

## February & March 2009 Report

Many thanks to the brethren and congregations that have continued to prayed for and support us.

First half of February was wet and hot, but it became dry and hot towards the second half and the rest of March. It has remained melting hot even up to the time of this report. Weather specialists forecasts indicated that rain would come forth in late March, that has not happened. As Ugandans depend on crops for survival, everyone is worried of the yield this year. There was abnormal early rains in January, which made people to plant their crops, but all have dried up now.

I was in South Africa for treatment from 27th February to 18th March 2009. I came back walking. Details follow down in this report.

We managed to settle our children to their school early February. It was a hard going with visitors, Keith and John. But we went through the exercise very well.

Inflation remained an economic threat. Prices of essential commodities have remained high and continued to rise.

Human/Child sacrifices have remained a big social evil in the country. The police is trying to stop it but results are still poor. But the Lord's work is continuing to go strong.

Brethren continue praying for us.

### Evangelism and Baptism.

As I just came from treatment, we are reorganising to continue with the work of evangelism and help the new converts get rooted in the Lord. We strongly believe in the words of the Lord, 'The harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest,' Lk 10:2.

### Lakeside Church,

I had a bible study in Masese, Jinja suburb on Thursday March 26th. This was my first time to go to Jinja. The saints warmly welcomed me from SA where I had gone for treatment.

I talked to the saints from Lk 22:3-4 (satan simply entered Juda) as opposed to Lk 22:31-32 (satan had to ask the Lord for Simon before touching him), and compared this Lk 22:31-32 with Job 1:9-12 which tells that satan could only touch Job when God permitted.

We were all thankful to God for strengthening my feet again.

### **Kampala Church**

I worshipped in Kampala on Sunday 22nd March after I came back from SA for treatment. I was warmly welcome. I limit my preaching time at the moment to avoid strain. We had study on Tuesday with the saints. We revisited the letter of Paul to Phillipians in our study.

### **Tororo Church**

Rosemary visited Tororo in my absence. I was not able to visit Tororo in both February and March because of ill health during those two months. Rosemary has continued and will continue to identify with Christian women. Fred has continued to encouraged the sanits with the word of God. We all need to commit him to God in prayers.

### **Rosemary's contribution,**

Rosemary did a lot of work especially when Keith and John came, and when I was sick. She is such a big blessing to us and the church of the Lord in this impoverished country. I'll always use every opportunity to encourage the saints of God to pray for Rosemary earnestly and to give her every kind of support and encouragements.

### **Keith Sharp's and John Welch's Visit**

Keith and John visited with us in January and Febuary. They Arrived Entebbe International Airport on Saturday 31st, January 2009 at night. I drove them from the airport to Jinja where they stayed. The journey from the airport took more than two hours. We got home after 2am of 1st February 2009.

The two brethren worshipped with us in the morning of Sunday 1st in Lakeside Church, Jinja. Both of them preached the word of God to the saints whose attendance was over 80 that day.

In the afternoon of the same day, we travelled to Kampala Church of Christ for worship with brethren in Kampala, 80km away. Both Keith and John each spoke the word of God the the saints again. The attendance that afternoon was over 50.

After worship in Kampala, I drove Keith and John for supper in a nearby city suburb hotel, then drove them another 80km back to Jinja to sleep. These brethren were natually very tired at this time, having made many journeys for over 36hours.

After dropping Keith and John in Jinja, Rosemary's house, I drove back to Kampala (80km), where my house is. I reached my house after midnight. The following morning my children were to return to school. The school was

starting on February 2nd. I was busy for almost 24 hours without rest. We can now all understand why my back had to hurt me that much after Keith and John left. This was the beginning of running up and down, as long as Keith and John were in Uganda.

Monday 2nd to Friday 6th, we were teaching young men to preach in Rosemary's yard. I interpreted everything Keith and John taught or preached while in Uganda.

On Thursday 5th, Keith, John and us went to join in Masese routine fellowship. Keith, John and I all taught the word of God a well attended fellowship (over 50), which took place at 4pm.

Saturday 7th was a rest day. On Sunday 8th, I drove over 180km from Jinja to Tororo to worship with the brethren there. Both Keith and John preached that morning. We drove back in the afternoon and reached Jinja at 6pm.

From Monday 9th to Thursday 12th, Keith and John continued to teach the young men.

Keith concentrated on the book of Acts and outlined 9 cases of conversion, while John taught and gave simple examples of preachable sermons to the young men. I did all the interpretation.

The teaching formerly ended at 2pm of Thursday 12th. Keith, John, Rosemary and I had lunch together by one beach hotel that Thursday afternoon.

On Friday 13th, we set off at about 4am for the airport. Keith checked in at 7am, but John whose flight was scheduled for 10pm remained with us until 7pm when he checked in. We were thankful that Keith and John came to Uganda. May God bless all those who prayed, those who supported and those who missed Keith and John during their six weeks visit to Africa.

The coming of Keith and John was a big blessing to all congregations in Uganda. We thank God.

### **My health**

This is a full account of my ill health from the beginning:

It was on January 14th 2009. I was lifting 40 litres of Jeri cans of water from a tap outside my house to the house, at about midnight. Water was not flowing into the house because of low pressure. Suddenly, I felt a very sharp pain in my lower back. I threw the Jeri cans down. The sharp pain did not stop.

The following day, I began to feel a gentle abnormal on and off pain on my right leg. This pain was coming from my right hip. I stocked reliable pain killers but the pain persisted.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, I visited doctors at Nsambya Hospital, one of the biggest missionary hospitals in Uganda. An X-ray was done but three doctors could not identify the reason why I was feeling so much pain. All they could do was to serve me with killers. As brothers Keith and John were coming to Uganda soon, I put my mind on their coming and began to rest. I continued depending on pain killers in the meantime.

When Keith and John came on January 31<sup>st</sup>, I got so busy up to February 13<sup>th</sup> under intolerable pains. Actually when they left on February 13<sup>th</sup>, I literally broke down. My legs literally 'rebelled'. I could not even visit the toilet. I was either crawling or moving under support of a stick. The pain was too much.

I did not have any money to visit a doctor for more investigation, until Brother John Welch sent me \$250 after I told him that I had no money to visit a doctor. I used the \$250 for fresh medical examination and CT Scan. This time I visited an Orthopaedic. The scan and an examination indicated that there was a disc movement (gave scan results many brethren). As a result of the disc movement, the Orthopaedic opted to do a surgery on me. Surgery killed my late wife during Caesar in 2004. This news of surgery cut my heart and left me more desperate amidst untold increasing pains.

But thanks be to God. Brother Paul Williams of South Africa understood my worries and began to look out for a suitable doctor to treat me in South Africa. Paul helped me with documents for visa. Oh, what a kind man Paul is? I flew to SA on February 27<sup>th</sup>, and started treatment on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009, this time the doctor saw not reason for surgery. The doctor gave the right prescription which I utilized until today. I returned to Uganda on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and continued to be strong.

After a week from South Africa, I have registered a great change. I have started doing my preaching work, but making sure that I follow all doctors' instructions. Brother Keith told me recently to go slow, drive carefully, and ensure that healing is sure. Please continue praying for me.

Special thanks to Paul Williams and Helen Williams for helping me. Thanks to congregations and individuals who sent support towards my air ticket to SA and treatment. May the Lord bless Alan Fox for helping me in Jo'burg airport. May God bless all those who prayed for me.

I thank brother Paul Williams and brethren who gave me opportunity to preach twice when I was in South Africa to their congregation.

**Francis Okech**

Uganda, [okech\\_cocug@yahoo.com](mailto:okech_cocug@yahoo.com)