



## Bor Team – July 2006



On July 19, 2006, an *Aid Sudan* team of two American Sudanese, three American women, and four American men departed the United States for Bor, Sudan. The team was composed of individuals from five cities in four States, all of whom carried with them a great heart for the southern Sudanese people.

Led by Peter Swann, Executive Director of *Aid Sudan*, and Russell Jonas III, *Aid Sudan's* Director of Sudan Projects, the team traveled to Wangulei, Sudan, in the north Bor area of the Upper Nile region. As with all of *Aid Sudan's* trips, the goals were simple and straightforward:

- 1) Engage the southern Sudanese people with the Genesis Project, which includes the four pillars of water, education, health, and the church.
- 2) Mentor and disciple southern Sudanese team members from the States as they return as Christian leaders among their people and are reunited with family and friends.
- 3) Pray for and observe God at work in each team member's life during the trip and as a result of the trip.



After flying through London and landing in Nairobi, Kenya, the team went through a whirlwind day of buying and gathering supplies before leaving early the next morning for southern Sudan. As the sun came up over the Kenya horizon, the team boarded the chartered DC3 airplane and departed the bustling metropolis of Nairobi for the "bush" of southern Sudan. Upon arrival, southern Sudanese team members were surprised to see how their area

had changed in the twenty years since they left. What a privilege it was to see them reunited with friends and family members after so many years! In fact, all team members were blessed by a very warm reception and the gracious hospitality offered by the people of Wangulei, including a bull that was slaughtered on behalf of the team's arrival.

Rain was plentiful during the stay, but so was warm weather, as on days the temperature soared over 100 degrees. Mosquitoes were abundant as well, and snakes seemed to keep showing up. But God blessed the team with great health and safety, and team members felt very secure throughout their time in the Bor area.

Team members experienced life in the "bush" as they used local accommodations, filtered their own water, and ate plenty of beans and rice! Still, the accommodations were much nicer than expected, which was a great blessing to the team. It was a privilege simply to live among the southern Sudanese people and focus on walking with them, spending time with them, and ministering to them.

The real heart of the team was for the southern Sudanese people, and the team was thrilled to deliver supplies and engage the area in training. In fact, by God's grace the team was able to achieve the goals set in each area of *Aid Sudan's* Genesis Project:

- **Water:** An assessment was made of all wells in the area, including those working and those not working. This assessment will be studied with the potential of future water work in the area.
- **Education:** The team flew in a significant supply of school materials, including pens, pencils, rulers, clip boards, chalk, and exercise books. These supplies will help the seven primary schools in the area. Three of the team members also led a training course for teachers from the local schools.
- **Health:** The team delivered a large load of quality medicine and medical supplies to the local health clinic. There is no hospital in the area and as with the school supplies, the medicine was gratefully received.
- **Church:** Team members trained local church leaders in Chronological Bible Storying, which included stories that chronologically went from the first story of creation through Jesus' death and resurrection. Although the team was aiming for 15-20 people, 38 church leaders received the training!



Peter Biar and Reuben Lual, the southern Sudanese team members, were a great help to the team not only in arranging logistics beforehand but also representing the team to local officials and working alongside the team in both of the training courses. Church leaders and chiefs were all very grateful for the work of Peter and Reuben and the whole team. In fact, the head chief in the area had a son who was

born shortly after the team's arrival, and in honor of the team he named the boy "Peter" after Peter Swann, *Aid Sudan's* team leader for the trip.



The team was honored during the stay to attend a memorial for the late Dr. John Garang, the former leader of southern Sudan, who came from the Wangulei area. The memorial was led by Rebecca Garang, the wife of the late Dr. Garang. It was a privilege to attend the ceremony and be a part of such an important occasion in the community.

As a part of the ceremony, two bulls were slaughtered and the community honored Dr. Garang through a gun salute. There were other rich cultural experiences as well during the team's time in the Bor area, including a visit to a cattle camp, a key aspect of any Dinka society.

In reflecting back on the goals of the trip, we very gratefully thank God for His blessings on the trip. The Genesis Project goals were completed, and southern Sudanese team members received mentoring and discipleship through the course of the trip. In our debriefing times each night, and even after the trip, team members have shared about how God had worked in them through the trip. In fact, one team member shared that she believed God worked in her more this trip than any other mission trip on which she had been. Mission trips to Sudan contain unique challenges, yet God continues to work in special ways.

It is indeed a tremendous privilege to follow God's call to serve the southern Sudanese people. The need is massive and at times overwhelming, yet we know that our God is able. We are so grateful to those who supported this trip financially and through prayer. We're also thankful for Medical Bridges, which donated medicine for the trip. The trip will certainly be remembered as one that the Lord blessed, one that included a great team from the States and saw real ministry to the people of the Bor area of southern Sudan.