

February 16, 2009—Arusha update #4

Dear Family and Friends:

It's ten to six a.m. (9 p.m. your time) and we are to leave here at 7:45 to the Internet Café on our way to present the Sanctuary at our SDA University at 10 for two hours. Dressing up the local people in the Priestly Garments means a great deal to them. We are one of them and they respond with such appreciation. The same is true when we eat with them and so far we have remained well. When we think of some of the kitchen conditions we claim the promise Jesus gave to His disciples when they went out on their missionary journeys.

We could have given many more of our Sanctuary book in English, but brought all we could. It is nearly out of print now in USA and we do not have plans to reprint it in English. When we presented Sanctuary at the 11 a.m. worship service at Shamsi (where our evg series is being held) a Moslem young lady from the neighborhood attended the service and was so impressed. She wanted to buy the book, but they told her they were for those attending the meetings as a gift. She borrowed a copy and as we drove away from church we saw her sitting in her courtyard reading the book. I'd like to give her one if I can recognize her again. We plan to leave ten copies at the university library since we don't have enough even for each Seminary student.

They had a preliminary baptism at our evg site last Sabbath and 25 were baptized. I have it all on video. It was a makeshift baptistry of wood and plastic liner, but all went well. They don't require much in order to beam with joy. The pastor here is thorough in study with the people in the classes and will be faithful in follow-up I feel sure. It is a great experience to conduct these meetings here even amid all the challenges with electricity and rain and the heavy dust that is everywhere. It keeps Mary Alice busy with our laundry which she is doing even now. Sometimes we can hang it out in the court in the sunshine, but more often we hang it

around the room and bathroom. Our hosts gave us their room and they took a smaller room for themselves.

Yesterday was a busy day also. Willie took us to visit a Maasai village about half an hour from here. Arusha was originally occupied by the Maasai, but they were a nomadic people moving about to find fresh pasture for their cattle and other animals. Now they have settled into the village

and environs. We bought groceries to take to them and that took about as much time as the drive to their village. There has been a drought this year and the extra food is a blessing to them.

We were royally welcomed and were able to take photos freely. Only a few were asking for money. It was a privilege to get to know them and see their humble mud huts. Willie pointed out that their engineering was superior to ours in some ways. They designed these homes with roofs of grass that expands in the rain to make the inside water tight, but in the heat of the sun it shrinks again and allows air to flow through so it is much cooler inside than outside. The pity is that there is not one SDA in that village yet. Willie asked if they might like to have meetings and some thought it would be a good idea. They have a small Pentecostal church on the grounds.

I bought a walking stick from one of them and hope we can bring it home on the airplane. On the way over one man had a cane aboard and it seemed to be ok. But one never knows. It is made of heavy hardwood, not ornamental but sound and would be good for hiking and for illustration of their simple armour when in conflict. They do not have to battle lions now where they live (unless one strayed from the Serengeti Game Park not so very far away). So their rules for becoming a man and able to marry are not now based on killing a lion or a human enemy.

The Maasai were formerly bitter enemies of the Pare tribe who also had cattle. The Maasai believed that "god" had given them all the cattle in the world and it was their right to steal it or take it by force wherever they found it. But in 1964 they made peace with the Pare tribe and remain so now. Willie's family are from the Pare tribe and John Kisaka (Willie's father) is the first SDA missionary to the Maasai. He tells some thrilling

stories from his experiences with Maasai. One night he had to spend the whole night in a tree with 2 male lions roaring at the bottom. Needless to say, he didn't sleep that night. I did get to video his story last Sabbath while lunch was prepared here.

We had John speak to the evangelistic crowd one night while waiting for enough darkness to screen the health slides and the sermon. He really had them listening and responding to his stories. I wish we could have heard it all, but private translation could not keep up with it and we had to settle for few details. He said he would love to spend more time with us—that he learns so much from my sermons even though he has been a pastor and professor for all these years. He graduated with his Doctor of Ministry at Andrews in the 70s. He is the one who arranged for us to speak this morning to the Theology students. He wants them to hear Sanctuary so badly. He says that the churches here do not hear about the Sanctuary and miss the strength of the illustrations of the Plan of Salvation. We are so glad that we can fill in at least some of the blanks.

Dr. Kisaka is arranging for the first Maasai campmeeting in September or October. He expects about 1000 of them to attend. There are now 1000 Maasai SDA in Tanzania and Kenya. He would love for us to be there and present Sanctuary, but that is not likely. It will last for five days. He also wants to conduct ten evangelistic series just preceding that.

We were pleasantly surprised last Sabbath to learn after the baptism that there were several Moslems and several Maasai in the group baptized. We have pictures of them to share when we get back home.

Dr. Richard Bendall, who spoke at Decatur a while back, should arrive tomorrow in advance of his group who are expected to arrive Feb. 20. We will join them on the way to Chome for the final weekend we are here. The group will build a clinic for that settlement in Pristine beauty surrounding Chome. Willie has a home there where we will be able to stay as here. We are to present Sanctuary to a joint meeting of 3 SDA churches up there. So we are trying to save a few of the books to share with them. We are also to visit again the Mwere church where Decatur and

Gentry funds is paying for the roof. Willie wants us to see the roof completed so we can photograph it to show you where your generosity blessed that faithful group of SDA members.

They have worked so hard to make the church building a reality. Every morning and throughout the day we hear the Moslem call to worship (Muezzine) over the loudspeaker on their Mosque. It is a reminder of the battle for the minds and souls of the people here and the reason we have come. It is also a backup alarm clock in case we should sleep through the roosters crowing and the dogs barking. So far we have not needed the alarm clock. I always wake up ahead of the time we would need to arise to get everything done before our early appointments.

On Friday we will need to leave here by 6 a.m. to catch the bus to meet the group going to Chome in the mountains. We will be at about 6000 feet up there. Willie tells that it is so quiet and beautiful. He would like to live there permanently but has a business in California and other things he needs to keep up with. His son lives in USA and some other relatives also.

Maybe this is enough for you to "chew on" for now. We should save a few things to tell when we give our report back home. We love you all and appreciate your prayers. It is making a difference here. We hear that last night's sermon on how Sunday came into the church, made a really strong and good impression on those attending. The crowd has remained constant all through the series in spite of the many interruptions in the sound system and pictures due to electrical failure.

With our love,
Glenn and Mary Alice (Mom and Dad etc.)