

The last couple weeks, I've only had time to MENTION things in passing, thinking I would find time to explain later. NOT! Today is IT. I'm addressing some cares that burden the heart.

First on my mind and heart is a case I mentioned in passing last week –a severe burn case. While I was finishing up at the community school, a young mother of one of my first graders brought her son, Junior, to our tent. Josh Pack immediately went to my first aid bag and began working on the boy while Jim brought me from the school. The child had been scalded over 63% of his body. That night, the parents “treated” the burns with diesel fuel and raw eggs. Josh Pack and I worked on him inside the big tent, removing the charred skin until he seemed unable to handle more. He fell into an exhausted sleep until evening.

The next four days, I made trips to Junior's hut twice a day. When I left him, he was stable; inflammation was down; no fever, the skin was healing and clean, but the pain was terrible. When we left for Choma, I made an urgent request to the parents to take Junior to the Mbila clinic. Wednesday, just before sending the prayer letter, we received word from the village that Junior died. I was stunned and confused. The wounds themselves, as witnessed by Mrs. Mabbola (surgical nurse/clinic officer) and myself, were healing and no longer seemed life-threatening. Later, we heard more of the story.

Sunday night, Junior went mad. He sat up on his bed, speaking vile, detestable things, completely uncharacteristic of this sweet child. His voice changed six times, as demons spoke through six different, deceased relatives. The last relative was the dead uncle, brother to his father. He said, “This boy has suffered enough. We are going to take him with us!” Then Junior died.

I am personally convinced that someone in the family panicked and invited in the forces of evil to “help out.” (There is so much trust in the occult, witch doctors, and hearsay cures.) The Zionists were called in to pray --a serious case of the blind leading the blind. They howl their prayers and beat the drums like the desperate Baal-worshippers of Mt. Carmel. The scene in my mind makes me ill with grief. Would you please **pray for Junior's family**, and for us, that God may open a door for us to speak the truths of God to them. This family has not been open to our invitations, nor have they responded to the gospel. The father is proud; the mother, distant –until this happened. We are not planning to return to the bush until the end of August, so let your prayers go ahead of us. They need them; we need them. The longer we are there, the more attached we become; the deeper we feel their losses; the more we observe the dark ignorance; the clearer our mission to bring them to the Lord Jesus Christ.

While we are on the subject of the bush, I may as well address the way that we get there: **our aging vehicle**. Our 1995 Land Cruiser is having weekly issues, even though Jim babies, soothes, and duct tapes it regularly. It's in the shop far too often, having nervous breakdowns and belly aches, creaky joints and gasket complaints. The latest breakdown involves the electrical system. All the gauges go haywire as we bounce down the road. The costs of keeping Bessie together are almost to medical proportions these days, so Jim has tried to play doctor/surgeon himself! I would explain the problems to you, except I am a real ding-bat when

it comes to mechanics and can't! The bottom line is, we need you to pray for a "bush" car for us. We have about \$5,000 to work with and our Father, who knows what things we have need of before we ask.

Before this second expedition, we'd requested prayer for **penetration of the gospel**, particularly as Arthur wanted to evangelize the new territory where he'd shown the Jesus video. He was only able to break away from the camp and other programs two days, but God was answering our prayers in His own way. On Sunday afternoon, we learned of a death in that village—a close relative of the Senior Headman. When we arrived at the home, the corpse lay in its cocoon of blankets on the floor. We sang hymns, Jim spoke, Arthur prayed, and we all spent time with the mourners. The Senior Headman made special request for Arthur to return the next day to preach the burial service—which he did with zeal. We were told that the people were talking about it the next day. A further impression was made when we held a soccer tournament the last day we were there. This village participated with two teams. Again, Arthur presented the gospel at half-time. We continue to see God pointing to that village as well as to a more receptive, younger generation. Pray the gospel will sink into these hearts and lives!

The last two weeks since returning, the team of interns took time to regroup. Josh Pack left for the Eastern Province with Harrison and Michelle Banda. He was able to renew his work permit, and will be staying another three months! Beth painted two murals for Salvation Baptist Church, as well as completing art samples and lesson plans for me to teach at the community school. She then headed to the capital with Lucy to research a project for us. That left us with Mary and Jake and four, fabulous days to ourselves before we again faced separation. Goodbyes on Tuesday were painful. We remained in the capital for two days, picking up supplies and doing business. Immigration again "lost our files for our **entry permits.**" Please pray about this!

We are now home on the farm. I feel like we just crashed across the finish line of a marathon that we sprinted. We need to breathe and to rest, especially before the next trip to the bush. Our Zambian ministry team also needs to reorganize schedules and take time to prayerfully evaluate the race set before us. **Pray for wisdom** to run it with perseverance. Jim and I are planning to get away a couple days in the next week or so. Woo-Hoo! 😊

Thank you for being our support, encouragement, listeners, and pray-ers. We love getting your notes, even though we can't respond very often. Writing to you helps us; praying together about this stuff helps everything! Thanks for being involved!

For the LORD's sake,  
Jim and Rachel