

Dear Friends, Family and Ministry Partners,

Greetings from Nairobi, where we have just returned from a final month in Zambia. It has been a successful but grueling month and we are still quite tired, but we wanted to let you know what's been happening and how to pray for us at present.

We thank God for safe travels from Nairobi to Lusaka to Mukinge and back again. During the month of September we were able to meet with most of the people we had hoped to see, to say our final farewells and to wrap up a decade of fruitful ministry. We spent many tedious hours and late nights sorting through ten years of accumulated papers, children's school projects, and assorted knick-knacks and "things of life" that tend to pile up in quantities unrecognized until it's time to move. We sold most of our furniture and many other items not being shipped to Kenya, and barely made our deadline for having everything else packed up and ready to truck to Lusaka. Unfortunately, the hospital lorry broke down half-way to Lusaka and we had to hire another lorry to complete the delivery for us two days later. We managed to get our goods delivered to the shipping agency barely 15 minutes before they closed for the weekend! We then waited until Monday to complete all the paperwork and make final arrangements for their delivery by air freight to Kenya and final arrival at our new home (a townhouse) in Nairobi. Our flight back to Kenya was Tuesday (yesterday.) That was close timing!

On our way to Mukinge, with about 30 miles still to go and dusk approaching, we passed a school soccer pitch and noticed to our delight that the familiar screen we use for showing the JESUS film had been erected there! We stopped to enquire and found our friends and colleagues in the process of preparing for an evening film crusade. They had earlier completed an interdenominational discipleship training program for church leaders in that community and had now returned with the JESUS film. It was a joyful reunion, and we would have stayed to participate in the event with them except that people in Mukinge were expecting us and would worry if we failed to show up soon. We learned that the past few months have been very busy with training seminars and film showings, and that the main obstacle to the program being even more active has been a lack of financial resources. The program still lacks \$1500 to meet what was budgeted this year. If you want to help this worthy project, send your gift to SIM-USA designated for Project No. ZM-94549.

One highlight of our month in Zambia included the chance for Bob to "catch up" on the progress of the AIDS treatment program he started at Mukinge Hospital. It is now actively providing care for over 500 people who are on daily anti-AIDS drugs. Bob was even able to see Chongo, the first child he ever started on anti-AIDS drugs. He hardly recognized him! He has put on so much weight, and according to his proud and happy mother is doing very well in school. The program is doing so well, in fact, that it has been asked to take over management of a similar but struggling effort in the adjacent Mufumbwe District. Kingsley Kuwema, the director of Mukinge Hospital's comprehensive AIDS program, anticipates having over 1000 people being actively managed on AIDS drugs by the end of this project year.

Another highlight of our time in Zambia was the opportunity for Bob to preach final messages of encouragement and testimony in three different locations. One of those locations was in the village of Kelongwa, where we did our first six weeks' "village live-in" experience. We always claimed Kelongwa after that as our "home village." We made occasional visits back to Kelongwa as often as opportunity allowed during our ten years in Zambia, and were always warmly welcomed back. This time was no different. After the service one of the church leaders told us in a heartfelt tone of voice, "You are not the only white people who have come to visit us in Kelongwa; but you are the first who have ever come back to say goodbye."

While in Kelongwa we also stopped in to see the new Chief Kisengwe. He is a well-educated man who has traveled in several African countries while in the Zambian military assigned to various UN peacekeeping forces until his retirement several years ago. He was rather abruptly installed as chief without prior warning by the village elders three years ago after the death of the former chief. We had not met him before. We had been told by Dyton Kima, our close friend and mentoree who is now coordinating the Jesus Film and Discipleship program and who is also from the village of Kelongwa, that the new chief is a strong believer and a member of the Kelongwa Evangelical Church. He still has only one wife in spite of strong pressures from traditional elements to take on more. He also has refused to allow witch doctors to practice in the area. We wanted to encourage him to stand firm in

his faith despite the considerable pressures that believing chiefs often experience to revert to traditional ways. Dyton told us that although he had an English Bible he had no Bible in Kikaonde, the mother tongue. How did he know all this about the new chief? It turns out that Dyton is a double nephew of the new chief! So we gave him our own Bible in Kikaonde as a parting gift, which he was delighted to receive. We urged him to read it daily, praying over what he had read, praying for wisdom to govern in righteousness, and praying for his people. He assured us he would do so.

We also were able to pay our final respects to our friend, Senior Chief Kasempa. He continues to gain strength and mobility slowly in the limbs affected by the stroke he suffered two years ago. Some of you have been praying for him, and God has been faithful to answer your prayers. His voice is strong and clear, he walks without assistance and he is using his right hand for many things although it is still not as strong as his left hand. In many ways, the sudden physical weakness he experienced two years ago has only served to considerably strengthen him spiritually. He knows how tenuous physical life can be and understands the importance of paying attention to the life of the spirit. He thanked us for the spiritual support and encouragement we have given him over the years, and we presented him with some Christian books we thought he would find useful, including a very good daily devotional. Like Chief Kisengwe, we urged him to be faithful in taking time every day for Bible reading and prayer.

We also noted that the Lord seems, in these days, to be raising up increasing numbers of chiefs who have made a commitment to follow Christ. (Among them is Chief Mumena, who used to be the director of Scripture Union before he was made chief.) We suggested to Senior Chief Kasempa that he use his leadership among chiefs to establish a fellowship of Christian chiefs. In such a fellowship they would be able to discuss issues of practical concern facing Christian chiefs, to pray for one another and to encourage each other to remain strong in the faith. He thought that was an excellent idea and said he would follow up on it. Please continue to pray for him. Pray that God will protect his health, extend his life, increase his strength and stamina, and expand his Christian influence among the Kaonde people and among the other chiefs.

Finally, we would also appreciate your prayers for us. Pray that our household goods will arrive in Kenya safely and in good time, and that there would be no problems clearing them through Customs. Pray also for a buyer for our Nissan Patrol, which we had to leave behind in Zambia. We need to use the money from the sale of the Patrol in order to buy a suitable vehicle here in Kenya. We are finding it awkward to run errands and accomplish certain tasks without a vehicle. We can only impose upon the good will of others for so long, and taxi fare becomes rapidly expensive. So please pray that the Patrol will sell soon.

We also need your prayers that the Lord would guide our thoughts and plans as we begin to strategize how to start an effective AIDS ministry under SIM Kenya. Pray that we would be given wisdom to ask the right questions, insight to understand the dynamics in play, and vision to know how to proceed. Pray also that the two of us will be able to work well together and will wisely divide up the roles and tasks involved.

Thank you so much for praying for us as we launch out into this new venture. Thanks also for praying for those we have left behind.

Yours in Christ,
Bob and Hope

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