



FAR REACHING MINISTRIES



OUR FOREVER

The chaplains had been asked to come to Juba, the capital of South Sudan. The chaplains' silent drill team would be performing before headquarters, and the nerve center and power base of the South Sudan Army. The men had been training for months, eight hours a day, six days a week. They were not to the level of the United States Marine Corps Silent Drill Team, but they will be by early next year. The 15-minute routine is done without command and was still very impressive. When we arrived, many men came to see the presentation. As the men began to perform, I could hear the officers and generals say, "Are these really South Sudanese soldiers?" They captivated everyone's attention. The intention is that after each performance, the Gospel message is presented, and with every presentation, men come to Christ. It is the professionalism of the men, in the silent drill team,

**"IN THIS LIFE
NOTHING LASTS
FOREVER, AND IN TIME,
EVERY ONE OF US
WILL FOLLOW"**

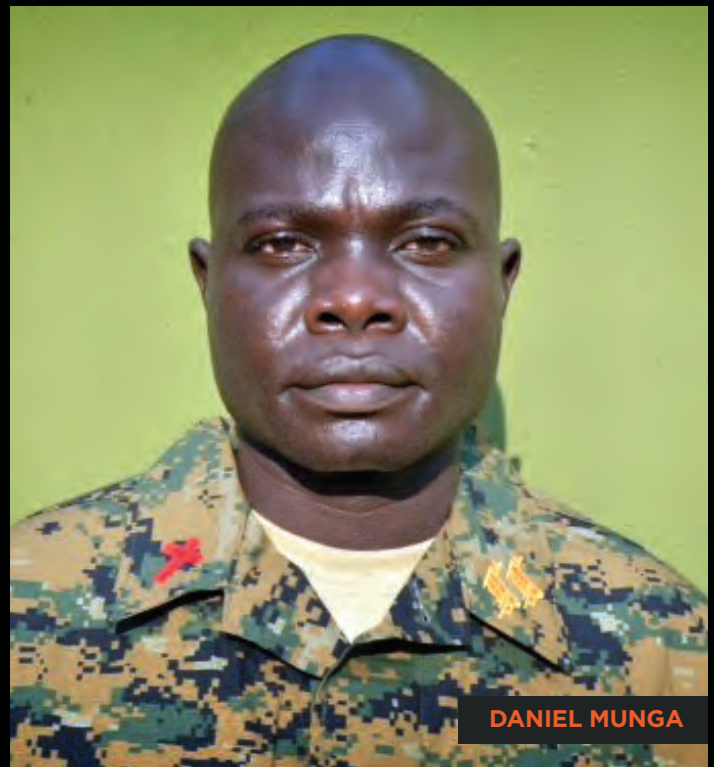
that resonates with soldiers and gives us an open door for the real purpose: that is Christ, and Christ alone. When we were done, I was told that we were to perform for the senior generals of the army in a private showing. I entered into the Bilpam, which is their Pentagon.

The word Bilpam means palm. The new headquarters was recently finished, and I was taken by how well it had been done. The building was beyond impressive. I met with three lieutenant generals; the rank of a lieutenant general is a three-star general. When I first arrived, I think they were just trying to be polite but were truly not interested. They did not understand

what we were about to do. But when the men started their drill, everything changed—they were glued to the performance. Afterwards, they congratulated us on what the men had accomplished. Then, the senior

general began a conversation with me about the fact that the people needed to learn to endure hardship. He said that when he was fighting in the bush, he had to eat lizards. He then said to me, "Have you ever eaten lizards?" And, I responded that I had eaten monitor lizard, at least four times. Next, he said, "How about frogs?" I said that I've eaten frog many times. He next said, "What about rats?" I responded that I had eaten bush rat. He finally said, "What about dog?" I could tell that he thought he had me. I told him that I had taught a conference in Indonesia many years ago. The senior Indonesian pastor told us that we were having hot dog for lunch. Then, he said, "Real dog and real hot!" At that point, the general just smiled and laughed. I had earned some level of respect in his eyes.

It was interesting how some of the chaplains heard the conversation. They were telling Vicky that the general had asked me how the men looked so healthy and then said, "What are you feeding them?" And, what they thought I said is that it was lizards, rats, dogs and frogs. Vicky had to ask me; she knew that somehow the conversation just could not be right. When I told her what was really said, she just laughed. My voice is so deep that I think that some of the men just do not understand what I am saying sometimes.



the hospital in critical condition. So, I sent the men to be fed and proceeded to the hospital. When I arrived it was Daniel Munga. He had been serving in the city of Yei with Santos who was killed two years ago. These men had been the driving force for the Gospel in this part of South Sudan. It was hard for me to

process losing two men who had been so faithful. When I arrived, I knew he was in bad shape. He was crying out but was unconscious and unaware. I went and found the doctor and asked what was wrong. He said that Daniel had hepatitis, from bad food, but had not known it. He then said that Daniel's liver was failing. I asked the doctor, "Will he survive?" And, he said that maybe he would. I knew the doctor was trying to be kind. Daniel was dying and about to make his final journey. I said, "Doctor, what can I do to alleviate the pain?" He said, "We do not have money for pain medication, so if you could give for that." Which I did. Then, I went back to say goodbye to Daniel and pray for him. A couple of the chaplains had



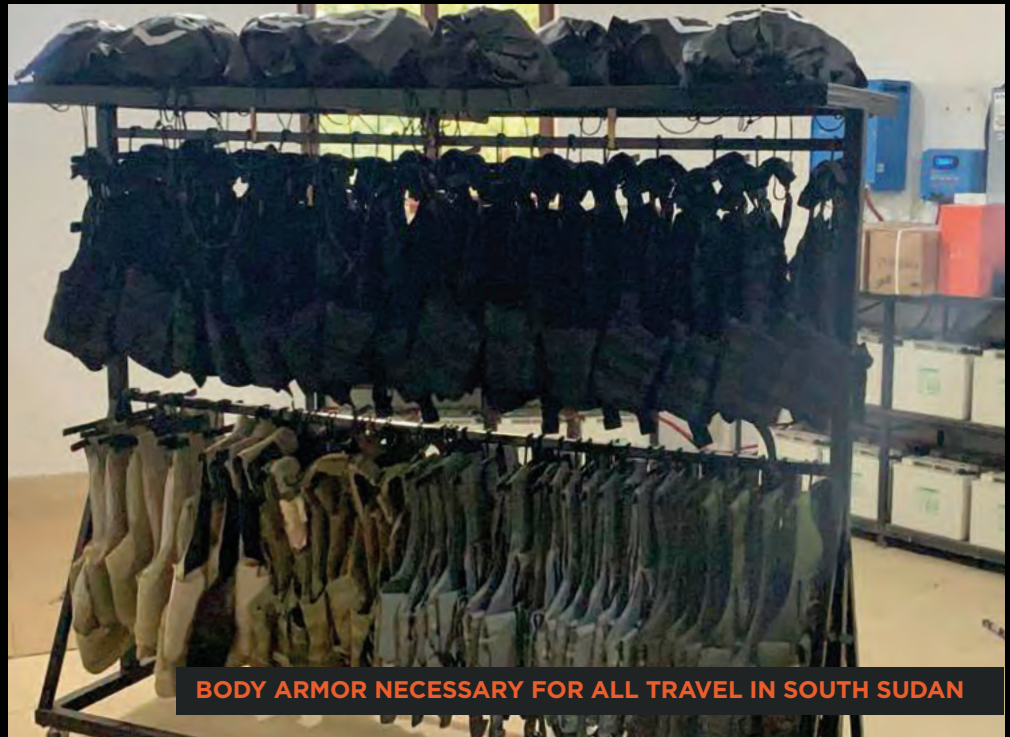
We were preparing to head back to the chaplains' base, but the men had not eaten all day. I arranged to get them fed and then return back to base. While doing this, I was informed that one of our chaplains was in

been with him and his new wife of only three months. I wanted to stay but that would mean we would be traveling at night. While we were well armed, the later

you travel the more dangerous it is. When I arrived back to get the remaining chaplains, they had been fed, so we briefed them on the battle plan should we encounter the enemy. Even though these men are well trained, you still need to explain where each group needs to lay down a field of fire. A moments' hesitation can cost lives. Then I mounted one of our vehicles, with Michael my senior chaplain. I had a 12-gauge shot gun with double-aught buck, a 9 mm Glock, and an AK-47 machine gun with a dozen 30-round magazines. The vehicle had six men in the bed, who were well armed. We were in a convoy of four vehicles and a bus. As we drove, I pondered Daniel's life and journey. He had struggled to become a chaplain. He had the heart, but the military training was difficult for him. He was dropped three times but returned every year to try again. Finally, on his fourth attempt, he graduated and served more than ten years. Both he and Santos had been extremely diligent in sharing and teaching God's Word and had a great effect for the Lord. It was hard to understand why they would be allowed to be taken. It will be extremely difficult to find men who will be able to replace them. Michael, our senior chaplain, and I both realize what a great hole in ministry that will be left, with no one to fill it right now. We will have to push on even if it is difficult.

As we were driving, it began to rain extremely hard, and I knew the men were getting soaked, but there was nothing we could do. This is war and men need to be prepared. As we drove, I could see the moon through the clouds. It was one of the most incredible sights I have ever seen. It looked like what you should see before the return of the Lord. I wanted to stop and get a photo, but it was too dangerous to stop, so I just shot the photo while we were driving. Then Michael said, "Sir, it is time." I knew what he meant; we have a term we use—"Go to guns." So, I chambered a round in my Glock and took off the safety on all the weapons. We were in the danger zone. Six men had been shot that week of which two had been killed. It was a perfect place for an ambush. If rebels

jump out on the road with an RPG (rocket propelled grenade), you hope the men in the bed of the vehicle are watching and ready but you cannot hesitate, you just



shoot through the windshield. Fortunately, I think the hard rain worked in our favor. It was probably one of the determining factors keeping them away. One of the needs of the ministry is two new jeeps. The reason is that you can take the doors off very easily and put them back on easily. It gives the men the ability to have their weapons on target at a moments' notice. It is often moments that mean the difference between living or dying.

When we arrived back at the base, we dismissed the men from what had been a fruitful day. All the men prayed for Daniel, but word would soon come that he lost his battle and went home to be with the Lord. I will never forget him or his zeal for the Gospel. Daniel died in his early thirties, but he had lived a full life for Christ. May his reward in heaven be great.

Daniel's new wife seemed to have accepted that she was going to lose her husband. As best as anyone can handle loss, she accepted this with dignity. We will continue to watch out for her until, or if, she remarries.

This brings the total men who have lost their lives in Christ's service to 58 and more will follow. As soldiers of the cross, we hold onto God's Word. "Do not grow weary in well doing, for in due season, you will reap a harvest of righteousness." In this life nothing lasts forever,

JEEPS FOR SOUTH SUDAN



In South Sudan, safe transportation is critical. With the constant threat of attack from the enemy and the harsh terrain, two new specialized jeeps are necessary for

the ministry. In order for the men to have their weapons on target at a moments' notice, the vehicles must have doors that can easily be taken off and put on.

The cost of each jeep, properly equipped for the road conditions, is about \$58,000. To assist with these critical purchases, please indicate **"JEEPS FOR SOUTH SUDAN"** on the enclosed gift card with your donation.

and in time, every one of us will follow. Our forever is on the other side of eternity. We have and will continue to see many open doors for the Gospel, with many responding. Daniel's sacrifice has not been in vain—he led many men and women to Christ. Some have gone home to meet the Lord, and I have no doubt they were the first to welcome him into the Kingdom.

Wes Bentley

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Far Reaching Ministries

TOYS & HOT DOGS FOR CHRISTMAS



For many of the children we have worked with in Mexico, when they are asked what they want for Christmas, they respond, "I want a hot dog!" Most have never received a toy before.

We are preparing for our Mexico children's outreach, for the poorest of children, where we will provide a blanket, a toy, candy, and a meal for Christmas.

This will cost approximately

\$30 per child. Our goal is to provide for 1000 children this year. To be part of this opportunity, kindly notate **"TOYS & HOT DOGS"** on the enclosed gift card along with your donation.



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