

A Pearl Of Great Price -- Testimony Of An African Missionary To Uganda - Part 1

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The situation in Uganda allowed us no freedom: No freedom to witness. No freedom to meet each other. Yet God did not stop. He commanded the spiritual rebirth of the Ugandans.

When I received the news that I had been selected as a foreign missionary, I had been inviting people to a festival at Shinjuku. Tears welled up in my eyes. I prepared my heart to meet Father. Each person was to stand in front of Father after he was assigned to a particular mission country. Until that instant, I had never thought of going to Africa. When I heard my name, I stood up and without hesitation took my place in front of Father.

He spoke to me, "You have a good face:- This experience became one of the motivating forces during my mission in Uganda. Father was not talking about my physical face but my internal attitude in response to Heaven's call.

Before I left Japan, in a revelation I saw Father wearing a golden crown and a white robe: three people stood before him. Among the three people were one white, one black, and one yellow (me). The black person came to me and pleaded, "Please save me. Save me."

Soon after this revelation, my central figure called to tell me about the real situation in Uganda.^[1] He especially stressed how much Christians had been persecuted in my nation. He informed me that a missionary of Brother Andrew's group^[2] had been martyred there. Again, tears flowed from my eyes. Unceasingly I could spiritually sense the heavy historical of the black Africans.

On the evening of May 25, 1975, I arrived in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, where I stayed overnight. Early the next day I flew to Entebbe. To my surprise, Entebbe Airport was beautiful. Located on the shore of Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa, it also claims the title of the source of the Nile River. Even

now, I cannot forget the impression I had when we landed. This forgotten continent and country of Uganda was actually a land of perpetual spring. Year-round it was bordered by lush green and countless flowers of brilliant colors. The colonists of Britain referred to this nation as the "pearl of Africa," or "Switzerland of Africa." I looked around, surveying even the airport. This was my nation. My life, my understanding of God would change in this place. I couldn't know how at that time, for that day I only entered this beautiful garden's gate.

From Entebbe, I headed straight for Kampala, the capital. It was the rainy season. and true to its character, a drizzling rain accompanied me during the long ride into the city. I couldn't help feeling the heart of Jacob after he left Canaan for Haran. In many ways, Uganda was to become my Haran.

In the city, the rain stopped. After registering in a hotel, I walked along the streets of Kampala. I could see no white people, no yellow people. There were only black Africans. I felt like I did not belong. I went to an African restaurant. No sushi. No tempura. I had to eat African style. I had my first taste of matoke, a steamed green banana.

Little by little, the reality of Africa was revealed to me. I was approached by many types of people. I saw the lame and the lepers. People stricken with elephantiasis also came to me, begging with pleading eyes.



I walked around various places until evening. Through God's guidance, I met two young people who took me to Makerere University, where I wanted to register as a student. Truthfully, I was worried whether or not I had a good enough grasp of English, but immediately I was filled with the knowledge that I could give joy to Father by going forward in faith. I was introduced to a graduate of Makerere University who helped me with my application for admission. I submitted the papers and was told I had to wait several days for the answer. Four days after I entered the country, he also found an apartment for me, which I shared with two others.

With the notice that my admission to the university had been denied, I felt concerned about how to remain in the country. Yet during that time, Father appeared in my dream. Standing on a rock on the top of a huge craggy mountain, he told me sharply, "You must erect a large splendid white temple here."

Once when Jacob lay his head on a pillow of stone, the Lord comforted and encouraged him. However, in my case, instead of comforting me, Father ordered me to make the impossible possible. I could only think of the practical aspects. How could I erect a temple on the top of such a tall mountain which did not even have

footholds? I felt God needed me to understand not a sympathetic love from Father, but rather a stern love.

I had entered Uganda as a non-Christian and could therefore not pray loudly or even sing hymns. I used to have pledge service but felt so tense. In order to simply wash my face, I had to go through four doors. I had to be extremely quiet and could not make a sound when I unlocked them. I felt like a spy. I would place a desk lamp on the floor and cover it with a bath towel so that the light would not stream through the cracks of the door. My pledge services were secret.

Yet, God also allowed me to enjoy myself at different intervals. For example, it does not snow in Uganda,

but something comparable is the season of the locusts. Countless locusts swarm around the streetlights; they actually resemble snow. People competed to gather them up. My housemate stirred up my excitement when he started to catch them. I joined him. After stockpiling a good supply, he put them in hot water, which softened them up. Then he tore off their legs and wings and roasted them in a frying pan. Our snack was ready.

At first, I was at a loss, wondering how or even if a man could eat them. Yet, in order to become "African," I ate them. I was amazed; they were quite good. "Delicious!" I exclaimed. He was so pleased that I liked them that he asked his students to help gather many of them for his Japanese friend.

They obeyed him and gathered more than an ample supply. It took me several days to boil them and get them ready for roasting. I think I was a bit hasty in my cry of "delicious," because locusts piled on a plate were served at every meal for a week. After the first time or two, it was all I could do to be able to swallow them.

What comforted me at that time was the friendship I had with two high school students I met the day before my 26th birthday. On my birthday, the three of us went to see the tomb of Mutesa I, the King of the Buganda Kingdom. One student had dreamed that many black people, including King Mutesa, gathered together in the tomb to welcome me. He was a devoted Muslim and lived in the middle of the slum district with his grandmother. I would secretly sneak away from my housemate and the maid to visit this student. I saw so much unhappiness in the slums. Whenever I walked along the streets there, nearly a dozen naked children would follow me in amazement. Whites never visited there. I became a popular figure.

I had never heard a Principle lecture given in English. I couldn't speak the language well myself, yet one day Mr. Sudo appeared in my dream and gave me a lecture in English about the dispensation centered on Jesus' family. He showed me his English study guide of the Principle. Encouraged by it, I was determined to learn how to give lectures in English to the two students.

As a result of such determination, in September of that year, one spiritual child was born. He came through so many tears cried by both of us. His rebirth took place in a humble hut of mud in the midst of the slums. To do this, I had to take many risks. My housemate and the maid often locked me in the apartment. Therefore, in order to go out for witnessing, I had to climb down the drainpipe from the fourth floor where I lived to the third floor, where I would ask my neighbor to let me out of the building.

I heard that one of the students was the ringleader of a gang in his high school. One day I could not get up because I felt too sick, but he came to see me and told me that he was about to be expelled from school. Tears rolled down his cheeks as he begged me to act as an intercessor and talk to the director of the school. He pledged to become a good Christian and repented of his past. What else could I do? Even though I was sick, I walked one hour to go to his school.

The director, a black man and a missionary blamed the student for causing trouble in school and wanted to insist on his expulsion. Yet I appealed to him and told him I would take responsibility for him and educate him to be a good Christian. He began to soften his attitude and agreed to let him stay in school. In fact, he took him to class. In front of 70 or 80 students, the director gave the student 20 lashes. From outside the room, I heard his screams and the other students' laughs. The director forgave him but made him "pay" for it by that punishment. Still, the student became a man of character. He was true to his word and did become a Christian. He studied the Principle eagerly and finally accepted True Parents.

[1] This was the time Idi Amin was president of Uganda.

[2] Andrew van der Bijl ("Brother Andrew") was a Dutch Christian [missionary](#) best known for smuggling Bibles and other Christian literature into communist countries during the [Cold War](#).