

21 March 2009

Dear Friends and Family,

“Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.”  
~C.S. Lewis

As I walked home Thursday afternoon from the Magistrates Court Room 2 and the privilege of sitting next to Linnet as we listened to the Magistrate sentence her husband, Ayub, to 20 years in prison, I realized that knowing and having the opportunity to be a small part of Linnet's life was one of the greatest gifts God has given me. (If you are a new to our Friends and Family email list, you can read a former email I have written about Linnet by going to <http://sites.google.com/site/specialorg/savuto/february7>, a web-site my sister has created for us.)

Linnet has had her leg surgery and it seems to have been very successful. She is actually walking on that leg. This coming week she will return to the hospital to have the leg checked and to begin the process of being fitted for prosthesis for both arms. We are all so excited for her and her future.

I have never been to any part of a trial in Kenya, so Ayub's was most amazing to me. His trial had actually taken place on 9 Feb and on 24 Feb 2009. Linnet had never pressed charges against her husband but he had been in prison for over 1 year and that is the maximum they can stay without a trial. Linnet came to his trial on 9 Feb. and was asked by the Magistrate to testify. Thursday 19 Mar was the sentencing. It was to begin at 2pm. Bill walked me to the court rooms where I met Rahab and Linnet. There were several women from the Women's Group that Rahab leads which was created to help women who have been abused by their husbands.

Ayub was being held in a holding room that was next to the court room. Through Rahab I had met Ayub before the trial. Afterwards we sat in the court room waiting for the Magistrate to arrive. He arrived around 3pm and Ayub was brought into the court room. The Magistrate read a synopsis of the case in English and it was interpreted to Ayub in Swahili. While listening to the Magistrate I learned many things.

At around 2am on 20 Sep 2007 Ayub came to Linnet's small house and knocked on the door. She was asleep and got up and asked who it was and he told her it was Ayub. She opened the door. According to Ayub's testimony that was her mistake as she didn't verify who it was. (Linnet had explained that she recognized her husband's voice and didn't need to further verify who it was.) Ayub had a panga (machete) in his hand and dragged Linnet out of her house. He raised the panga to hit her in the head and she put her right arm up to protect her face and head. The panga cut her right hand off. He again tried to cut her head or neck and she put her left arm up and it too was cut off. He then cut her 25 times on the face, chest, shoulder, legs, and back. Before she passed out she heard him tell her that he had killed her and would now go kill himself. She screamed with all her remaining strength to get help and then passed out. The first person to find her was Ayub's father, Zakayo. He loved Linnet and was devastated by her injuries. He began to shout and the neighbors came running. Zakayo carried Linnet for miles

to find a matatu (transportation) to take her to Maua Methodist Hospital. Many of the neighbors helped carry her to the hospital.

When the neighbors returned home they found Ayub and as Ayub stated, “They took him into the forest and tortured him and then took him to the Police Station in Maua and accused him of trying to kill Linnet”. Zakayo was so distraught, so ashamed of what his son had done, he left his home in late October 2007 after visiting Linnet in the hospital and no one has ever seen him again. He left his wife, who was at the trial. She was a little, elderly traditional lady with such sadness in her eyes it was difficult to look at her.

A Clinical Officer from our hospital had testified that Linnet had grievous injuries and that it was a miracle she had not died from the attack. A Police Officer who was put in-charge of the case had testified that Linnet, Zakayo and the neighbors all knew it was Ayub that had attacked Linnet. Ayub always stated he was innocent and knew nothing about the attack.

After the Magistrate read the facts in the case he asked if Ayub wanted to make a plea for mercy. For the first time he admitted he had attacked and cut Linnet because the devil had entered him. He asked for mercy as he said he would like to be out so he could work and support Linnet and his two boys. No one believed him.

The Magistrate stated he was very happy to hear Ayub finally admitting to the crime though there was no one to blame but himself. The Magistrate then spent about 10 minutes writing his decision and then we all stood and as he read the sentence. The Magistrate stated that he would be merciful and that Ayub would be sentenced to 20 years in prison.

I had asked Linnet what she thought would be fair. She had stated, “Whatever the Magistrate would decide would carry justice and she wasn’t looking for any certain amount of time.” Three people from the Nation newspaper and Citizen TV were at the trial. One pastor from a small church in Maua was very unhappy with the sentence and stated it loudly to the news people that 20 years was not enough if he emerged with his two arms. He had wanted a life sentence. Rahab and others were not happy with that pastor and stated that 20 years was a fair sentence and that everyone deserved mercy.

After the trial, Linnet went over to talk to Ayub’s mother. Her obvious concern, care and love for the elderly woman was so remarkable. Ayub’s mother explained that she could not visit Linnet in Chuka as she had no money for the transport. Linnet’s understanding and kindness touched everyone in the crowd around them. It was an example I will never forget.

That evening Linnet and Rahab came to our home for dinner. As always Linnet was so positive. As I fed her she shared her thankfulness and joy at what had and would be happening in her life. I always feel like I have been in the presence of angels when we are with Linnet and Rahab.



Jerri, Linnet and Bill

Please keep Linnet and Rahab in your prayers as they travel to Nairobi for her medical appointments.

I have another prayer request. A four year old girl, Clurisa, was admitted last Sunday with a snake bite. We do not have many poisonous snakes in our area and most snake bite victims are treated as Out-patients. However, this snake must have been very poisonous. She had surgery yesterday afternoon to debride her arm. Please pray with us that she lives. She is in critical condition.



Clurisa and her very swollen arm

8 – 14 March I attended the 2009 International Nursing Symposium in Limuru, Kenya. This symposium was planned by Dr. Amy Toone, who now works at the Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing, a consortium of HSU, ACU, and McMurry University in Abilene, TX. Many nurses, nurse practioners and midwives from the USA came along with several doctors that serve as missionaries in Kenya and Uganda. The missionaries that came were from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Africa, Egypt, Tanzania, Zambia, Jordan, Dubai, and Omen. I had the great privilege to teach one session on the Alternate Rite of Passage and two sessions on Quality Improvement in Mission Hospitals, Health Centers and Clinics.

The classes were excellent and often gave us hands on experience. I have more than enough hours now for my Texas Nurses license. But even better than the classes, at least for me, was

the opportunity to meet nurses from around Africa and the Middle East and hear their stories and learn about the work that God is doing through these women. I returned with new hope and enthusiasm for what is happening in the name of Jesus Christ in so many places and a large number of mission boards. The week was a tremendous encouragement and inspiration to me.

Dr. Toone recently married George Toone, who led music at the symposium. George is blind and is a gifted musician with an incredible sense of humor. He added significantly to our time together. One Friday George and Amy had an African wedding to celebrate their USA marriage. It was such a lively and wondrous event that had most of us dancing and singing. We also had Amy and George's pastor, Jeff Reid, there and I so enjoyed his twice daily sermons.



George & Amy's African Wedding



Our USA instructors

The rainy season usually begins on 15 Mar or around then. So far we have had no rain. Please pray with us for the rain. It is DESPERATLY needed this year. Our two rainy seasons in 2008 were very poor and as I have said in the last few emails there are 10 million Kenyans at risk of starvation and certainly we are seeing many that are starving to death, especially children.

We so enjoy hearing from each of you and appreciate your support, both financial and prayer, and your encouragement more than mere words can express.

In His grip,

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"For without belittling the courage with which men/women have died, we should not forget those acts of courage with which men/women have lived." ~John F. Kennedy