

# STORIES FROM KENYA

By Julia & Vincent Leiyoole

Meet Some Missionaries, October 2024

---

## The Samburu Outreach

---

Imagine what it was like for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob herding their flocks and finding water at a well. It's still like that today in the remote desert, mountainous and plains area of north central Kenya where the Samburu people live. Their traditional semi-nomadic lifestyle is well suited to this beautiful but rugged rural environment.



Map of Kenya with location of Arsim added  
Herd of zebras at watering hole



Elephant family in nature preserve



Giraffes at water hole

Vincent and I often camp in remote desert locations, where we can set up to show The JESUS Film to the unreached people living there.



*Camping Kenya style – Julia and Vincent often travel to remote areas such as this where they can set up equipment to show The JESUS Film in the evening.*



When not on the road, we maintain the WMPL mission station in Arsim and assist with various building projects and provide discipleship to leaders. We also operate Outreach Mission Team (OMT), a non-governmental organization we founded in 2016. Elephants are familiar sights at the mission station!



*Mission station when rain has been plentiful*



*Julia - just another day at the "office"*



*Vincent and team members unloading drought relief food and water in village*



*Julia & Vincent were asked to supervise the project to finish building this church*



*Getting materials to Arsim for ministry projects is never an easy task. This lorry was loaded with over 13 tons of supplies then a tire rim broke.*

What began as a passionate desire to tell others the story of Jesus has blossomed into a grand bouquet of colorful stories among the multitudes wandering the mountains and deserts of Samburu. Working among a nomadic culture dictates the terms of discipleship; if these people were to embrace their Savior, we would have to be the feet that brought the Good News and the church would have to journey to and with the people. The long miles on dusty roads, through rivers, across cavernous earth cracks and other obstacles have only increased our joy and faith. The stories of these journeys are a testament to God's faithfulness in gathering His people, and Samburu warriors are among those being gathered.

---

## **Lmaperin**

---

Lmaperin is one of these living stories that became an odyssey of faith and trust. He is a warrior playing a magnificent role within the intricate design of God's plan for Samburu warriors. Warriors are an age-specific group of young men; their social rank signifies the emergence of a boy into manhood. They are the vanguards of protection who are taught to hunt, fight, keep their community safe from predatory animals, and mobilize as the frontline soldiers against warring tribes. As such, they endure a harsh life existing primarily outside the normal social parameters. They drift across the barren wilderness like hot desert winds wandering the plains and valleys in search of seasonal rains and grasslands for the cows they shepherd. Lmaperin is a young warrior who answered a call to watch over our herd, and this became the catalyst for him to answer a greater call.



*Samburu warriors displaying their elaborate headdresses and neck ornaments*



*Samburu warriors help keep communities safe*

Under normal circumstances, warriors have little interaction in any type of religious setting, and most have no formal education. Yet, God opened a door into the world of these isolated men to tell them of the story of Jesus. One night as the full moon rose in heavenly brilliance illuminating the dark night, curious eyes watched intently as the film equipment was set up against the solitary tree at the edge of the den surrounding the tired cows. The film came to life on the screen, and Lmaperin was transfixed by the story of Jesus that unfolded before him. It was that very moment he answered the call of God to listen, to learn, and to share His story. He was to become a disciple among the fiercely independent warriors. It has come to pass that at least one hundred warriors are now disciples of Lmaperin.

When the long desert days become cool nights, and the long afternoon shadows give way to darkness, he hauls out the lantern to listen to the stories of Jesus. Dressed in his vibrantly colored clothes and array of intricate beadwork accessories, he leads groups of warriors and young shepherd boys to hear God speak to them through the audio devices. God has gathered his forgotten shepherds and tells them of the riches of the Kingdom of Heaven. They believe. Lmaperin is constantly amazed at the hunger the new disciples exhibit to ingest more knowledge of Jesus, and in turn, incorporate the teachings into their lives. They embrace life-everlasting that results from accepting The Good Shepherd as their Savior.

God's divine story of redemption has reached the unreached and spreads like the pink glow of the rising morning sun above the mountains. And to think, it all began with a seven-year drought that brought people to their knees in prayer. God heard the cries of His people and answered with an abundance

of rain, filling the landscape with green pastures of deep grass and overflowing streams. The warriors gathered like never before in response to this heavenly provision, received more than they could have envisioned, fattened the once dying cows, and now prepare to embark on the next nomadic journey. They will carry The Word with them, and they will tell the story of Jesus to those they meet along the way. This unique brotherhood of warriors are now God's disciples, and it was made possible by the God of the impossible.

---

## A Need to Hear

---

The haggard elder shuffled and limped as he walked toward the gate. It was yet another exceedingly hot day and dusty sweat dripped from his furrowed brow, but he seemed to be on a mission. His milky eyes, dimmed by the years, remained intent and focused on his destination. Vincent met him at the mission station gate and shook the man's wrinkled, leathery hand in welcome. Familiar Samburu greetings were exchanged, and greetings grew to include the specific need this elder came to share. It is a normal turn of events with our visitors to hear repeated stories of so many in desperate situations. Poverty, hunger, sickness, and every kind of human suffering reaches our ears daily, but his man had a far greater need.

His journey of over 20 miles across the mountains left him faint with hunger and weak in his stiff, arthritic knees, but his exuberance for 'getting something' outweighed the physical infirmities. "How can we help you?" Vincent and I asked. His response was short and direct. "I need the church, I need the machine that tells of Jesus." He quickly added, "And please can I get a drink of water?"



Weary elderly Samburu man

His wobbly legs began to tremble and suddenly he collapsed to the ground. Hunger and thirst had overcome him. Vincent leaped to his aid, helping him to stand and totter to the nearby shade tree. Spurred on by his critical need, I ran to the house and returned with some water, milk, and bread. A little rest paired with a little sustenance revived him, and soon the conversation returned to his story. His story, like so many we have heard of late, was one of hearing an audio device fill the arid desert air with the voice of Jesus. Perched on a rock at the periphery of a gathering of people, he had been listening to a Missions Discipleship Training (MDT) disciple play *The JESUS Film* at a distant and isolated village. He came to learn we had audio devices, and it was his keen desire to obtain one of these devices. God had filled his mind and soul with a thirst to hear more, and to know more about this man named Jesus.



*Audio device for listening to The JESUS Film*



*Showing The JESUS Film outdoors*

Once again, I raced to the house and emerged with an audio device and a solar lantern. His gaze and slow grin turned to a twinkle in his eyes and a smile that stretched across his face when he realized he would be given 'the church'. More lively conversation ensued, accompanied by cups of Kenyan tea and biscuits. Strengthened in every way, the man rose from his resting spot under the tree and announced, "I am going now. Remember me, and remember us old people because we need to hear the Word of God too."

Yes, we remember, and Vincent has been able to share more with this man as God allows their paths to intersect. Every ear has a need to hear. It is not just the children, the youth or young adults, but every person who needs to know the story of Jesus.

---

## **Just Go**

---

The noisy engine of the motorcycle breaks the Sunday morning silence in the sleepy village he calls home. A young Samburu man heads out early every Sunday morning for the long ride through the dense thorny shrub to be the first one to arrive to the church in Arsim. While it may be a difficult journey across the miles of uncertain terrain, it is one he cherishes. It is a time he reflects on how God has filled his life with more than he could have dreamed possible. Sharing the Gospel is the focus of his life, and he does it with dedication and great joy.



In yet another village nestled into the valley at the base of Mt. Ndoto, far from the hustle and bustle of city life, another young man begins his day in praise and worship to God. He calls upon Jesus to show him

the path that will take him through the day as a disciple called to share the Good News to all he encounters. God has given him an abundance of blessings: a wife, a home, a thriving business, and even a new home for his parents. His family are witnesses to the life-giving power and hope that arises from accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior of their lives.

Their stories are just two of the many ways God has shown us the Kingdom harvest that is possible when we just listen to His leading and 'just go'. Many years ago, when the ministry was in its infancy, we took our battered old yellow lorry to distant villages to deliver water to desperate people stricken by extreme drought. In these desolate places where the oven-baked earth cracks and rivers become barren sands, women and children often spent an entire day looking for a mere cup or two of life-giving water. The lorry would rumble into a village, water splashing shimmering drops every time it rocked and creaked across the rock-strewn forbidding ground. Children would come running just to try and catch these drops as they fell to the parched red clay soil, hoping for a taste before they disappeared into the dust. Women came running with their dilapidated water jugs (some having to evict the spiders who had made homes within the unused containers), and they waited patiently hoping to share in the precious cargo God had delivered to them.

After water distribution, the lorry would become the outdoor theater. Cumbersome equipment was unloaded from another old vehicle that rattled and groaned under the weight. A white sheet was secured to the side of the lorry, and soon the crowd was treated to something never before seen or heard. The story of Jesus: it was told in their native Samburu language, and they could listen and understand as Jesus spoke directly to them.

These two young men were once children in one of these crowds of 'mobile theater goers.' Neither would fidget or move or take their eyes from the sheet flapping lightly across the side of the lorry as the miracle story of Jesus filled their hearts and minds. We did not notice them particularly that fateful night in the desert wilderness. But Jesus did notice them, and He called them His own, and thus began a journey of faith and discipleship for them both.

Many years later, we would come to know their stories. God would share with us what He can do when we just plant the seeds. These stories began with a need far greater than cool, refreshing water; they began with the need for Living Water. The seeds we planted that scorching afternoon fell on 'good soil' and all it required was our willing hearts and determination to go and disciple. The work is by no means easy, but it is an overwhelming feeling deep in our souls to know the reward that comes with the effort. We cannot begin to fathom or imagine how many more stories like theirs are out there. God knows, and every day we willingly and lovingly go forth according to His plan that others may experience the miracle of Jesus.

Want to help? Go to <https://wmpl.org/fellow-worker/julia-vincent/>

For more information about World Mission Prayer League and its programs,  
Please visit: [wmpl.org](https://wmpl.org)



### **Julia & Vincent Leiyoole**

Julia and Vincent follow God into the most remote desert locations in Samburu county, northern Kenya. Their passion and focus is showing *The JESUS Film* to unreached people in these isolated areas. Their long-term goal is to bring full knowledge of the Gospel to those with no access to education. They travel hundreds of kilometers following goat trails and camping for up to a week at a

time to spend time sharing the Gospel. When not on the road, Julia and Vincent maintain the WMPL mission station in Arsim and attend to a variety of projects in the area, including building a school dormitory and providing discipleship to leaders. They also operate Outreach Mission Team, the non-governmental organization (NGO) they founded in 2016.

Contact Julia at: [jleiyoole@wmpl.org](mailto:jleiyoole@wmpl.org)

#### **Links:**

Kenya: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kenya>

Samburu: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samburu\\_people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samburu_people)

Jesus Film: <https://www.jesusfilm.org/>

WMPL: <https://wmpl.org/>

mission: <https://wmpl.org/cause/samburu-outreach/>

Arsim: <https://kenya.places-in-the-world.com/11670813-place-arsim.html>

OMT: <https://www.facebook.com/OMTKENYA/>

Elephant video: <https://www.facebook.com/OMTKENYA/videos/710628490119678>

MDT: <https://www.uk.om.org/pages/category/mdt>

Mt. Ndoto: <https://mapcarta.com/12713746>

Julia: <https://wmpl.org/fellow-worker/julia-vincent/>