

Tabora, 03/05/2019

Dear friends,

First I want to thank everyone for their prayers!! This last week has once again proven God's Grace, Mercy and unending love for our family. God does hear our cries and meets us in our needs. All praise be to Him!!

During the past seven days, the adventures started with Mahona's travels to Kenya:

(He gave us this information but he will write his own story later.)

Mahona left by bus on April 24th to go to Mombasa to teach a seminar. The bus left quite late and they arrived at the border around 10 pm. At the border all passengers had to get out to be checked. Then they had to walk to the Kenya border to get their passports stamped. The bus would park about 40 meters behind the customs office. There were only about 15 passengers. When they left this office to walk to their bus all of a sudden all the electricity went off and they were in the dark. Right away a group of thugs jumped out of the bushes and attacked them. Mahona saw that at least one of them had a machete. There were about 8 to 10 attackers. They screamed for help but no one of the officers came to help.

The results were that every one of the passengers lost their belongings and one woman was injured. Mahona was to sit down and they put a helmet over his head to cover his eyes. Then they left. Mahona was able to get someone who let him use his phone to call me. He was quite shaken and told me he was robbed and lost everything. (He had forgotten that he had hidden his passport in his clothes and he remembered this later) I asked to talk to the person whose phone Mahona was using. It was an officer. This man told me that he was closing the office and that Mahona was to stay and wait for a bus the next day. I told this officer that Mahona should not be left by himself. He promised to wait for a colleague. I am not sure he did but I did not hear from Mahona again until the evening of the next day after many prayers had gone up for his safe return. What a relief!!

On April 25th Don Nicol, Baraka, Christina (Kiri), Faraja and I went to Mwanza. The plan was for Don and I to have some fun days with the four of them before taking them back to school in Kahama. I had found a very reasonable priced hotel

with a beautiful swimming pool up on a hill outside the city center. We used the GPS to find it and after hobbling over one of the worse roads you could imagine, we finally made it. It really was a lovely place with very nice staff who welcomed us. I told them that the road was horrible but the place itself was great. We went into town the next day over the same miserable road. We picked up Mahona and took him out for lunch. We heard his whole story. He told me that one of his sneakers was still in Kenya...so just outside the restaurant I found a perfect new pair for him. He also went with Don to find a new phone. He now has a new one so we expect that he will be sending many messages soon. Then we had some blood tests done for Jacky and then returned Mahona to his university. We went to our hotel over this dirt road which had by now worsened due to a huge downpour. What a relief to get back to the hotel! There I found out that there is a new paved road going into town starting not too far from the hotel!!! So much for GPS in Tanzania! Needless to say I was quite happy to get on this paved road for the next trips into town! This we did on Monday as the kids still needed some shoes and sandals and other items for school. We all enjoyed our stay and some great times swimming, eating, playing games, etc. It was a real holiday for all of us.

(I will add some pictures at the end)

Tuesday morning we headed for Kahama. Everything went well but the kids remembered that their heads needed shaving... We stopped at a small restaurant and there was a "saloon" nearby. I send the kids off to get their heads shaved while Don and I relaxed with a soda and ordered food for takeout. We were a bit late leaving for Kahama but besides having to stop for a speeding ticket we reached Kahama. First we dropped of Baraka and Christina. This is quite a process as everything you bring with them has to be examined. They make sure no drugs enter the school. Then we stopped at a new hotel with good security to make a booking for rooms for Don, Jacky and myself.

The next task was to drop off Faraja at his school...This went amazingly fast as they knew his entire luggage would be OK and they didn't even look at it. After dropping him off, the three of us went to a new restaurant to relax and have a bite to eat. Then we went to the hotel to sleep. We had closed the sliding windows and

went to bed early. There was a huge wall around the place with barbed wire on top. Two security guards were doing their rounds....

Around 7,30am I woke up to the sound of a huge mosquito choir...There were hundreds of them! I saw that the window had been slid open and discovered that my handbag with all my money, car keys, house keys, passport, bank cards, health cards for the kids, etc. was gone. I send a message for prayers to many of you. Then I went to see the manager and after getting the police involved one guard came to ask me to take a look at a bag they had found. It was my empty bag hanging from the barbed wire fence. The guard told us that he saw some papers lying around on the other side. We walked around several buildings, through a bit of a swamp and thorn bushes till we finally found the spot. The first thing I spotted was my passport! Then I found almost all my most important things like keys and bank cards, kids health cards, etc. The money and two flash drives were gone. AMAZING!!! Again we received another answer to prayers so quick that my mind is still spinning. To get my belongings back is almost unheard of in this country!

The police came to the hotel and I had to give a statement. This took about 2 hours. Then the two guards were arrested and taken in the police car with several officers who carried automatics and the two detectives who had come to investigate.

We then left for Tabora. How wonderful to be home again!!!

This morning I realized I had a slow puncture...or so I thought. My rim had cracked and I hope to get a new one this afternoon. Once again I am overwhelmed by God's provision. The bad road in Mwanza had probably weakened the rim and we had made it back home!

God is so good and we/I cannot praise Him enough!

Jacky's restored health is another praise item and Ngassa is also doing well. This coming week we have another trip to Mwanza to have his metal pieces taken out of his leg which is much straighter. Do pray for him as he is worried about having to suffer again much pain.

Don will be on his way soon to Turkey. We will miss him very much as he fits in so well with my Tanzanian family. Such joy it was to have Alvin here together with Don. Too bad it was for such a short time!!

These are the latest from Tabora.

May the lord bless all of you and thanks again so much for your prayers and support!

Happy me and kids and Don

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A beautiful dark sky over Mwanza..a huge thunderstorm is on its way!!



Jacky watching Faraja at the pool



After dinner dance by Kiri and Baraka



Faraja was enjoying himself immensely.