

Boys Camp – 2006

Cabin Devotion: Thursday, July 27, 2006

Scripture reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Marsabit National Park in Northern Kenya is the home of some of the largest elephants in Africa. One such elephant was so well known for its enormous tusks that it was given a name, Ahmed. The government even assigned a special guard to protect Ahmed from poachers who might kill the animal for its tusks. When Ahmed died from natural causes the tusks were placed in a museum in Nairobi.

The area of Marsabit is also the home of the Borana tribe. David Diida (dee-ee-da) was a school teacher to his own Borana people. He was also a Christian involved in Bible translation. His greatest desire was to translate the Bible into Borana so his people could have the message of Jesus in their own language. Working with Kenya's national Bible translation organization, David began translating the Bible into Borana in 1979. He worked diligently for 15 years. As the project neared completion David traveled by bus to Nairobi to spend a month checking the translation with consultants.

On his way home, heavy rains turned the road into a hopeless quagmire, stretching the two-day trip into four. Finally the driver could make it no further. David knew that his wife would be worried. He and seven others decided to walk the remaining twenty miles to his home in Marsabit. He would spend the night with friends along the way.

About dusk, the men heard the noise of some animal thrashing in the bush. Suddenly a huge elephant appeared on the road ahead of them. Trumpeting loudly it charged the men. David turned and ran, the elephant hot on his heels. His only hope was to dive into the bushes; but as he turned the elephant followed. David fell and rolled himself into a tight ball against a small tree. As the elephant came directly toward him David thought of his wife and four children. He prayed, "Lord, I know you control all things, and you have all power. You are powerful enough to keep this elephant from killing me. But if it is your will for me to die today, please accept my spirit into your kingdom."

David decided to try to get away before the elephant trampled him. But as he moved, the elephant grabbed him with his trunk and raised him high in the air. He threw David to the ground so hard that David bounced under the elephant's belly and through his back legs. Torn and bleeding, David stumbled away into the brush as the angry elephant continued to trample the ground where David had been.

A short time later a group of men found David and took care of him until his wife came to take him to the hospital. After spending the night in the hospital, David was well enough to walk home. God spared his life. As a result, David continued his work until finally his Borana people had the Bible in their own language. David is a builder of the Kingdom.

[Source: "Paving the Road with Prayer," In Other Words, Vol. 20, No 5, 1994 p.2. Published by Wycliffe Bible Translators]

Questions for Discussion

1. How was David Diida a builder of Christ's Kingdom?
2. What if the Bible were not written in your language?
3. Why is it important for everyone in the world to have the Bible in their own language?
4. Wycliffe Bible Translators works with people around the world to translate the Bible into their own languages. Baptist missionaries work with Wycliffe to help get the message of Jesus to all people. Is this a kind of missionary work you might be interested in doing? What preparation would you need to do Bible translation?

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