



Cameroon Report

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JOTS FROM JANET

15th April, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Well, all I can say is: THAT is the only way to travel over here! My helicopter trip took less than 20 SMOOTH minutes, whereas, it took Paul a ROUGH nearly 4 hours over Terrible roads to go to the same place! What we really need to do is raise money to fly EVERY WHERE, instead of paying for the gas and upkeep of the Chevrolet. Just imagine, we could fly to Douala where we enter the country and where we do our cold food shopping (a 9 hours hard driving and much more dangerous) and back in the same day, save money on hotels, food, and our discomfort! (hint, hint)

I almost felt I had not been out of town at all! Kiven, my helper, and I arrived at Abachi nice and fresh and rested. I took a video of most of the flight until the white harmaton (dust from the desert) made it useless to try to see anything clearly, the further north we got, through the camera lens. But it was safe enough for the pilot. Using the GPS coordinates which Paul gave him, we zeroed right in to the school field where Paul and other brothers and sisters were waiting, with about another one hundred and fifty people who seemed to have come out of the wood work. They all started clapping when we touched down, got their faces blown full of dry grass from the rotors, and before we had our feet on the ground, we were surrounded by all of them welcoming us. I felt like a Hollywood celebrity!

With such a crowd, drawn by their first sight of a helicopter, Paul could not resist the opportunity to preach the gospel (as was planned). So for about 30 minutes there was more or less a captive audience, then the helicopter left, to come back in three days to carry me back home.

It was a very busy three days. After we were shown our sleeping quarters, a mud brick room with a tin roof (Kiven's had a thatch roof, which is much cooler) we got settled in, had lunch of fufu corn and hot pepper soup, Paul and I rested (I actually went over my lesson for my women's class.) I went back to the school house and taught my lesson on Prayer to about 30 to 40 women. Meanwhile, Paul was having a men's class. Getting toward dark, they tried to get the generator going so we could have lights. It worked all of 10 minutes. I had about 15 to 20 kids staring at me, so I sat down in a chair opposite them sitting on small stones and the dirt veranda of my room. I taught them songs of "Baby Jesus", "Baby Moses", and "Little Boy David", with some explanations of the stories. I told them that if they came to Sunday School I would show them pictures of those stories.

Saturday morning for my eye clinic, Kiven and I set up our eye charts and arranged the school benches (they have desks built into them, like the old timey ones) around the walls of the large school room. Over the next couple of hours, people dwindled in from several villages. We had forgotten to give out numbers as they arrived, so we had to halt operations and try to rearrange the people in order. The ones needing reading glasses went around the perimeter of the room. The ones needing glasses for distance were put in the middle at a distance of 20 feet from the charts. According to one brother, I took over an hour to instruct them with what they needed to do to help us fit them. If you don't know, it is like an assembly line, passing used glasses from one to the other until they find three or four pairs according to my specifications. Then Kiven or I could go back to them and make a judgment pertaining to their individual eyesight. From 9 a.m. until 5p.m. we helped 78 people. I believe I talked about an hour in explaining the Bible Correspondence Courses, the reason I do the eyeglass work, so they will be able to read their New Testament which will be given to them upon completion. Of course, I do some Bible quotations while I am at it. At the end the "Fon", the king, gave a speech welcoming me and Paul. At night we had public lectures in the evening, retired under mosquito nets and a battery fan all night.

On Sunday I taught Children's Sunday school, as promised, and we worshiped with 3 congregations with about one hundred and fifty people. Afterward, we trekked to the nearby village, by walking mainly on a "mountain goat path", going down, down, down, across a stream on stones, then up, up, up. I kept praying to God to give me the power to make it, what with my squeaky knees and heart mitral valve problems. I am glad I brought a walking stick to help push myself up. After reaching the village, I was disheartened to see that our sleeping house was still up another hill, and yet again, the school I was to soon teach a women's class was up another hill. I waited and waited and finally at dark the women started trickling in. So I taught that class by using a flashlight.

On Monday morning we had to go up yet another hill, through the village, to the Fon's palace where I was suppose to have my next eye clinic. The room there had one small window and door, and was too small for over a hundred people which they had told us to expect. I said, "No way!" and started looking around. I noticed some guys sitting up on some big boulders under this gigantic fig tree. So we climbed up there and looked around and decided to bring some benches (up again) there. We started earlier, as we had to leave by 2:30 and expected a lot more patients. The ground was pretty level, howbeit with these huge tree roots all over the place, so I had to really watch my footing. But they made for extra seating. :-) Others sat on the boulders and on the few benches. We had a lot of onlookers on the boulders too. I could imagine how 'the Sermon on the Mount' was like. It was cooler there, with a breeze, so the time spent on the 37 eye patients went by quickly. I was very thankful that we did not have that 100 someone talked about. At the end, I had to do a little minor operation one man's eyes. He had glaucoma really bad and was almost totally blind. But his complaint was pain caused by inverted eyelashes. I am glad that I brought my tweezers along. I had about 30 people in the "balcony" watching me, so then I felt like a surgeon. :-)

The helicopter came pretty much on time, but it landed in the wrong village. We had been discussing whether he would agree to land amid what we saw was some small piles of stone and construction. I didn't think so, and when he flew right over, we assumed that was the case. But there had been a misunderstanding about the pick up point, and I started dreading the trek back to the first village. But one villager got a free ride, I'm sure the highlight of his life, to show the pilot where we were. I was home by 4:30 and Paul was home by lunch the next day. It's not everyone who could feel like a pilot, movie star, doctor/surgeon, teacher, disciple on the Mount, and mountain goat all in three days! But the best is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and to do all of these things in His Name with Glory to God.

In Christian love,

Janet M. Kee

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