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- *Evangelism*
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Gospel For All

“If you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.” Col. 1:23

My Trip to Ethiopia – A Visit to the Field

by Samuel T Dersu

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Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! There has been a lot going on and God continues to bless this ministry. We praise God for all of our supporters; because of you we are getting stronger everyday. Your prayers and financial sacrifices have made this possible.

2007 has been an exciting year for us so far. In May, I was able to visit our work site and meet with the evangelists and the orphans we support as well as with the Borana Outreach volunteers who are leading the work we are doing in the southern part of Ethiopia. I was excited to see the fruit of the work that you have been a vital part of for the past three years. I planned my trip in advance and passed on my plans to the leadership team in Ethiopia. I wasn't sure how it would work out; after all I was planning a trip to Africa where plans are always just plans. I am thankful for the many people who were uplifting me in prayer.

After arriving in Ethiopia, I continued to be anxious as to how my schedule would work out and to worry about how my family in Ethiopia would react to my busy schedule. I had warned my parents and siblings before arriving in Ethiopia that the purpose for this trip was to do the will of God first and then hopefully have a little time to see them after the first week. Some of my family members were at the airport when I arrived. I was so happy to see them. After one

night in Addis Ababa, I headed to Awassa, which is about 245 km away, and spent the night in my sister's home. Based on my schedule, the following day I was to start driving down to Negelle. Knowing my sister and her husband, I expected them to voice their concerns about my plans to travel by myself with a driver to Negelle. They have not traveled these roads for quite a while; however, it is well known that the roads are not safe, especially when it rains. Sure enough, I heard them discussing among themselves, my driver and the GFA coordinator, about what my travel route to Negelle should be. I wasn't included in the discussion. I tried to stay out of the conversation as long as I could, but finally I interrupted and told them that many people were praying for this trip and I really needed to stick to the schedule planned. I am fortunate enough to have a family who worries about my safety, but also understands the power of prayer. Once I mentioned to them about the many prayers, they responded by telling the driver, "Okay, just drive carefully."

The next day we took the 10-hour drive to Negelle. Upon arriving in Negelle that evening, I had dinner with our evangelists in the area. The next morning we met with the area outreach coordinator and then drove out to visit the areas where our evangelists, Yaikob and Gaalo, have been working. I was able to speak to individuals who accepted Christ through the ministry of our evangelists. One of the converts I spoke with was a young man who now leads a congregation of about 40. He was one of Gaalo's first converts. The day went by quickly and I had to leave Gaalo and Yaikob and head for Yavello. Yavello is about 341 km from Negelle. It was difficult to leave the evangelists in the bush, but good to know that they are happy and committed to their work.

On the way to Yavello we stopped in Wachile. Wachile is a very small town in a very hot and desert-like area. The majority of the population in Wachile is Muslim. Different tribes live in this



The road from Negelle to Yavello

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Hand of Hope....reaching out to orphans



Sisters, Kaliti (9) and Kabale (13) Mega, Ethiopia

God continues to bless our Hand of Hope program. Through Hand of Hope we are making a difference in the lives of orphans and other neglected children living in the areas where our evangelists are ministering. Currently we are sponsoring 11 children through the Hand of Hope program. Since its inception in 2005, the Hand of Hope program has steadily grown from sponsoring 2 sisters, to sponsoring a total of 11 needy children. All eleven children are enrolled in school.



Abeduba Children: Back (L-R): Aster (18), Galgallo (14), Nesaanet (19); Front (L-R): Biftu (5), Gemechu (8), Meskerem (7), Ana (10), Wakole (17)

— Yavello, Ethiopia

We recently received a letter from the Abeduba children. Here is what they said:

“After God visited us through Gospel For All representatives, we are no longer living like orphans. We are managing our daily life and growing spiritually. Every month, God’s servant, Kebede, comes to visit us and give us spiritual guidance on behalf of Gospel For All. We believe that you are God’s messenger sent to make a difference in our lives. We are no longer shy towards you, for you are our parents and we are your children. Praise be to God!”



Israel, age 5 Mega, Ethiopia

Israel (pictured to the left) is the newest member of the Hand of Hope family. Five year old Israel has no idea who is father is. His mother brings him daily to the town of Mega and leaves him to fend for himself as she looks for a job to earn a little money. Israel’s mother is an alcoholic, and any money she earns is spent to support this addiction. Every evening Israel waits for his drunken mother to come pick him up and take him home. He spends his day in an area of Mega where members of a couple of households make sure this neglected boy has a meal to eat and is safe. Israel’s sponsor, through the Hand of Hope program, provides financial support which has enabled Israel to enroll in school. Gospel For All has arranged for one of the families in the neighborhood where Israel hangs out to take on the responsibility of making sure Israel has food to eat and that he attends school regularly.

Gospel For Unreached Nations — Evangelist Tsega-ab Bekele

Evangelist Tsega-ab continues to travel extensively throughout southern Ethiopia conducting evangelistic crusades as well as training programs for church workers from many different denominational backgrounds. His crusades attract a lot of people and lives are touched and set free by the power of the Holy Spirit. We praise God for the work He is doing through Tsega-ab’s faithfulness to the call on his life.

Continue to pray for God’s protection to be over Tsega-ab as he travels much of the time. Pray as well for his wife as she cares for their three children alone much of the time.

For more information on Tsega-ab’s ministry, please check out his website at www.gfuntb.com.



Evangelist Tsega-ab with his wife, Tiya and their 3 children (l-r) Tihute (age 7), Ruth (age 4) and Faresa (5 months)

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town, including Somalians, as this town is close to the Somali border and serves as a center for the larger towns in the area. I was sad to learn that there is no evangelistic presence in this town. Since my return to the USA, we have been able to hire one evangelist for this town. We definitely need more. Please pray that we would be able to expand God's kingdom into Wachile.

After a night in Yavello, we headed for Teltelle where we have two evangelists. Teltelle is about 110 km from Yavello. The roads were good, but it had rained the day before we arrived and the Teltelle dirt roads get quite muddy when it rains. Thankfully we were driving a four-wheel drive and didn't face much trouble on the way there. I was able to visit with Dida and his family. Since I arrived one day ahead of schedule, I was not able to see Boba as he was out in the



Sam Dersu delivering soccer balls and other supplies to Dida in Teltelle during his May 2007 visit to the area.



Evangelist Wario drinking fresh milk from the sooroora

field and was coming back in town the next day, which is when we had planned to be in Teltelle. The believers in the area were happy to see us. Some of the villagers in the area had been giving our evangelists a difficult time because they have been preaching against the idols that the villagers have been worshipping for many generations. I was touched when Dida's wife brought us a jug (sooroora) containing fresh milk. It is Borana tradition to show love and respect to guests by sharing from what you have. This may have been all the milk she had for the day, but she was willing to give it to unexpected guests. This was a lesson for me; it should be for you as well. Do we sacrificially share from what we have?

Overall the entire trip to Teltelle was successful. The only problem we encountered was when our vehicle got stuck in the mud on our way out of town. After struggling for about 15 minutes, we were able to head back to Yavello. That evening I met with 5 members of the leadership team who are voluntarily leading, supporting and praying for the evangelists and the work we do in the area.

After this first week, I looked forward to being joined by Scot Mechling from my home church in Nashville. Before

heading for Addis to meet Scot, I was able to go to Mega to see my Mom and Dad for one day. I headed for Addis the next day. I stopped in Yavello to visit with 8 siblings I had heard about who were living by themselves after having lost both of their parents. The oldest sibling was 18 years old and had been forced into the head of household role. It was heartbreaking for me to see these siblings and hear about their struggles with life. These children were highlighted in the Summer 2007 newsletter. (see more about the Abedubas in "Hand of Hope" on page 2.)

We arrived safely in Addis and met Scot at the airport. The following day we headed down to Moyale. We spent the night in Moyale, which is a town on the border of Ethiopia and Kenya. Our plan was to head back to Mega in the morning and meet with the elders from the Mega church. We then planned to return to Moyale for an evening prayer walk through the city. There is a lot of tension between tribes in the area. Over 90 % of the population is Muslim.

We were able to meet with the Mega church elders, have lunch and pray with them. We were happy to see the



newly completed Mega church and to see that it is the biggest church in the area. God bless the individuals who made it possible through their sacrificial giving for this church to be built.

On the way back to Moyale that evening we had car trouble. The enemy tried his best to stop us from getting to

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Moyale and proceed with our planned prayer walk that night. Thank God our driver knew how to work miracles on the car. Whatever he did to the car got us to Moyale! Six of us split into 3 teams and we covered the town of Moyale in prayer as we walked through the town. Please continue praying for this town. Pray for love between Oromo and Somali people in the area and pray that the kingdom of God will expand in Moyale, Ethiopia.

The following day we waited all day for a spare car to arrive, as our car had completely broken down. The spare car finally arrived at 5 p.m. We were not able to visit the places which we planned to visit; however, we were able to make a quick stop in Dembi, which is not too far from Moyale. Evangelists Wario and Guyo work in Dembi. We were able to have a quick visit with them. We handed out clothes, soccer balls and school supplies provided by PLCF, our church family in Nashville. I was able to talk to Bonaya Fugicha, a young man who came to know Christ through one of our evangelists. He lived in a cemetery before accepting Christ. He was mentally ill and demon possessed. He told me, "Those Jesus people came and prayed for me." Today he is free, makes his living by farming, and has his own place to live.

All the Glory to our God! When I hear and see things like this I am encouraged I thank God for giving me an opportunity like this to see that the enemy is losing, and the victorious one is God.

We made the 100 km trip from Moyale to Mega, where we spent our last night before

heading back to Awassa and back home to America. The next morning, we made a quick trip to Deeda Jaarsa before heading for Awassa. We were able to see the simple church building in Deeda Jaarsa that GFA built. Evangelists Dimtu and Molu work in Deeda Jaarsa. The believers were happy to see us, and all the kids who were on their way to school returned to the village when they saw our car. Unfortunately, due to our tight schedule, we were only able to stay a short time. We were blessed to spend that time worshipping with them through prayer and song. It was a joy to visit with the children and listen to their singing. While listening to the children it hit me that most churches in Ethiopia are built in towns, so many people in remote

villages never get a chance to have a church to call their own. The children growing up in Deeda Jaarsa today will be the first generation of Borana children to grow up with their very own church. We want to have more 'Deeda Jaarsas' in other remote areas.

Our last appointment was with Tsega-ab Bek-ele, founder of Gospel for Unreached Nations, which is based in Awassa. He trains most of our evangelists and compiles a quarterly report for us with updates on all of our evangelists. Tsega-ab conducts revivals and conferences as well as training programs for church leaders from various denominations. Recently, he organized a successful Peace Initiative Conference



Dembi area convert, Bonaya Fugicha, set free from demonic possession

in the Borana region. May God continue to bless Tsega-ab and his family for the sacrifices they are making to expand the kingdom of God.

Overall, our trip was successful. I was very pleased to see with my own eyes the work that we have been hearing and reading reports about for the past four years. I am

touched with the

different testimonies I heard. Words can't express my feelings. I can only say that God's kingdom is expanding throughout southern Ethiopia.

I thank God for watching over us during this trip. Blessings to PLCF for providing the finances and prayers for the trip - - blessings to Simret and Gollo for letting us borrow their car for the entire two weeks -- blessings to our wonderful driver, Zeleke, and blessings to my wife for putting up with the girls by herself while I was gone. God bless Scot Mechling for taking the trip and God bless those of you who have been supporting GFA through your prayers and sacrificial giving.



The road leading into Mega

Ministry Updates

Negelle

Yaikob Dima and **Gaalo Elias Huka** continue to work in the highly Muslim populated region of Negelle. Pray for them as they provide spiritual guidance and leadership to the believers in this area.

Yaikob and Gaalo are also conducting a literacy program. Many people throughout this region are illiterate and have had very little, if any, formal education. Pray for Gaalo and Yaikob as they strive to teach those in the community to read and write.

Yaikob recently completed the course on Intercessory Prayer through the Bible Training Program currently underway for five of the evangelists with GFA. "This course challenged my understanding and exposed the emptiness within me," Yaikob shared after completing the course. He now looks at prayer in a new light.

Continue to pray for Yaikob as he completes the remaining training courses this year. Pray that Yaikob and Gaalo would continue to be effective in their ministry and that they would be able to shepherd the group of believers under their care. Pray for God's continued protection over Gaalo and Yaikob as they minister in this hostile area.

Moyale

Wario Galgallo & Guyo Buke continue to serve in the Moyale area, mainly in Dembi. Dembi continues to be one of the most highly populated Muslim areas in the country and is one of the hardest places to preach the Gospel. God continues to work in this area and souls continue to come into the kingdom. Wario and Guyo have asked for funds to erect a church building in Dembi. Please pray that funds would be available to turn the plans for a church into a reality.



Children in Dembi

Guyo Buke continues to participate in the 10-month Bible Training Program currently being held for GFA evangelists. Guyo recently completed the course on Intercessory Prayer. He is grateful for the opportunity he has received to participate in this training program. He shared with us that, "Every time I come to Yavello for these classes, my life is set on fire for Jesus." Guyo recently got married. Please pray for God's blessing on his marriage.

Wario continues to serve as coordinator of GFA's evangelists and also assists with the work in Dembi. He recently played an active role in the conference held in Chareturura. (see more on the Chareturura conference on page 6.)

Ministry Updates

Chareturura

Abeduba Arero continues to work in the Chareturura area. Please pray for this young evangelist as he works to establish a group of believers in this area.

Chareturura is a village located in the Borana region approximately 35 km from the town of Mega. Chareturura is surrounded by many small villages made up of a number of different people groups, most of whom speak the Oromo language. Most of the people in this area are pastoralists who enjoy the Chareturura area for its animal friendly habitat. Christianity first came to this area around fifty years ago from Kenya — even before Norwegian Lutheran missionaries reached the town of Mega. In spite of the long presence of Christianity in this area, there are relatively few believers. It is estimated that there just under 120 believers in the Chareturura area.



Members of the Church Choir listening to the preaching during the conference in Chareturura



Chareturura Conference attendees

The small group of believers in Chareturura had a desire to conduct an outreach conference in their area. They began to pray that funds would be available to make such a conference possible. God answered their faithful prayers through Solomon Yohannes, founder of Borana Outreach Ministries, currently living in Norway. Solomon, along with Hayu Duba (from Moyale) contributed financially to make this conference possible. The 3-day outreach conference in Chareturura became a reality in July 2007. GFA's coordinator and evangelists played an active role in organizing the events for this conference. Christians from many of the surrounding areas came together for a time of refreshment and encouragement.

Christians from Moyale, Yavello, Mega and even from Moyale, Kenya, participated in this conference. In addition, many unbelievers came and heard a clear presentation of the Gospel.

An estimated 250 to 300 people attended the conference whose aim was to encourage spiritual revival in the area, expand evangelistic efforts, and encourage the believers in Chareturura. Christians came together and there was a true sense of unity and love among all as they heard God's Word taught, participated in worship through prayer and singing, and witnessed to unbelievers who attended the conference. We trust that this conference will be the beginning of many souls in the area turning to Christ and following Him.

Please pray for Evangelist Abeduba as he follows up with new believers and works to organize a team for outreach to the areas surrounding Chareturura.



GFA Evangelist Wario speaking during the Chareturura Conference

Ministry Updates

Mega

Teshome Tadesse continues to serve in Mega and the surrounding areas. He continues to work on developing an effective group evangelism outreach program with the youth in Mega, encouraging them to go out into some of the nearby rural communities to share the Gospel with people.

Teshome is one of the five evangelists who was selected to participate in the Bible Training Program during 2007. He recently completed the class on Intercessory Prayer. Teshome shared that “my former understanding about prayer is very far from what I received from this class. I was shocked and thrilled to discover the biblical view of intercessory prayer. I am ashamed that I did not know these truths until now. I will use what I have learned in life and ministry from here forward!”

Continue to pray for Teshome to learn a lot from the Bible Training Program. In addition, continue to pray for his ministry to be effective and for God to continue to use him.

Deeda Jaarsa

Dimtu Guyo and **Molu Jillo** continue to work together in Deeda Jaarsa. New believers continue to come to know the Lord through this ministry. We praise God for the many children in the area who have come to know Christ. Pray for these children to grow in their relationship with the Lord.

Continue to pray that Dimtu and Molu will be able to work well together as Dimtu gets closer to retirement and prepares to turn the leadership responsibilities of the Deeda Jaarsa church over to Molu.



Children gathering at the church in Deeda Jaarsa

Teletelle

Dida Barako & Boba Guyo continue to minister in the Teletelle region. God is working in this area, and hearts are softening. We recently shared how many people in this area worship a “rock” on a nearby mountain. Dida and Boba have experienced a lot of opposition and persecution; however, since GFA’s founder, Sam Dersu, visited this area in May, there has been a significant change in the attitudes of many of the elders in the community. The community elders have begun to draw closer to Dida and Boba and no longer look at them as “enemies.” Please pray that God would continue to work in the hearts of the elders of this community and that one day they would accept Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The children in the area continue to play with the soccer balls that Sam Dersu delivered during his visit. These soccer balls are a constant reminder to the community of the people in America who are standing with them and supporting this work. Please pray that God would use these soccer balls to bring children to Christ.



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**READER'S
Corner**

We would love to hear from you. Please write us with your comments, suggestions or just words of encouragement to share with our readers.

We are so encouraged by how God is working! We continue to stand beside you in prayer.

Solomon Haile

100% of all gifts go directly to support the ministry in Ethiopia

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PRAISE & PRAYER

PRAISE GOD FOR....

- ◆ His continued protection over the evangelists and their families.
- ◆ The souls that continue to come to Christ.
- ◆ The faithful supporters of Gospel For All who support this ministry both financially and through prayer.
- ◆ Provision of funds to sponsor 8 siblings through our Hand of Hope program.
- ◆ The recent conference held in Chareturura.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- ◆ Pray for the 2008 PLCF Missions Trip to Ethiopia. Pray that finances would be available for those going on the trip. Pray for the leadership of GFA as they plan this trip and work out the many details.
- ◆ Pray that educational materials will be made available to the evangelists. This includes material for literacy programs that have been implemented as well as health-related materials in the areas of family health and hygiene and HIV/Aids prevention.
- ◆ Pray for the *Hand of Hope* project that is reaching out to children orphaned — some of which are a direct result of HIV/Aids.
- ◆ Pray for the physical safety of the evangelists and their families.
- ◆ Pray that finances would become available to erect a church building in Dembi.
- ◆ Pray that the leadership team of Gospel For All would have wisdom as they lead this ministry for the Glory of God.
- ◆ Pray for the necessary finances to continue to come in to carry out this ministry.



THANK YOU

To all of you who faithfully pray for the evangelists by name.

We encourage you to adopt an evangelist and pray for him daily.

Let us know who you are praying for and we will pass this on to the evangelist. This will be a great encouragement for them to know that their name is being lifted up every day to our Father.