



Nystrom Prayer Update

Ukarumpa, PNG

August 29, 2007

Today, it's Twenty Years for us in PNG

Twenty years ago today, on August 29, 1987, Bonnie and I and Brianna arrived in PNG, greeted by a blast of heat and humidity at Jackson's Airport in Port Moresby.

IN 1987:

- * Ronald Reagan was the US President and The Soviet Union still existed. In June that year, Reagan told Gorbachev to "tear down that wall." Two years later it came down.
- * Most people in the US had never used a computer, and almost none of us had ever heard of email.
- * Most of us had heard of the Internet, Bill & Hillary Clinton, Al Gore, or Al Qaeda.
- * Using up-to-date technology meant using a fax machine and a VCR.
- * DVDs were still a decade away.
- * Our daughter Brianna couldn't walk or talk yet.

So it's been a long time and we thank all of you have prayed, given, and helped in a thousand other ways to keep us here.

We are blessed to not just be involved in the Arop translation project, and not just in the Aitape West project either, but contributing to the whole Bible Translation effort here in PNG and around the world.

So what am I doing today on our 20th anniversary in PNG?

Today I'm writing this, planning a data backup system for our translators who work in 185+ languages so they can't lose their work even if their laptop is stolen, helping a friend figure out how to put cross-references in his translation, corresponding with colleagues in Africa, Asia, and other places about enhancing our translation software to make it easier for teams of people to work together on their translation projects even if they can't be in the same place at the same time, transferring some chapters of Acts from my computer to Emil's and vice versa, arranging for sending out our old (now repaired) generator to Arop on one of our planes, and handling various other minor things.

At 5:15 I plan to play Frisbee golf with a friend to get some exercise.

It's a full day and I am blessed to be able to be involved in all these things.

- **Praise the Lord that I finished checking Acts** in the Arop language on Monday. Next I'll be working on the 'back translation' that our consultants will use to check it some more.
- **Praise the Lord that Emil and Peter** are making good progress in the Greek Course here at Ukarumpa, taught by Ben Pehrson.
- **Pray that I will prepare well** for the "Subversion" translation data backup workshop I'm leading on Sept 18-19. This process is new to us here in PNG, so there are lots of decisions to be made as to how we will do it.



The Young and The Restless. Literally. That's Bonnie and I at age 26, and Brianna at age 10 months. Nobody's sleeping, but we're having a good time on our first trans-Pacific flight on the way to PNG via Alaska, Korea and the Philippines. This was our first lesson in long-distance travel: *The cheapest distance between two points is almost never a straight line.*

“THINKING LIKE TRANSLATORS”

OR

“WHAT THEY DIDN’T TEACH YOU IN SUNDAY SCHOOL, COLLEGE OR SEMINARY”

During our translation workshop in July, I was impressed again at how well the translators are progressing in **thinking like translators**.

While we were discussing Luke 19, Jack Boipe from the Barupu language had a problem with verse 5. Here it is in the NIV:

⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.

Jack asked, “**When did Jesus start talking to Zacchaeus?**” I said, “What do you mean?” “I mean, I have to translate it two different ways, depending on whether Jesus started talking *immediately* when he reached the spot, or whether a little time passed first.”

Wow. Good question. Hmm. You won’t find that in a commentary!

We decided that, since the text doesn’t say some time passed, Jack would translate it with Jesus starting to talk immediately.

Jack’s language is one of four in what we call Group One. When we got to Luke 19:41-44 where Jesus cries over Jerusalem and speaks to it, one of the Group One translators asked, “**Is Jerusalem male or female?**”

My intelligent reply: “What are you talking about?”

He explained, “In our language, it has to be one or the other, because when you talk to somebody, **our verb for talk has one ending on it if you’re talking to a female and a different one if you’re talking to a male**. We have to choose, so which is it?”

Never wanting to miss an opportunity to teach people to fish rather than giving them a fish, and being totally without a clue, I said, “Oh. Well, what do you guys think?” This is not passing the buck or copping out, this is called “**facilitation**.”

One of them suggested, “We should probably treat her as female, because the context talks about her children in v. 44. That sounds more like a woman than a man.”

“OK, If that makes sense in your language, go for it.”

They did. Translation is so much fun when the translators are thinking like translators—finding the problems, evaluating the possibilities, and choosing the best available solution.

Thanks for helping us help these guys make the Bible make sense in their languages!

Your partner in this adventure for 20 years now,

John Nystrom (for Bonnie and all of us)

STAYING CONNECTED

Our web site: www.thenystroms.org.

Mailing Addresses

US: 12352 Imperial Dr
Seminole FL 33772
PNG: SIL Box 365
Ukarumpa EHP 444
Papua New Guinea

Contributions

Checks go to the Wycliffe address at right, with a note saying it’s for John & Bonnie Nystrom in PNG.

Email:

John_Nystrom@sil.org
Bonnie_Nystrom@sil.org
Eric@TheNystroms.org
Brianna@TheNystroms.org



Partners in Bible Translation

Wycliffe Bible Translators
PO Box 628200
Orlando FL 32862-8200
1-800-WYCLIFFE
www.wycliffe.org