

THE BIRTH OF BAYETHE MZANSI, UP WE GO by E M E Ratheb

A miraculous thing happened to me in 2010 that birthed the song Bayethe Mzansi. This song was the initial inspiration behind the **Up We Go Mzansi movement, calling all people in South Africa to each use our personal power and collective strengths to move SA upwards together**, which was launched by the Department of Sport, Art and Culture's Social Cohesion Advocates' in April 2021. It's story is worthy of being told, because in our human strength there are often challenges that are seemingly impossible to overcome, but when God intervenes, even the impossible can become possible. I truly believe that God has plans for the South African nation. This nation of diverse people can come together and become a model for the rest of the world to follow, on how to transform, overcome, progress and grow together.

Let me explain the lead up and then I will tell you what happened. I felt a deep desire to assist people that had not had the same access to education and opportunities that I was privileged to receive. I wished to see more people become truly empowered to positively change their lives by knowing what they could try to do differently in their situation, in order to have more likelihood of success in achieving their goals. Together with a woman I assisted to get her first home, we wrote a 10-step guide to using a government housing subsidy to own one's first house. She then asked me if I would speak at her church and explain to people how to also get their own first home, but said that people would likely not pay enough attention to a long talk, and that I must rather add song to my message. She said that people will listen through music and dance. I was stumped and had no idea what to do about this request. I had no inspiration or clue as to how to make a song about getting a housing subsidy, the idea seemed impossible. I did not want to disappoint her and so before falling asleep that night, I said a short prayer in earnest, saying, "Dear God, I have no idea what to do about this request and am so tired and uninspired. If this is important to you then please send me a song on a silver platter to make it easy for me." I think I must have fallen asleep within 20 seconds of hitting the pillow, as I was so extremely exhausted.

At precisely 2am I was awakened sharply by a flash of bright light in my head. That has never happened to me before nor since. I sat up instantly, like a lightning bolt had hit me. The digital red digits said 02:00 on the clock in front of me, and then I heard it, a voice in my head singing "I am the power of one, this is my country where I belong, I sing to you my brothers my sisters, come sing with me in unity...Bayethe Mzansi, Bayethe South Africa...." I jumped up and ran to my piano to find the chords of what I was hearing and I scribbled down the words and chords as fast as I could manage. After 5 minutes, a beautiful and long song was down on paper and streams of tears flowed onto the page as the last lines hit the page, "Let's work hard and join our hands, Let's make South Africa our Promised Land!".

I realised in those precious moments, that a miracle had just taken place. Indescribable joy filled me, total elation. I felt like I had been lifted into the clouds and had just connected to the source of life and love itself... it was remarkable and inexplicable! God had answered my prayer and sent us a beautiful song that had the power to unite South Africans in a common vision. I realised that the song didn't cover the housing subsidy guide directly, but rather it encompassed the direction our society was to take, to ensure that we all helped one another to become empowered to improve our own lives and that of those around us, so that together we could take South Africa higher in every aspect.

When I woke up after falling back asleep, I realised that the date was 27th April 2010 and this made it even more of a big deal for me. The song seemed to call out that the struggle for Freedom had been

won but now it was time for a new struggle, a struggle for true personal empowerment. South Africa has a lot of problems facing her people that often seem insurmountable. However, I believe that God is calling people to have faith and to do everything in each of our personal power, to move ourselves, each other and our country forwards and upwards.

I would like to share the original words of the song “Bayethe Mzansi” as they came to me on 27 April 2010:

Bayethe Mzansi, Up We Go

I am the power of one
This is my country where I belong
I sing to you my brothers, my sisters,
Come sing with me, in unity

**Bayethe Mzansi
Bayethe South Africa
Bayethe my country
My land, my home**

**And as we stand here
Can you feel the power
Taking us higher, higher & higher, Up We Go...**

Our land so free (South Africa)
Our land so fair (South Africa)
Our land so beautiful, None other can compare (South Africa)
Respect for all (South Africa)
Is what we want (South Africa)
Respect for life (South Africa)
Our values strong (South Africa)

To love our neighbours, black and white
For peace & one-ness, we are willing to strive
This is our mission, to stand as one
When we stay strong, all will go well

Chorus

Let's stand tall, (South Africa)
Let's stand strong (South Africa)
Let's set our goals together and work as one (South Africa)
Let the future excite us all
It's up to us, to make it real
Education, is what we need
We must each learn how we can succeed
We must be patient, and plan our road
We will get there, if we share the load

Bayethe Mzansi
Bayethe South Africa
Bayethe my country
My land, my home

Nothing comes from nothing we all must play our part
Let's work hard, and join our hands
Let's make South Africa our promised land

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The original song has since been adapted with the input of Sidumo Nyamezele, P J Powers and Monde Msutwana. "Bayete Mzansi" was released on 27 April 2021 as the anthem for the Up We Go Mzansi movement, and features P J Powers/Thandeka and the Mzansi Youth Choir. We were honoured to work with P J Powers. She is an extremely dynamic Social Cohesion Advocate and has the progress and well-being of our nation very close to her heart. P J Powers also represents the wisdom of the elders that needs to work in unison with the energy of our youth to move our country forwards and upwards together. Our heartfelt thanks go to Jannie Zaaiman from MYC for all his help, as well as to his incredible team of specialists, especially Sidumo Nyamezele and Alfred Pakhati who were amazing to work with. Special mention must also go to the soloist choristers from MYC, Thando Matiwane and Zoe Gulwa, who are two very talented and passionate young people that added tremendous value to the delivery of the anthem, and also to promoting the campaign thus far.

The sheet music for both the original "Bayethe Mzansi" and the adapted recorded version "Bayete Mzansi" can be downloaded on this website. We hope that many choirs across South Africa will facilitate this God-sent song to reach the ears and hearts of many South African people.

It has taken eleven years since this song was sent through me, to connect with like-minded people in government to launch this anthemic song for the **"Up We Go Mzansi" movement, that calls all people in South Africa to use our personal power and collective strengths to move SA upwards together.**

After being invited by Minister Nathi Mthethwa to serve as a volunteer Social Cohesion Advocate on 21 May 2020, I joined other Social Cohesion Advocates, who all have as our goal, to assist the Department of Sport, Art and Culture to put projects in motion that promote Social Cohesion and Nation-Building (Outcomes 14 of NDP). The Social Cohesion Advocates are a diverse group of activists working passionately on the ground across South Africa to make things better in our beloved country. **We wish to see people seek to understand and serve one another better; for people to heed the call of Up We Go Mzansi and each use our personal power and collective strengths to move SA Upwards Together!**

The time for us to unite behind a common vision for South is now. As you have all heard it said before "if not now, then when? If not us, then who?" The time has come for us to seek new and better ways to solve our problems and to seek God's help to overcome the seemingly insurmountable challenges we face.

When we make a choice to trust in God as a nation and do our best to make good choices in every action and decision we make, the change will come slowly at first but within a few years we will see the growth in our economy increase and our social problems decreasing. We need to work towards building

trust between government and society again, and between all groups of people. We need to seek the good in one another and recognise and build on each other's strengths.

Let's each use our "power of one" and harness our collective strengths to move SA upwards together!



Let's Move SA Upwards Together!

Visit www.upwegomzansi.org.za and ENCOURAGE all youth to engage with the videos and talk groups they will find on the website, as well as the TAKE ACTION page ideas. We would love to hear your ideas on info@upwego.org.za of how we can move SA upwards together!