

The Tale of Two Prophets

(Turkana Trip September 2016)

Before I tell of our trip to Turkana, I feel the need to give a little history which has led up to this time. I hope this will help put the trip into perspective and show its divine significance.

In 2012 and 2013, the Lord led us to begin working in the remote northern mountains of Pokot, called Chemorongit. It was about a 30 mile hike one way, over mountains, to reach this area. At that time, the name of Jesus was unknown to most people in that area. Eventually, over 300 people surrendered their lives to Jesus. One of them was the head traditional prophet and spiritual leader (called a laibon) over all the Pokot people in both Kenya and Uganda, numbering over 800,000 people.



The old Pokot prophet (laibon) on the left giving his life to Jesus

We left audio, solar, New Testament Bibles in the Pokot language with these believers. We asked them to mainly listen to the teachings of Jesus and do what he said. Later we taught on how Jesus wants us to forgive others and love our enemies.

Their enemies were people from the Turkana tribe which lived north and east of them. These two tribes have been fighting for hundreds of years, mainly over cattle and land. Cattle rustling has led to thousands of deaths and is a major problem for the Kenyan government.



Chemorongit Mountains as seen from the flatlands of Turkana

The Christians of Chemorongit began to obey the teachings of Jesus and not only forgave their Turkana enemies, but began to pray for their salvation. I told them that one day some of them would go with me and preach the gospel to the Turkana people.

In early 2015, a peace initiative started among the Pokot and Turkana, led by the Kenyan government. Though this had been tried in the past, this time more elders from both tribes were willing to make it work. Also, one of the main forces for peace was the old prophet of Pokot who had earlier given his life to Christ. Truly, the Lord is answering the prayers of many, but I believe the prayers of the Christians of Chemorongit have been very powerful, for they forgave those who had killed their family and friends and prayed for their salvation.



Ascending into Turkana from the Pokot mountains

In October of 2015, the fragile peace was suddenly broken as some Pokots raided and stole goats from a village in Turkana and killed one man. Soon after, the Turkana answered by slaughtering 5 Pokots in another village further to the south. This was purely revenge, for no animals were taken, just innocent people shot while sitting in their huts. The area now was very tense, and everyone feared the worse: that the Pokots were now going to retaliate and war would begin.

We had previously wanted to go into Turkana, but every time that I prayed, I felt the Lord was not giving me permission to go. Then during this time of tension, while we were having church under a tree, the Lord spoke to my heart that now was the time to go! He also made it clear that I was to walk, not drive, to Turkana. Wow, of all the times to go; the Lord was now asking us to walk into a hot zone. But I have learned that if the Lord says to go, you go. He is totally in control of all things. To stay where you think it is safe and disobey the King is much more dangerous.

Some of you have already read of this trip, but basically a team of five of us walked down a very dangerous corridor to Turkana, November 2015. This is where cattle rustlers from both tribes normally pass through. Many had been killed in this area in the past, plus it is filled with leopards in the mountains and lions in the

Turkana valley below. Two Pokots on this trip were former well known cattle rustlers who have now given their lives to Jesus. They now made this trip without their AK-47s and only armed with the gospel.

We drove as far as possible then walked for 5 hours before we had to stop because of rain. We camped among many lion tracks then walked two more hours the next morning. We entered a village which was totally abandoned. We found out later that this was the village where the massacre had occurred, just a week earlier. We did not realize it at the time, but where we stopped and rested was near the hut where the five Pokots were killed. If we had looked inside, we would have seen dried blood still on the ground.

While walking further, we came in contact with a Pokot military patrol and Turkana gold prospectors who were in the area. We met together with both groups and prayed. We asked for peace and that the kingdom of God would come into this area. The presence of God was very strong during the prayers, and I knew, for now, we had done what God called us to do. We had walked the land, especially where the blood was spilt, and declared the coming of His kingdom. Only this will secure lasting peace.

After returning to our compound in Pokot, the next week as we met under the tree for church, the Lord gave me faith for the following prayer:

“Lord, move on the heart of the prophet of Turkana to come to Pokot to see the prophet of Pokot and may they talk of peace. Also, let the prophet of Pokot share with the prophet of Turkana the message of Christ, and may this lead to a great revival among both tribes and the kingdom of God coming to this area.”

In January 2016, while we were in the States, I got a phone call from the local senior chief of our area. He said that the prayer had come true! The prophet over the Turkana tribe (about 900,000 people) had come to Pokot to meet with their prophet to speak of peace. In hundreds of years, this had never happened! And while there, he heard about Jesus from the old Pokot prophet. It was reported he left saying that he wanted someone to come later and teach him more of this message of salvation.



The morning after a 12 hour drive to Turkana

After battling malaria for 3 days, about two weeks ago Mary and I drove 12 hours to reach the area called Apuke. Here we met with some of the 50 Christians from Chemorongit who had recently migrated into the area. Also, we met with around 20 people who had walked over 30 miles (one way) from another one of our churches in a village called Nakali. Actually, it was the leader of this church who had planned this mission trip. They had heard from the Lord to go, and they did: without any outside support or prompting! We were just trying to catch up with them as we drove to meet them.



Some Pokot leaders, most of whom had walked more than 12 hours to Turkana

The next day after we arrived, we met with Christians in the area who had migrated from Pokot and also the Turkana who lived there. We had church under a tree, and I spoke. Others also, both Turkanas and Pokots, gave testimonies of how Jesus has changed their lives.



Rick preaching to the combined group of Pokots and Turkanas



Turkana women in their traditional dress

As the church began, I was told that the prophet from Turkana had come with all of his family. After I preached on the kingdom of God and how to enter through Jesus, the prophet and all of his family came forward. They all got on their knees and surrendered their lives fully to Jesus.



The prophet and spiritual leader of all the Turkana people

Later, I spoke to him in private and told him he needed to learn the ways of Jesus. He invited us to return, and we also invited him to come visit us in Pokot. We plan on returning for another trip in October. We will try to keep everyone informed so you can be praying for the trip and the further discipling of this new believer. He has tremendous influence over his people and can possibly help lead many to follow Jesus. This could help bring lasting peace to this war torn area.



Traditional Turkana Hut



African sunrise just outside our tent



While traveling back, I showed the corridor between the mountains where we had walked into Turkana last November



Heading backs to our hut in the Pokot mountains