

Onzima's Journey

A brief report and testimony about my ministry to the UK

By Rev Gard Achialu Onzima, (7th July 2004) - Chaplain to Kulura Hospital, Arua and Diocesan Youth Worker, Madi, West Nile, Uganda. He writes here about his efforts to reach the UK for ministry in a Nottingham parish before attending the SOMA Silver Jubilee Conference in Canterbury.

My journey to the UK has just been an adventure and such a nice experience in my Christian life. I have never gone through such an experience before.

I had a serious prayer and fasting to equip myself because I knew I was coming to share ministry with people abroad as well as equipping myself for the ministry of transformation.

I knew the people I was going to had planted the seed of Christianity called Anglicanism in Uganda and I knew I was coming to replant the same seed in the UK.

Three weeks before my mission to the UK, Satan laid his strategy to disorganise me. The communication system broke down and I could not receive or send emails. So I was not updated with what was going on. I thought I was no longer going to the UK.

A day before I came I had to ring Revd Don Brewin in order to update me. Fortunately Mary Cloake rang me informing me about the change of my flight to travelling by "Akamba" bus via Busia. It was an abrupt change and I was forced to borrow money to take me to Nairobi by road the following day.

After contacting Charles Laku, a friend in Kampala I was able to get a ticket for Nairobi but unfortunately because Arua is very far - over 500 km from Kampala - I arrived when the bus had already gone to Nairobi. After getting advice from the Akamba bus office in Kampala I was forced to get another transport to follow the bus up to Busia border, which cost me UG shillings 8,000. (About £2.50).

Unfortunately the bus had left. The staff in Busia would not compromise with me but forced me to pay for another fare from Busia to Nairobi. However I was able to offer for the sake of God's ministry and we travelled the whole night and reached Nairobi in the morning. So I travelled from Arua to Kampala, then Nairobi without stop, rest and no proper food for the sake of the ministry abroad.

SATAN IS A LIAR

As if this was not enough, Satan had to use another strategy after failing to stop me with the first one. It was my first time in Nairobi and I had no map. I did not have enough money. To make it worse a friend had told me not to consult people in Nairobi - even the policemen because they are the most corrupt people. Imagine the situation I was in. But all in all the Lord's hand was on me and I managed to reach the airport safely.

The last blow I got from my enemy was at the airport. I was directed to Elizabeth Kamau whom I had never seen and did not know where she was. She was not there and she had my air ticket. My phone which I thought would allow me to talk with her had no network and I could not communicate. The number I was given could not go through. I had no more money

to communicate and thought I had failed and must go back to Uganda. Imagine the situation I was in.

WITH GOD, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

Praise God, after my serious and "selfish" prayer God had already arranged some "Good Samaritan". He saw and understood my misery and offered me his phone, after trying for several times the number could not go through.

Just imagine the situation I was in. Indeed prayer is a powerful weapon to overcome our spiritual war. The last time I went to this Good Samaritan who offered me his phone was a time when God did a miracle. He used a trial and error method to ring Elizabeth Kamau, but at last God made him get through, in fact when she asked: "Is that Rev Gard Onzima from Uganda?" I felt like dancing without music. It was something I could not believe. I had lost hope and I was already thinking of how I would get back to Uganda.

Indeed, God can give hope to those who are hopeless and God works for the good of those who love Him. The joy of the risen Lord was in me, for Christ had overcome the devil on my behalf.

MISSION IN UK

We travelled well. My host Rev Trevor Hatton, who is the Rector of St Nicholas' Church, Nottingham, welcomed me so warmly. He brought me from Manchester. I shared the ministry my celebrating Holy Communion in the church, shared with the sick in hospital, preached, visited families and had a good time with the church youth group. I was able to spend time with the chaplaincy team at the Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham and get some experience from them. I am a chaplain in a missionary hospital which was founded by Dr Williams and Peter Williams who were both British. I also visited a Church of England Secondary School and shared by experience with the staff and students. Last but not least I spent time at a Diocesan Seminar on Child Protection which was opened by Rt Rev George Sadly.

This is my testimony and my report which manifested the power of God over the forged demonic powers of Satan. Prayer can move mountains. All my mountains, which were my obstacles, were all removed by God through prayer.

I thank SOMA for coming up with this brilliant vision of sharing the ministry with people as written in Matthew 28:19. I thank SOMA for involving young people in this transformation ministry. God has raised the youth who were despised in some communities to also participate in transforming the whole world.

Lastly I want to give thanks to Revd Don Brewin, who introduced me to SOMA team. Secondly to Mary Cloake who tirelessly connected me successfully for my safe journeys. And I thank all the Executive members of SOMA for tirelessly organising this expensive function of setting transformation of God's people ablaze.

I feel I'm well equipped and I'm ready to go where God wants me to go and transform others.