



Nystrom Prayer Update

Upland, Indiana

December 10, 2008

It's just water, unless you don't have any

It's just water. We take it for granted. We drink in it, cook with it, bathe in it, wash our dishes and clothes in it, and flush the toilet with it. We always just assume it's there, it's clean, and we can use as much as we want.

Right now in Arop there's a severe water shortage. All drinkable water in Arop comes directly from rain and is stored in tanks. Our translation center is also a water project for the village. It has more tanks than anywhere else in the village, and they are open to the public.

Emil wrote to me earlier this week: "Please pray with us because we are very short of water in Arop. All the tanks in Arop have no water now and everybody is coming to get water here at SIL Arop (the translation center). I find it hard to stop them because there's no water in any of the tanks in the village. I am concerned because, our next translation workshop is in January and we could be short on water. **Please pray with us that rain will come and the tanks will have water.**"

The translators depend on having clean water when they come for workshops. If we don't have enough clean water, the translators can't stay. Please do pray.

- **Pray for rain in Arop!**
- **Pray for me** as I work on 1) checking the last changes to Luke in the four Coastal Languages, 2) checking the first chapters of Acts in the Arop language, and 3) testing the new translation software and helping make it work for multi-language translation projects.
- **Pray for Bonnie** as she prepares to lead strategy discussions in PNG in March.
- **Pray for Eric and Brianna** as they continue their studies at Taylor University.
- **Praise the Lord** that Emil was able to mail a CD with the translation changes on it. Pray it arrives soon in Ukarumpa and can be sent to me immediately.



This is not really what our water tanks look like these days. There are six of them now, all holding over 2500 gallons each, and there's a roof over them now.

You'd think I'd have a better, more up-to-date picture, but who takes pictures of water tanks? It's just water, until you don't have any. Then it's pretty important stuff.

PART OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN AROP

If we translate very literally into English from our translation, we get what's called a Back Translation, which we often use in checking translations. If it's done well, we can still read it in English while getting a 'taste' of the language itself.

Below is an English Back Translation from Arop of part of the Christmas story. I decided not to add more words than are absolutely necessary to make it easier to read in English. The same things that sound strange to us are the very things that make this translation sound so good in Arop, that make it "cry good" as the Arops say. It's what makes a normally-noisy village church absolutely silent. It's what makes people say, "Yes! This is *my* language and it's so clear!" The story is familiar, so you can probably figure out what most of the Arop expressions mean.

Luke 2:1-7 Back Translation from Arop

¹ That time Sisar Ogastus made a law that all women men must give their names. ² This very first time that government took the names of women men. They did this work time Kwirinius was man that goes before government of provins Siria. ³ So all those people went to their base place so the government could take their names ⁴ That Josep, blood of king Devit. So he left town Nasaret of distrik Galili its name Betlehem, it's in distrik Judia. ⁵ Josep both that spouse female Maria of his went for government to

take the names of both of them. Because this Maria woman they said would call (i.e. marry) Josep. And this time Mary (had) womb. ⁶ Time both were in that Betlehem, that Maria her hips affected her that she would bear child. ⁷ And she bore child male her first blood. She wrapped him cloth things and put him down lying inside box that cows eat food.

Reading this, we can get an appreciation of what it is like to read something that is almost our language, but not quite. This is similar to what it would be like for speakers of Malol or Sissano or Serra to try to read the Arop translation. It's close, but close enough is not good enough. You get so distracted by the weird way things are worded that you miss the meaning. The strangeness of the language keeps you from hearing the message.

Thank you for helping us remove that barrier for the people who speak Arop, Malol, Serra, Sissano, Goiniri, Wolwale, Romei-Barera, Pou, Ramo, Sumo, and Barupu. What better Christmas gift could we give them?

May we all rejoice this Christmas as we hear, clearly in our own language, the story of God's sending his Word in human form.

Your partner in making the Bible 'cry good',

John Nystrom (for Bonnie and all of us)

STAYING CONNECTED

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Contributions

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

Contact us if you would like us to come to see you and/or to share about Bible translation with your church or group while we're "home."



Partners in Bible Translation

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