

# We Go To Them

"TAKING THE GOSPEL TO WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE"

Shad Williams Evangelistic Association - Global Field Evangelism

## VICTORY IN ADVERSITY

### THE KENYA CRISIS CONTINUES - BUT PEOPLE ARE BEING SAVED



Remains of burned church

To try to summarize the developments in the country of Kenya and in our ministry in Kenya over the past 30 days is difficult. But, I felt it was time to put something in print other than emails. As you all know, a large part of the ministry of SWEA/

GFE is based in Kenya, especially the western Rift Valley section where most of the violence has occurred. To date at least 500 people have died in the clashes, thousands of homes and businesses have been burned and over 300,000 people, mostly Kikuyus, have been displaced. Many have fled the country. We praise God, however, that not one of our many team members has been harmed and not one of their homes or churches has been burned. Many of them have gone for days, holed up in their houses without food, just praying that they would not be attacked, but thus far, by the grace of God, all are safe.

The violence and destruction that has continued to erupt throughout the country over the past 30 days began with the presidential election held on December 27. The incumbent president, Mwai Kabaki, was opposed by Raila Odinga who made a pact with the Muslims agreeing that if he was elected he would make Islam the official religion in the country and would disallow public meetings in which people were preaching the Gospel. In short, Odinga was defeated, but of course, both sides were accused of corruption. Odinga was supported by the Luo, Luya, and Kalenjin tribes. Kabaki was supported by the Kikuyus who are hated by the other tribes already. The history of why this is so would take too long to explain here. The bottom line is that the failed political system quickly reduced itself to tribal warfare.

A day or so before Christmas Ben told me he was taking Mary and the kids to Mombasa on the coast for the holiday. The next time I heard from him was on the 30<sup>th</sup> in an email. They made it to Nairobi by road and then on to Nakuru safely, but there they



People fleeing for their lives

encountered a situation that nearly ended in their death. Ben wrote, "Mary, I and family were traveling from Nakuru to Eldoret and ran into 5 roadblocks. At one of them the machete waving rioters tried to pull Mary out of the car asking what tribe she was from. She is Kikuyu. God intervened and sent 3 men (probably angels) from the local Kalenjin tribe who were able to get us out of the situation and drive us to Eldoret. The men told me they would rather die than let my family not get home only 50 km



Mother & child, homeless & displaced

away. A while later we were stopped again and the mob said the 3 men were paid to drive us through. 100 men surrounded our vehicle and broke out tail lights with rocks, but some how one man released us and told us to go as fast as possible. We are home now, but we

saw death with our own eyes. Two cars of people were burnt in front of our eyes. Today was Sunday, but I did not even know because the only thing that mattered was life for my family and me".

On the phone Ben told me that the city of Eldoret was besieged with violence. People were being murdered in the streets, homes were in flames, all stores were closed and it was impossible to get food, Thousands were running away from the city, but the roads were all sealed off with roadblocks at which people were being dragged from their cars and killed. No flights were coming to the small airport and it was impossible to even get to it anyway. Ben said that similar reports were coming in from cities all over the country where our team members are stationed. It seemed so unreal because Sheila and I have preached in all of those cities.

On Jan 3 GFE evangelist, Wilfred Andabwa wrote, "The situation is much worse than the media is portraying. I expect homeless numbers to far exceed 150,000. In the outskirts of Eldoret, people are still being chopped and burned. Their bodies are lying on the ground. The Red Cross is unable to pick them up because the mortuaries are full. Homeless children are dying in the elements and without food".



Ben & the soldiers hired to protect him

**Displaced families being fed**



On the 6<sup>th</sup> pastor George Kimosa wrote from Kakamega, "We rarely get out of the house because of what is happening. Last Sunday trucks brought people to our market close by. In the whole

market people were being beaten all over. Everybody was running for his life. Shops were looted and people were cut with sharp objects. One of my church members was cut badly on the head and just lay down as his shop was looted. Some ran to the police headquarters only to find there was no one to protect them. I am hiding my wife right now. She is Kikuyu. My wife's parents were chased out of their home and are now living in a church. We are in prayer and God is in control". George wrote again later, "I am sorry to let you know that the man I told you about who was cut, died at 2:00PM Sunday. His wife and kids were in tears. I prayed for them. They are staying out in the open close to the police station. Tomorrow we will take the body from the mortuary for burial".

Also on the 6<sup>th</sup> (Sunday) I called Ben and he was at the Eldoret airport with Mary and the kids. He said, *Brother Shad, I am here with Mary and the kids and we are trying to get on a flight to Nairobi. I want to send them to the States for safety. We made it here because military was on the road, but now we cannot go back home because the Kalenjin have set up road blocks and are pulling Kikuyu out and killing them. The problem is that there are only 50 seats on this plane and they have issued 100 boarding passes. Please pray*". I hung up and joined with Sheila in prayer asking God to cause the officials to give favor to Ben. I call back 2 hours later and he said, "Brother, it is a miracle, we are in Nairobi". After we talked, they divided the people into two groups and began calling names to board the plane. Our names were the first 5 called out". At that, Sheila went to work booking tickets for Mary and the girls to leave Kenya. Miraculously she was able to get them seats on a flight out the next Friday. On Saturday night, January 12, they arrived in Conway, AR where



**Ben preaching to multitudes in war torn Eldoret**

they are staying with friends until the crisis in Kenya is over.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> pastor Daniel Khatera wrote from Kisii, "Precious families are

suffering, little kids are being ferried as transit goods and caring fathers have rolling tears of desperation for lack of providing for their families. They are overwhelmed by the cloud of uncertainty of the future. That same day pastor Alfred Egeyse wrote from Nakuru, "Brother Shad, things are bad for us, but we thank God for everything. People wanted to burn me and the church, but some one said, no we know pastor Alfred, don't burn him and God saved me. They burned all the shops and houses around us, but they didn't burn our church".

**Hundreds left homeless by tribal war line up for food**



Day after day the reports have come in telling of death, violence, burning, homelessness, hunger, and fear of more tribal war. But from all those ashes and out of all that horror God has

given victory. Amazingly, souls are coming to Jesus. Ben has been enabled, with help from friends in the USA, to make advertisements that are being played on television all over the country. While most religious leaders throughout the country have taken sides, Ben has remained neutral, and doing so has given him a voice to the nation for the Gospel. He told me a week ago that even though the country is still divided, it is ready to hear the message of hope, the Gospel of Jesus. He asked if we could help him begin doing festivals in Eldoret. I said, of course we can – we MUST while the hearts are open. I am happy to report that as I write this, the first festival comes to a close with thousands of people having been saved. A second one begins this week on January 30. All over the war torn country our team members are reaching out with the Gospel and with humanitarian aid. We are hearing of victory after victory and soul after soul coming to Christ.

As you might imagine, our team members, pastors and evangelists, scattered across the country are surrounded by enormous need as well as unprecedented opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus. I praise God that through the generosity of some of our support team we have been enabled to help our guys take advantage of the opportunities while they exist. As I write this, however, the crisis is not over and there is much to do. Please pray that God will continue to make it possible for us to help

where help is needed. Thank you all for your prayers for this situation, for our Kenya team members and for Sheila and me as we seek the guidance and wisdom of God day by day. It was His guidance that prevented us from being in Kenya when the violence broke out. We were scheduled to be there in January, but several weeks before, the Holy Spirit said don't go. At the time we did not know why, but now we do.

**Ben says, "There has never been a time like this for sharing Jesus"**



**Thousands receive hope through Jesus**

