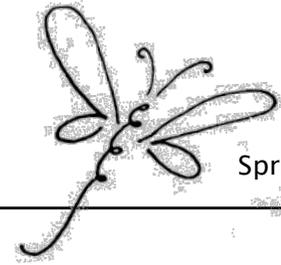




HBS Newsletter

Hôpital Bon Samaritain

Limbé, Haiti



Spring 2022

Limbé flood 2022



Haiti has many rivers, waterfalls, and streams. The longest river on the Island of Hispaniola is the Arbonite River which starts in the highlands of the Dominican Republic. With a length of approximately 145 miles, it flows across the border between Dominican Republic and Haiti for several kilometers and then continues across Haiti from East to West ending up in the Gulf of Gonave.



Limbé is located in a very fertile mountain river valley in the Northern Department. The Limbé River originates where two mountain branches, the Grande Riviere from Marmalade and Riviere Soufriere from above Acul come together just south of the town. The river passes Limbé on the east side, flowing northward to Bas Limbé before emptying in the Atlantic Ocean.

On the 5th of March a heavy rain system in the northern part of Hispaniola triggered flash floods in the Puerto Plata Province in Dominican Republic and the Northern Department of Haiti, hitting especially hard in the areas of Limbé and Bas Limbé. In Limbé people started noticing the water rising at 5am where flood waters coursed through the streets up to 5ft high in some parts of town. It took most of the day for the water to recede.

It has been many years since Limbé has seen a flood of this magnitude.

Limbé benefited from a dike system built in colonial times to keep the water from breaching the town. Development and erosion have seen this dike system deteriorate over time. The Limbé bridge creates a bottle neck so when the water swells it has nowhere else to go and floods the northern end of the town.

Thankfully only the lower end of the town on the river side was under water but people there lost a lot of personal belongings. Crop and animal loss was significant throughout the valley.



Dr Hodges' view on Haitian Culture and Religion

"Twenty-two years in Haiti have convinced me that all human beings are yearning for and moving towards that splendid vision of redemption in an orderly universe ruled by a God of love and the Christ of Gethsemane".

William H Hodges



Dr. William Hodges spent 37 years in Haiti from 1958 until his passing in 1995. Foremost a Christian and Medical Doctor, he was very interested in History, Archeology Philosophy and Theology. He wrote many newsletters during his time in Haiti. Several of his letters, written back in the late 70's and early 80's, were compiled and published as "A Philosophy of Christian Mission".

Haiti is a very spiritual country and has an animist society. Animism is the belief in innumerable spiritual beings concerned with human affairs and capable of helping or harming human interests. It is an idea of pervading life and will in nature, a belief that natural objects, places and creatures all possess a spiritual essence.

Sir Edward Tylor, an anthropologist, developed animism as an anthropological theory in the late 19th Century. According to him it represented the earliest form of religion.

Animism is used in the anthropology of religion as a term for the belief system of many indigenous people. Although each culture has its own mythologies and rituals, it is said to be the most common foundational thread of Indigenous people's spiritual perspectives.

According to Dr. Hodges, "westerners" have come to believe that faith in Christ stands quite apart from basic ethical conceptions, notions of truth, respectable patterns of behavior, human dignity, "good sense", and mutual trust. That these ideals are shared with all the societies of the world and that the personal aspect of faith, acting within the individual, can operate around and on top of the traditional society. The spiritual struggle is between the power of evil and that of God. (A girl with Tuberculosis, the X-Ray says it is TB and society says it is a curse.)

He believed that religion and culture are inextricably interwoven together and that the missionary task ultimately envisions a Biblical penetration into man's whole conceptual system. The all-important matter of culture is the ways that different societies view the world. The Biblical faith is involved at every level of human conception. We will not be involved in a kind of changing culture and root out undesirable elements. Seated with all of mankind, weaving into the tissue of our culture new threads and patterns until we have made new cloth.

Dr Hodges stated that the introduction of the Biblical message into an animist society such as Haiti envisions a new weave in the tissue of thought, a far reaching and painful process as best.

We are very grateful for all of you that to support HBS to the continuation of the important life work of Dr. Hodges and his wife Joanna. We really appreciate all of you that believe in our mission and thank you for all your prayers and support.

A Philosophy of Christian Mission was published and is available for purchase on The Book Patch.

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