

## A Tribute to Our Foreign Missionaries – Part 2

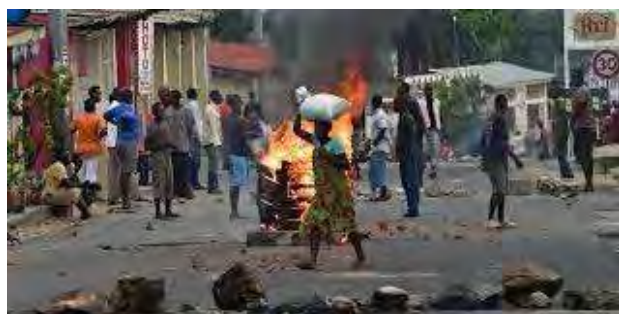
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### National Messiah to a Country in Civil War

My husband Paul had a massive heart in 1994, but when we were called to Korea to take part in the National Messiah Workshop from Aug. 1. – Sept. 11, 1996, Paul did not even consider not attending the workshop because of his physical condition, but followed Father's call. He even participated in the required 7-day fast, even though Daemo nim had advised him not to do so. Upon completion of the 40-day workshop we were assigned our country, Burundi in East Africa, then one of the poorest nations on the African continent and in the world,

the most difficult country imaginable for his age, as Paul was already in his seventies, and given his fragile physical condition. The country had been torn apart by civil war for years on end. Between 1997 and 2000 Paul made six trips to Burundi, literally at the risk of his life. Here is what he experienced, in his own words:



"Conditions here are very pitiful. Hundreds of thousands of Burundians have been slaughtered by warring tribes, including three presidents. At this time, the embargo imposed on the country is still in effect, and thousands are suffering from malnutrition and are living under unsanitary conditions unimaginable in the West, especially in the many refugee camps around Bujumbura, the Capital City, with no end in sight. People just don't have anything to eat, even though the UN tried to

help, but the need is too great, and people lost all hope. On our first trip, my French brother, Joel Ader and I, could only get to Bujumbura on board a small UN-plane from Kenya. The plane itself was so old and in poor condition. The seats were not bolted to the floor anymore and moved back and forth according to the plane's movement. We wondered about reaching our destination in one piece. But Joel and I were very grateful for that chance, as there was no other possibility to get into Burundi to meet and lift up our members in the country, who persevered even under extremely adverse conditions."



Paul continued: "At the time of our second visit to Burundi in July 1997 we ventured out into the countryside, south of the city along the shores of Lake Tanganyika, unaware of the great danger lurking everywhere. Suddenly we found ourselves surrounded by government troops and escorted to jail, a primitive shack in the middle of nowhere. We were charged with espionage. After intensive interrogations lasting for several days, we were released, but the investigation itself continued for the next six months. As we had contact with many high ranking politicians, we became suspect. Eventually we were cleared, but it was quite an experience, as a human life there is next to

worthless. People were shot every day, and we could have very well disappeared forever, without a trace. Even on the streets in Bujumbura checkpoints with trigger-happy soldiers were a common reality. It had become a way of life.

### Facing Adversity with Blessing and Courage

During our subsequent visits we were able to bless many couples, including several Members of Parliament, Government Ministers and an Ambassador. We also visited the former President. It was a rather unusual process to convince the participating couples that it is God's will to only have one partner for all eternity. The women living in the countryside in primitive huts usually raised many children, often not knowing, who the father was. They had no income whatsoever, and food was scarce. They raised some vegetables on a small plot of land surrounding the hut to feed their families. It's hard to believe, how they could even exist under these circumstances, but I have seen it with my own eyes. The blessing itself

was conducted in a solemn atmosphere as they drank the Holy Wine and affirmed their marriage vows. I was deeply touched by their sincere, hopeful and grateful hearts expressed at the celebration that followed."



At the time of the bombing of the US-Embassy in Kenya, Paul was in Nairobi on his way home from Burundi. I was so shocked when I saw the terrifying pictures on the news and immediately called our center there. But there was no answer. Anxious by then I called the German Embassy in Nairobi, but it was closed for the weekend. The only thing I could do was to pray for Paul's protection. By that time everyone was glued to the TV, anxiously watching the news. Our neighbor

and good friend from across the street came over, hugging me, saying: "My poor Baby (even though I was about 20 years older than her). How could Paul do this to you, going to such dangerous places, risking his life in Burundi and Kenya? When he comes home, I'll tell him my mind". But she knew that he was a missionary, doing God's work by serving those people in need.



When he did come home a day later, he told me the story, how he was protected by Heaven. After his last night in Nairobi he prepared for his trip home and was ready to leave early. Rather than waiting it out in the city, he decided to leave for the airport already and passed by the American Embassy when the traffic was still relatively light. But when he arrived at the airport he was quiet shocked and watched the terrible news with horror on the TV Monitors in the Terminal, showing what had just transpired at the American Embassy and the rescue operations underway. It was utter chaos, and he could have very well been harmed while driving by in a taxi.

After his last visit to Burundi in 2000 Paul was not able to travel to Africa anymore on account of his poor health. We kept in touch with the National Leader of Burundi and supported the mission in every way possible. Through these experiences in Africa our appreciation for our missionaries became even more profound.