

Journey Together

(A Monthly Prayer Guide for Dale & Florence Johnson's prayer partners)

August 2009

Faith Journey

One of the more difficult spiritual situations that we've experienced has been that of a handicapped woman who is housed permanently at SIM's medical center across the road. Ramata is a Fulani woman who was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer almost four years ago. For three years now, she has been living in a small room at the clinic with her 11 year old daughter.

By all accounts, Ramata has lived much longer than anyone would have expected. And it shows. With no chemotherapy or other Western cancer treatments, one year would be the most that you could hope for, according to a worker at the clinic. "It's clear that it's God who has kept her alive and here with us for so long," said the clinic's chaplain. But why? The cancerous tumor fills her entire swollen abdomen. She has been cooped up in a small, foul-smelling room for so long. Her eleven year old daughter, Rabi, doesn't get to grow up like other children, but must instead cook and clean for her mother all day every day. The rest of Ramata's family has abandoned her, leaving only the small child to help.

Of course, to be Fulani is to be Muslim. It's nearly impossible for our Fulani neighbors to separate their identities from Islam, and the peer pressure from family members is very intense. Ramata has long clung to Islam, and Rabi has been forbidden to go to church or school with the missionaries.

At times, the clinic's chaplain and CAH employees have felt that Ramata has been receptive to the Gospel. She has prayed with them and given indications that she has renounced Islam and become a Christian. But then, soon after, she acts as if she is too afraid to turn against her family and Islam.

All of this became even stranger recently. She began showing signs that make people here think of demon possession. Normally, Ramata is confined to her bed; too sore to lie down and too sick to sit up. But now and then, she'll sit up suddenly and scream, and she won't stop screaming and gesturing until Rabi, her daughter, brings her some "potion" made by the local medicine man (witch doctor). To make matters worse, near the peak of some of these episodes, a neighbor child told Rabi that her mother was possessed and that it was all Rabi's fault. This, of course, reduced poor Rabi to tears for a while.



Every Thursday is market day in Mahadaga. People come from as far as 30 kilometers away to buy and sell anything from clothing, shoes and jewelry, to medications, to produce, grains and spices, to buckets and plastic basins, to hardware and tools. It's a lot like your local WalMart!

It's often difficult for us to know what's going on inside these "traditional" understandings, behaviors and fears of spirits. But we do know that there is a hidden spiritual battle being waged. And we do know that this particular battle requires prayer. Our Father does not want anyone to perish apart from Him, including Ramata and Rabi.

Please pray for Ramata and Rabi. Pray that God would soften Ramata's heart and help her make a firm decision to choose Christ. Pray for her physical and spiritual deliverance. Pray for Rabi, that the Lord would redeem the difficulties of her circumstances, and that He would bring her to a saving faith.

Life Journey

Personal and ministry-related events to pray for this month

August 18 – 25: Trip to Ouaga

Prayer Journey

Weekly prayer topics to guide you in your prayers

August 1-7: Pray for endurance in the face of famine and a multitude of work challenges

August 8-14: Pray for future missionary support in Mahadaga, specifically for Fulani and children's ministries

August 15-21: Pray for real rest and peace when we can get it

August 22-31: Pray for wisdom in parenting

Specific prayer requests and praises

Praise for the encouragement and fellowship we enjoyed with the team from our home church

Praise for good visits with some of the other missionary families serving with us in Burkina Faso – a chance for us to extend hospitality and get to know their families better

Praise for the good time spent at the SIM Burkina Faso prayer conference at the end of July, as well as the chance to visit Piela, another mission station, afterwards and see the work there

Praise God for his constant provision and for the faithfulness of those who have been supporting us through the past several years

Pray for rain; we are averaging one good rain per week, which is much less than ideal for this time of year

Pray for wisdom in responding to the need around us as hunger is rampant this time of year

Pray that the new internet system in Mahadaga would work soon so that we can communicate with the outside world again

Pray for the upcoming board meeting for the CAH and for the leadership transitions happening in September

Our prayer letter is distributed by: **Steve & Krista Frank** ♦ smfrank@gmail.com