

# Letters from the East

Spring 2012

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SIL Mainland Southeast Asia

*I pray that your love will keep on growing more and more, together with true knowledge and perfect judgment, so that you will be able to choose what is best. Then you will be free from all impurity and blame on the Day of Christ. Philippians 1:9 TEV*

## Change in the wind

Because of a current controversy regarding how *Son of God* and *Father* are being translated in Muslim contexts, change is definitely in the wind. We are not sure what direction this will take but we will keep you informed. Our careers may shift and we'd like your prayers over the next months as we follow the Lord. We ask for your prayers because it helped to have them and your encouragement when we went from living in the US to living and serving in Papua New Guinea in 1985. Your support and trust kept us after finishing in PNG while Roman attended seminary in Springfield, Missouri in 2000. Then you supported us as translation consulting became the focus of our ministry in 2003. Your backing while we spent a year in Darwin, Australia strengthened us. In 2004 we relocated to Chiang Mai, Thailand to continue serving as translation consultants and trainers. Whatever happens, it will be good, and we trust God will lead us.

## Consulting with a resilient hero

March 9 was the final morning of this checking trip. The advisor and her new team of two young men had worked hard all week. I'd asked a lot of test questions, explained meanings and we'd made adjustments to their work for accuracy, clarity and naturalness. This was normal for a first check with a team. But this team was different. The translator was herself a child refugee from East Germany during World War II. As an adult she followed the Lord to Southeast Asia in the early 1970's. She was immersed in learning the minority language and culture when she found herself in the middle of another war and forced to evacuate. After completing a New Testament translation with a national partner in the Philippines, she returned to the same Southeast Asian country to resume language work in a dialect of her original 1970's assignment. That effort went on for several painful years as the man working with her became increasingly unstable. Finally a few years ago he brought all their work to a halt and she had to begin a third time. So, I enjoyed getting to know her as I checked this new team's first translated portion. During the devotions that morning I asked if each would share a bit from the Gospel of Mark that touched them as we checked. I started, saying they had inspired me in their comment: "Salt is good because it's salty. Likewise believers are good because they believe." The translator who has a one-year-old chose: "Whoever receives a child receives Father God too, at the same time." The other translator said he was first thinking of the salt also, like Ma JeJustin (*Grandmother of Justin* = me). So he thought of another. "The ghost story was like Jesus testing the disciples. When he walked on the water it scare them like he was a ghost, but I liked when Jesus said 'Don't be afraid. I am with you. Make your livers strong; have courage'. In temptation God opens a way so we can get out. I already knew 1 Corinthians 10:30 says that when we have temptation we have a way out, but this is more vivid as it shows how not to be afraid." The language helper man was speechless so I told him to think about Mark 10:45b. The girl language helper said "God can do anything. The father of the boy with convulsions said, 'if you can do it' and Jesus said 'God can do anything' in chapter 9. The advisor said "Jesus just says a word and the demons can't do anything any more!"

## Praise & prayer

- ❖ Last week one of the national translators I was working with hosted Roman and I for lunch in his village home. It was peaceful to get out of the noisy city out among the rice paddies. Pray for his village to become receptive to hearing the Gospel. His is the only Christian home there.
- ❖ Roman and I each checked Scripture portions for two groups in two countries in March. Please pray that these Scriptures are heard, heeded, and strengthen their local churches.
- ❖ I provided career guidance for a fine colleague. Please pray for her future ministry
- ❖ Thank you for your partnership in Bible translation with us. We pray for God's blessings for you.



With these diligent translators and a few others I checked 9 epistles in March.

## Upcoming Plans

**April:** Happy Easter to you! This year our SIL MSEA Group has a Personal & Professional Development conference. I am looking forward to spending Good Friday and Easter in worship with colleagues and in participating in the professional development. Roman, as translation coordinator, is involved in leading three sessions. They are:

- *Translator Update* Share insights, successes and questions with other members serving in translation projects. Information sharing from translation conferences.
- *Adaptations (Translation)* Problems and benefits of meeting the translation needs of a community through adapting translations done in related languages. Discussing why, when and how to design a project around a translation adaptation.
- *Translation Consultant Update* The evolving world of translation consulting! Direction for the future for Translation Consultants in MSEAG. Information sharing from the recent Translation Consultant seminar in Bangkok. Training into the future.

I am preparing for checking three epistles with a team in late April.

**May:** We hope to attend some open meetings at the SIL International meets in Chiang Mai.

Roman is set to check 2 Corinthians and Philippians in Mae Sai.

We have tickets for a two month trip to the US and hope to see you.

**July:** We return to Chiang Mai and renew our visas.

**August:** We consult at the Highlands Initiative gathering.

**September:** Consultant checking.

**October - February:** Teaching translation at Payap & dissertation.

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