying and he began to suck and chant and suck some more. I never have been shy about these things, so I walked over and watched. Then I turned to a Culina friend who had come to the village with me and I said, "I know his secret! I know how he is fooling everyone and lying! I saw him put the Dori in his mouth!". Sure enough he was soon vomiting them up and showing everyone the Dori he had sucked out. Scam! Fraud! False Prophet! I was trying to find someone who would agree with me that this guy was a big fake.

My Culina friend then said, "Oh, we all know that he keeps the Dori in his roof! We know he puts them in his mouth before he starts sucking. But that doesn't matter...that is how you get the curse out! That's just the way it is!"

Dori has killed many, many Culinas. Not the sickness, but the belief that a person has been cursed by a Dori blown from some enemy and then that clan must get vengeance by killing some one from the clan of the shaman who did the evil deed! And now you know why Culinas are scattered so widely all over the Rain Forest. They flee the avengers.

The Culina need to know that Jesus has defeated Dori. He took the Curse on the Cross for us! He died on the Cross to free us from the curse of sin. Praise God that today there are born again Culina who no longer believe in the Dori and believe in the Deliverer!! Hallelujah!

Duane and Nadine Howe in the big woods

