

Africa

A story of heartbreak and faith from the mission field

“And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” Isaiah 65:24

Working in a labour ward can be exhausting and challenging. It is the scene of miracles, but sometimes it is heartbreaking and cruel. As the missionary doctor worked hard to help a young African mother through a difficult labour and deliver her second child, she knew in her heart that the battle was lost. Sure enough, in spite of all her best efforts, the young woman died, leaving a tiny premature baby and a crying two-year-old daughter.

Hospital facilities were basic. There was no electricity, so an incubator was out of the question, and no special feeding facilities were available. Although the hospital was situated near the equator, nights could be chilly and winds treacherous.

As a student midwife went for a box and cotton wool that would serve as the baby's cot, another stoked a fire to heat water, a bottle would be needed to keep the baby warm. Returning in distress, she told the doctor that the rubber had perished and the hospital's last hot water bottle was now useless. Putting the baby as near the fire as safety would allow, the doctor slept between the baby and the door to keep the infant free from drafts.

A bold prayer

The following day as she led prayers with the orphanage children she explained about the plight of the newborn baby. Undaunted, one ten year old girl, Ruth, began to pray. “Please God, send us a hot water bottle today. It'll be no good tomorrow; the baby will be dead, so please send it this afternoon.” The doctor gasped, how could she possibly say Amen to such an outrageous prayer. Of course God can do anything, but in reality there

Source: Mission Field

are limits – aren't there? Ruth wasn't finished. “And while You are about it, would You please send a doll for the little girl so she'll know You really love her?”

The doctor had been working at the hospital for four years, the only way to have those prayers answered was a parcel from home, and that had never happened. Even if that impossibility came to pass, who would think of sending a hot water bottle to a land situated on the equator?

An answer to prayer

During a nurses training course that afternoon, she received a message that someone was trying to locate her, – a car had been seen at her front door. Returning home, she found a large parcel on her doorstep. As she opened the parcel with the help of the orphanage children, forty pairs of eyes focused on the boxes of clothes and sweets. Then as the doctor fumbled for the bottom layers of the parcel, her hand closed around a brand new rubber hot water bottle!

Bursting into tears, she pulled it out. Ruth rushed forward and grabbed it “If God has sent the bottle, He must have sent the doll too!” Rummaging down to the bottom of the box, she pulled out a small beautifully dressed doll. Her eyes shone, she had never doubted. That parcel had been on the way for five months! It had been packed by the doctor's former Sunday school class, whose leader had heard and obeyed God's prompting to send a hot water bottle to the equator. One of the class had put in the doll “for an African child” five months before, in answer to the believing prayer of a ten-year-old to bring it “that afternoon”.

Please pray:

- » Open Doors equips Sunday Schools throughout Africa to learn God's love and trust in Him in their difficult circumstances. Pray for both the teachers and the children.
- » For Open Doors literacy and livelihood projects in Africa that enable believers to rebuild their lives, read the Word of God for themselves and share it with other women and children.



African children learn about Jesus through Sunday schools supported by Open Doors

For more information on Open Doors Women's Ministry visit:
www.opendoorsuk.org/women



Open Doors
Serving persecuted Christians worldwide

Open Doors **UK**, PO Box 6, Witney, OX29 6WG
T 01993 885400
E info@opendoorsuk.org
I www.opendoorsuk.org

Registered Charity No. 260600 © Open Doors 2007

Women's Ministry News



India

A Hindu mob repeats it's attack on a pastor and his wife

Kanti Sharma knew that many local people did not approve of her family home being used for worship every Sunday. Her husband, pastor Kanhaiya, had faced opposition and isolation ever since he had received Jesus into his life five years ago, and both Kanti and Kanhaiya knew that villagers were just waiting for an excuse to vent their anger against them again.

Beaten and humiliated

Kanhaiya still remembered the savage beating he had sustained at the end of 2006. A mob of 30 Hindu extremists, lead by fanatical 19-year-old Jogi Sahu, had attacked Kanhaiya and four other believers. After the beating, the mob ripped the believer's clothes, and then paraded them around the village.

Still the believers ordeal continued. Dragging them to the local Hindu temple, they attempted to force them to bow down before their idols. Still unsatisfied, Kanhaiya was forced to sign a form stating that he was indulging in forced and fraudulent conversions. Police refused to file a complaint against the extremists, despite the believers filing several requests.

An unprovoked attack

Now, as Kanti queued for water, she saw the fundamentalist Jogi approach and jostle a young girl out of the way, making sure he was first in line to fill his bucket at the village water pipe. Despite the young woman's protests at his rough treatment of her, it was to no avail. Kanti was outraged, the man was a bully, he shouldn't be allowed to intimidate the

young woman and push her around. Bravely speaking up on the young woman's behalf, she protested, telling him to stop. The fundamentalist ignored her.

After Kanti had returned home, Jogi and two of his brothers arrived at her house and dragged her outside by her hair. They began to beat Kanti, in front of her neighbours, ignoring her protests. Despite her injuries, the fundamentalists ensured that Kanti had to wait over two hours before allowing her to go to hospital to have her injuries attended to.

Special Note: In Kanti and Kanhaiya's home state of Chhattisgarh the local government have repeatedly ignored anti-Christian attacks in their province.

Please pray:

- » For Kanti and Kanhaiya as they minister God's love in Chhattisgarh state.
- » For justice in Indian states that discriminate against believers by passing anti-conversion laws. These laws are frequently used against Christian workers as they seek to minister.

Walk to the water

A woman like Kanti walks on average five miles a day to fetch water for her family. On Saturday 8 September 2007, join Open Doors Women's Ministry on a five-mile walk to raise funds to train and support our persecuted sisters.

For your sponsorship form and prayer guide, visit the Open Doors website www.opendoorsuk.org/walk or call Jenny on **01993 885400**.

Women in India walk on average five miles a day for water



Source: Compass Direct

Indonesia

Through the flames into a new life –the story of a woman’s determination to forgive and continue serving Jesus

Netty will never forget the night her family home in the Muslim-dominated town of Aceh Singkil was torched. As she began to investigate where the smell of burning was coming from, she noticed that flames had begun to lick around the doorpost, and before long they were engulfing the home she shared with her husband, pastor Luteran.

Hurriedly grabbing for a few treasured possessions, the couple escaped the blaze to find the church they pastored together was also on fire. Netty was terrified. She was pregnant and Netty’s greatest fear was losing her baby. Her first child, a son, had died at birth and Netty desperately wanted things to be alright this time.

A hurried escape

Shocked, traumatised, and upset, Netty struggled to stop anger rising, why did their attackers need to burn their home and church? What would happen to the two congregations that they pastored now that their church had been burnt? So many questions that needed an answer, but first they needed to escape to safety.

An unexpected blessing

After finding refuge in a neighbouring province, Netty decided that she needed to visit a hospital. She was still ‘in shock’ and needed to be reassured that her pregnancy was progressing without problems. Although delighted that her unborn child was safe, she was dismayed when doctors discovered that she needed to be delivered by caesarean! Both Netty and Luteran knew that their meagre savings would not extend to that level of medical treatment, how were they going to ensure that Netty received the help she needed? The answer came when an Open Doors co-worker reported Netty’s problem and the necessary funding was made available so that she could have a safe delivery.

Lessons Learned

Reflecting on God’s love, Netty told an Open Doors co-worker, “We have burdens, but God always helps us in unique ways.... He is truly sovereign in our lives”. She is now wiser and spiritually stronger, “We used to fight over small things, but now realise that such things are trivial...we are more

accepting of each other. I have now forgiven the people who burnt our home and church”.

Netty has now given birth to a healthy baby girl who has been called Estikhia.

Please pray:

- » For Luteran who is attending pastoral counselling classes at Bible College and is due to graduate soon. During his studies, he joined a ministry, travelling to villages to show Christian films, distributing tracts and holding revival services, please pray for his safety.
- » Luteran and Netty do not have a regular income, and do not know what is ahead. Pray that they will adjust to their new situation and for the Lord’s provision for their daily needs.
- » For the congregations that Luteran and Netty had to leave behind.



Indonesian ladies reading the Word of God

Planting Gospel seeds in mountain soil.

Chuni loved her mountain home, it was beautiful. The forests and high peaks which seemed to stretch up to the sky were endless and the mountain air was fresh and clean. Small remote villages and farmsteads nestled into the hillside, isolated from the world outside. It was all she had known since childhood and she felt that this was where she belonged.

Difficult journeys

As the wife of a pastor, Chuni was kept busy helping her husband. Reaching out to non-believers was difficult. Anti-conversion laws in their state meant that they must be careful not to upset

the local authorities who were sure to impose heavy fines or imprisonment if they discovered their evangelistic activities. This never dampened their enthusiasm from sharing the Gospel at every opportunity and travelling to surrounding villages, often along rough roads that were covered in the large stones that fell from the mountains.

Chuni, and her friend Nadeen, knew that God had placed one particular unreached village on their hearts. They longed to go and share the Gospel to the people there – but knew that it was controlled by anti-Christian extremists and this presented a large challenge.

Despite the dangers, both women were prepared to travel the difficult mountain trail that led to the village. The freezing temperatures and the harsh winter winds were unforgiving, and this made travel difficult. Both women feared the ever-present possibility of attack from religious extremists; there would be no protection if they were discovered. The biggest obstacle however, was their lack of formal education, neither had received adequate schooling and this made explaining Bible truths particularly difficult. But this had never stopped them and they decided to go anyway.

Setting out on their journey, the women had plenty of time to contemplate how they would be received by the villagers, - and plenty of time to seek the Lord's guidance. Progress was slow; the uneven ground cut into their worn shoes and landslides hampered their progress. But eventually they arrived exhausted, and immediately began to seek out villagers who would be receptive to their message.

Finding fertile soil

The Lord blessed Chuni and Nadeen's bold efforts. Soon they found a group of villagers willing to shelter them and hungry to hear the hope contained in their message. Today, a small group of new believers gather regularly for prayer meetings.

Please pray:

- » For Chuni and Nadeen as they obey the call to minister God's love to remote villages in her region.
- » For Open Doors co-workers who conduct Standing Strong Through the Storm seminars in India and encounter considerable difficulties in their work.



An Indian woman at an Open Doors' sponsored Standing Strong Through the Storm seminar