



The Testimony of Tambaya Ibrahim

As told to **JON BANKE**

Tambaya Ibrahim is a passionate evangelist and teacher, serving both the settled and nomadic Fulani Church in Niger. He is a recognized leader inside and outside of Niger, active in various key ministry capacities.

I am a Bodaadó Fulani. My father and forefathers are Wodaaße; all of them were cattle herders. I grew up in the bush. I knew only herding cattle—nothing else. As a child, I never visited a town, large or small village. Sometimes, men might go to a town market, but children and women never went to towns. We only stayed in the bush.

I was born during the famine of 1974. My father's name is Ibrahim. In that year, my people experienced much suffering, including the death of all our animals. Many lost everything. Within a week of my birth, my father was visited by Malaam T, a friend who was a Christian. He brought the customary greeting for my birth and asked if he could pray for me. Though my father was a Muslim, he accepted. Malaam blessed me and asked God to make me a worker for Him.

Ten years later, during the second terrible famine, our people went to a large city to find food. There, two of my uncles met a missionary, who explained to them the way of Jesus Christ. They trusted in Jesus that day.

From a young age, I suffered from terrible nightmares. My family thought these were caused by evil spirits; nothing could be done to alleviate these terrors. On one occasion, I was taken to a traditional healer, who explained what must be done. My parents were away at the time, but when my mother returned, she flatly refused such a treatment. She then prayed a prayer I will never forget, "Jesus, I trust You. You have saved me and my son. He is Yours. If You choose to, You can cure him." She then took me to another town to see my father, who was now a believer. While there, a SIM missionary talked with me about Jesus, and asked if I wanted to follow Him. I trusted Christ that day. God removed evil spirits from me, and the nightmares stopped. My heart was filled with joy, and I began to follow Jesus.

I learned to read and write and loved studying. Some years later, a pastor observed my passion for learning and encouraged me to go to Bible school. This was God's leading, and I studied four years at a Fulani Bible school in the country of Bénin.

God has called me to reach Fulani who have never heard the *habaru beldum* (sweet news). This dominates all my thoughts. I travel across Niger to preach to Fulani and encourage believers, finding great joy in working for the Lord. My life is a testimony to how God is answering Malaam's prayer for me at my birth. ❏