

May 2007 Prayer Newsletter - CALL TO PRAYER-Andrea Herman

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SHIFTING PLANS

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9

May has been another exciting month, full of unexpected blessings and challenges. Things in Guinea became precarious again when the disgruntled military decided to demand payment of a huge amount of money from the president, which he promised over a decade ago, to give to the military personnel who remained loyal to him. The military marched in the streets of Conakry, shutting down local businesses (because the owners feared trouble), shot their guns in the air (which killed 10 and injured at least 70). The soldiers, the only people with guns in the country (except a few hunters), began looting. They looted massive amount of food supplies and weapons from warehouses. They stole and looted vehicles and electrical equipment, among other things.

The situation was very unstable. There were clear divisions in the military, and there was a "power vacuum", due to many top leaders, including the minister of Defense, being fired (in an attempt to pacify the soldiers). The president had already once provoked the military by not showing up for an important meeting shortly after he had agreed to some of their demands. We were all waiting uneasily to see how things would unfold.

Another meeting to try to appease the angered military was scheduled with the President. The meeting was postponed and things were tense. Nortons had experienced a military take-over in the Ivory Coast several years ago, and were concerned about the great potential for that in Guinea. What makes a military take-over even more dangerous than the problems we experienced during the strikes and unrest in Guinea in February is that the military are the ones who are supposed to enforce law and order. When they run amuck, there is no one to restore order or keep them from looting and pillaging because the military are the only ones in the country who are armed. The military are also the ones who have control of the border (which is our primary way to get out of harms way if things get bad).

Our team in Guinea was really conflicted about what to do. There was no way to predict the outcome, and waiting too long to make a decision could itself be another major problem (especially if the military decided to close the border). After much prayer and a fair amount of angst, the Nortons and I decided to leave Siguiiri and watch how things panned out in Guinea from the safety of Bamako.

As soon as we got to Bamako, I started language lessons again with Brehima, (the same language helper I used when we were in Bamako in February). I was absolutely AMAZED at how much I was able to learn with him as my helper. The first lesson we had, I felt like I had learned as much with him in a few hours as I had with my 2 language helpers in Guinea in a week and a half! Since my language lessons in Bamako continued to be extremely productive, and Heidi was going to be alone with the kids while Tim was teaching in Togo for 2 weeks, I decided to stay until we can all return to Siguiiri together.

Though at first I was against the idea of leaving Siguiiri when we first discussed that idea, I thank God that He has turned this unexpected time in Bamako into a HUGE blessing and encouragement to me, at a time when I really needed encouragement in my language learning. God has demonstrated once again, that He is in control, and that His plans are always best.

BELIEVING GOD

One of the great blessings of being in Bamako, whenever I am here is being able to join a group for Bible study. The group has been doing the "Believing God" series by Beth Moore. Though I have missed more sessions than I have attended (since I'm usually in Guinea), I feel that I have profited much from the teachings. There are 5 basic principles of belief that we talk about that are very basic, but also quite profound when you consider the implications.

- 1) God is who He says He is
- 2) God can do what He says He can do
- 3) I am who God says I am
- 4) I can do all things through Christ
- 5) God's word is alive and living in me

Believing these 5 things seems simple enough. However, when we are challenged with living our lives like we believe these 5 things (i.e. actually allowing God to be the one who directs our lives and allowing God to provide the power for us to do the things He calls us to do, instead of trying to do it on our own), that requires some trust on our part.

Can you think of a time when God has not been faithful? I can't. His faithfulness has been a constant in my life. God says He is faithful, and I have never experienced anything to the contrary. That is not to say that I have not experienced difficulties and challenges, it means that God has never left me alone in any of those difficulties. He is always there to help me through whatever it is.

The very nature of God is truth. God is good. God is loving, and He has great things planned for each of us. Our challenge is to believe God's promises found in His Word, the Bible, and to live our lives trusting in His promises. I am convinced there is no greater, more fulfilling way to live. I am still working on living out my belief in those statements of faith. I know it will be challenging, but I also know it's totally worth the effort. Why? Because nothing is more certain than the promises of God.

Please join me in thanking God for:

- Keeping our Guinea team safe during the recent military unrest
- The unexpected blessing of having access to a trained language helper for a few weeks
- A VERY productive time in language learning while I've been in Bamako
- The blessing of a large community of Christian fellowship in Bamako, both in Bible study and an English worship service
- And the great encouragement that has been to me
- The peace that has returned to Guinea after the military unrest
- The energy and enthusiasm (and time) I've had here in Bamako for language learning
- The completed well at my home in Siguiri!
- Good health!

Please join me in asking God to provide:

- Wisdom and a good solution to the issues with my language helpers in Guinea, that God would provide a way for my formal and informal language helpers to switch roles without causing major problems for either
- Time & discipline for me to set aside daily time to pray for the Maninka people
- Continued health & energy: physical, emotional and spiritual -Plenty of restful sleep so I can stay healthy
- Continued ENTHUSIASM! for language learning
- Getting resettled in Guinea and packed up for my trip to the States on June 21
- A way for the truck who has been hired to bring my furniture to arrive before I leave for the States (the arrangements have been made since early May, just waiting for the truck to fill up so it will leave for Siguiri)

--A safe trip home, a beneficial time at our Ablaze! Conference in Houston and good vacation time with my family.

Thank you all so much for your prayers. It is so clear to me how God is answering your prayers from month to month. I hope you are able to see that in my newsletters too. God is so faithful.

Since I will be gone from late June through July, you may only receive one newsletter for June and July together, but I'll try to be back on my regular newsletter schedule after I return. May God guide you as you seek to trust in His unfailing promises, and may you believe Him because of who He is.

In service to the Almighty, loving God who created you, me, and the entire universe,

Andrea

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.'" Jeremiah 29:11-13

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