



The Ottosens Reaching the Kamea of Papua New Guinea

June 2024

Jason was invited to speak at an annual Easter Meeting in neighboring Morobe Province. Thirty church members joined Jason to form a caravan traveling by foot for the first day and then by road the remaining distance to the Asiki Station. Upon arrival they found a large "tent" which was a 70 meter long bamboo structure covered by an assortment of colored tarps. More than 500 people gathered daily to hear the word of God and 50 souls called on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

This meeting was a memorable time for a multitude of reasons: the warm welcome by the hosting church, seeing many old friends along with making hundreds of new ones, excitement of people responding en masse to the preaching, hours of fellowship with other ministers, spiritual conversations with Christians from diverse locales, tasty food, all coupled with torrential bouts of rain. Another church graciously brought their sound system that carried the good news across the valley. A generator was used to power lights hung from the bamboo framework through the entire tent.

The opening services were met with heavy rain that lasted for hours. Jason's jaw dropped open as rain began flowing inside the tent through one of the tube lights suspended near the pulpit, projector screen and men leading the music. He expected a sudden explosion or mild electrocution for all those nearby. One of the Pastors saw the concern on his face and assured him that the same thing happened during an earlier meeting without mishap and nothing should go wrong this time.

After everyone returned safely from Asiki, the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) held a two week long meeting in our village and many people fell for the false gospel presented. Jason held two public debates with them countering their erroneous claim that one could not be saved by God's grace alone but must follow the law in addition to getting baptized by their church. We are burdened by those that have been misled into following the broad way that leads to destruction.

Jason took a small group of men to visit and encourage a Christian family that lives two hours away. Their village holds a small market once a week and Jason preached to the crowd. There they heard the SDA began another large meeting four

hours further away in Wemauwa village. Reportedly many from our village intended to get baptized there. This deeply disturbed our men and they decided to hike to Wemauwa and preach the truth. They were unwittingly stepping into a foreboding situation.

Wemauwa had been visited in the past without much spiritual response. The community boasts of having a large Catholic ran school. For the past year and a half the SDA and Catholics have been clashing to expand their territory. Battle-lines had been drawn as those who joined the SDA would no longer be allowed to attend school. This meeting was meant to assert dominance over the Catholics in the area.

Despite the palpable tension the gospel was proclaimed as planned. As a result, four adult men claimed Jesus as their personal saviour. In a short time people asked us to build a church in Wemauwa. We had no less than four families offer us free property around the village. It was a nearly miraculous event considering the surrounding circumstances and the social pressure these men would feel from their family on either side of the religious quarrel. It was a faith-growing experience for the Christian men that went with Jason. He will return in two weeks to see if any of those offers are viable. Pray with us as we seek the Lord's will about a new church plant in this village.

Illness has repeatedly struck our community with five souls perishing in two weeks time. Pastor Jack spent three weeks at a distant health clinic to see that his one year old daughter recovered from the respiratory flu and fever. She has bounced back, but he now went back to his home village to care for his elderly mother. We pray for her health and his safe return.

Our family has endured bouts of illness that has left our children with ongoing headaches and stomach pain. Cherith is regaining her strength and Jason has recovered except for partial deafness in one ear. We appreciate your prayers!

This week we will begin a new literacy class as well as the Bible school. The new classroom exterior is finished but desks and decorating the interior await completion. Enrollment is full and we will keep you posted on the progress.

In His Service,

Jason, Cherith, Grace, Melody, Hannah, and Josiah Ottosen

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