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Taylor Tidings

Matt & Christy Taylor
Kaitlyn, Nathan, Justin and Julianne

partners in Bible translation
with the Nukna people
of Papua New Guinea

A Fruitful Village Stay

Thank you to all of you who prayed for us or encouraged us by emails throughout our time in the village. We were in Hamelengan for seven weeks, which is our longest village stay so far. It is amazing how much easier it is to be out in the village with our new house and office!

There were certainly some difficult times, such as dealing with water (or rather, the lack thereof!) for our first few weeks. And we had a few bouts of sickness which made it hard, especially on us parents.

However, we were very encouraged by all that we were able to accomplish during our stay. One of our goals was to complete the village check of Genesis 12-22. This involves reading the translation verse by verse and then asking various questions of the Nukna listeners to test for clarity and understandability. The actual testing was completed over the course of three different days. For the last day of checking, the church leaders decided to make it a part of the morning worship service. "After all," they told us, "doing the village check is just like studying God's Word." So after a time of worship and prayer, we finished up the last two chapters in place of the usual sermon.

"God Has Heard Our Cries!"

It was so exciting to be reading a passage, and hear the people laughing at the right spots, or smiling as we or one of the village men read. We would ask them, "Why are you all smiling?" And they would answer, "Because it just sounds so good. We've heard this story before in Tok Pisin (the trade language), but we've never heard it like this before!"

As we were checking Genesis chapter 21 - which tells the story of Hagar and Ishmael dying of thirst in the desert, and God hearing their cries and revealing a well of water to save them - a large downpour with thunder and lightning hit the village, the first heavy rain in almost three weeks. One of the village leaders said to me, "It's been so dry lately, and we've been very worried that the food growing in our gardens would dry up and die. But just like God heard Hagar's cries for water, He has heard our cries for water and sent this rain." Wow, great timing, God!

Life in the Village

While we did accomplish a lot while we were in the village, we also had time for some fun things. During our village stay we first celebrated Matt's birthday, and then Justin turned 4 on October 25th. The local primary school celebrated PNG Independence

(continued...)



Photos from the top:
1) l-r: Musoki, Simendi & Yana
2) Kaitlyn at the Kerame River
3) Nukna schoolchildren
dressed up for celebration
4) Justin on his 4th birthday

Day (September 16) with festivities, and in October when the local villages gathered to have their first annual "thanksgiving" celebration as a fundraiser for the school, it was a real treat to see the traditional costumes and dancing that took place.

Since it was dry season, there were many beautiful sunny days, allowing us to do more outdoor activities than in the rainy season, such as hiking through the jungle to play in some of the local rivers. Christy enjoyed working with the women on a Nukna Picture Dictionary and accompanying a Nukna woman to her garden to help harvest corn.



28 new Nukna preschool books

Books, Books and More Books

We arrived back in Ukarumpa on October 27th and dove right into literacy work. Three Nukna men (Simendi, Musoki and Yana) came with us to help prepare materials in the Nukna language for the Elementary Prep school (basically a preschool taught in Nukna) which will be starting up next year. Musoki will be the teacher for this new school and we were excited to help him make materials to use in the new school.

Together we made 28 different books, some about themes (hunting, animals, weather, etc.), some for teaching letters of the Nukna alphabet, and also some simple stories.

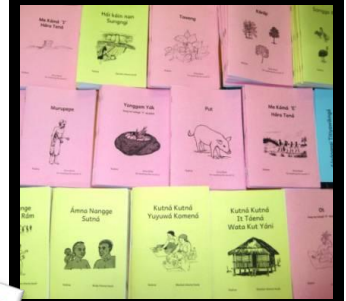
Consultant Check

One of the final steps in translation is the Consultant Check. After a portion of Scripture is drafted, village checked, revised and a back translation completed, it's time to take it to a translation consultant/exegete. Matt, Simendi, Musoki and Yana spent 4 days working with Alan Brown, a fellow SIL translator, checking over the Genesis passage. He was able to draw from his years of translation experience to suggest improvements and guide the team through tricky passages. Overall, he was pleased with the work that has been done and gave his final stamp of approval for Genesis 12-22 in the Nukna language. We are now free to print and distribute the first Bible portion

ever translated into Nukna.
Praise be to God!



Consultant check of Genesis 12-22



Giving

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Contact Us

Matt and Christy Taylor
SIL Box 288
Ukarumpa EHP 444
Papua New Guinea

m-c.taylor@sil.org.pg
matt_taylor@sil.org
www.taylormissions.com

Photos from the top:
1) Julianne playing with village kids; 2) Nathan being silly; 3) Christy & Musoki making books; 4) View from our village house; 5) Some of the new literacy books; 6) Kaitlyn with our guinea pig, Daisy