

Update from Aliamma George in South Sudan

March 2013

Psalm 18:2: *The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*

We praise God that He enabled us to come to the end of our first term of service in Malakal, South Sudan, with thanksgiving and satisfaction.

We would like to introduce you to Mr. S and his family, who started coming to worship at the National Presbyterian Church of Malakal for the first time in his life. He is a tailor who came from Khartoum with some of his six tailor friends. They sit in a market veranda and make clothes when people bring the materials. They take their machines home at night, but leave the tables folded on the veranda. There are two policemen with flashlights watching Malakal market areas. So it is safe except that some bull, cow, sheep, goat or donkey that lost its way in the dark might sleep on the veranda and leave in the morning.

Whenever we pass through the area we say hello to the people there. At the end of the hall there is a bench where two ladies make coffee and sell it to the tailors and visitors. Each tailor has a basket to put his materials in and a table on which he can put his old Singer machine and peddle and stitch—so there are six people in a row and one man to iron the clothes with a heavy coal-filled iron box with smoke coming out of it. Jacob got an idea to get two pairs of pants made. When we went there, they directed us to the second man in line, Mr. S. He greeted us with a smile, took out his cigarette from the mouth and pointed to the area to get the cloth for pants. We bought blue and brown material in the prescribed length and width. That cloth businessman also is from North Sudan. He said he is happy, with good business, and he became our friend too.

Mr. S took the measurements and wrote it down on the material, and then we went many times to get it. He would say, "Bukra" (tomorrow). On a few occasions by hand signals we explained that smoking is bad for him, for the cloth basket, and for others. He smiled and said, "OK, I will stop." After a few more visits, Aliamma asked, "Mr. S, how many times do you want us to come?" He laughed and said, "Mama, twenty-one times." He meant one or two times! Anyway, we got a pair one day and brought it home for Jacob to try it on—and found that it was too wide and too long! When all his friends started laughing, Jacob told them that it was all right—"My friend Mr. S will fix it." He did, and he was paid extra for the extra work though he did not ask for it. Since we visited them many times, all the tailors became our friends besides the language problem.

The outcome of all this came out well. One day Mr. S told Jacob that his son wanted to learn English. Jacob had a storybook *Joseph, Mary and Their Son*, so we gave it to him though we had planned it for another merchant. The second man was given *Abundant Life*. Both parties were

happy, and they were given New Testaments after a couple of weeks. A bystander helped give them directions to the National Presbyterian Church of Malakal. On the following Sunday, when the invitation was given for new decisions and prayer, Mr. S was the first one to come forward to the altar, and about 60 other people were behind him. Mr. S dedicated his life to Jesus Christ, and now he brings his wife and son to worship and waits for us after worship to share their difficulties and needs. He wants his 10-year-old son to be proficient in English soon. We connected them with a pastor-trainee so that the boy can be introduced in the Sunday School. Mr. S. stopped smoking and is planning to bring his other friends to worship on Sundays.

Mr. M, who received the first *Abundant Life* book, completed reading it while selling groceries in the market. Now he is reading the New Testament eagerly. Please pray for special grace for him.

Mr. Z, who sells potatoes and onions, has two sons who are going to middle school, and he wants them to grow up in life with good character. Father smokes continuously, already had a small stroke, and walks with a stick. Jacob sat in his small store and prayed in the name of Jesus for him to get the strength to stop smoking.

The (40) market boys had a meaningful Christmas lesson, prayer, and lunch, and now preparation is going on for the Easter celebration through the National Presbyterian congregation. Please pray that it will spread to other congregations also and will help to transform those boys into useful citizens. Our aim is to encourage the church to provide daily spiritual lessons to these children.

Our (43) students are ready to graduate, and they have many ideas about transforming their villages. Please pray for them and their families.

We request your prayers for blessings on our Interpretation Assignment in the U.S. as we prepare for the same.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support for this ministry through PC(USA) World Mission.

Blessings,

Jacob and Aliamma.