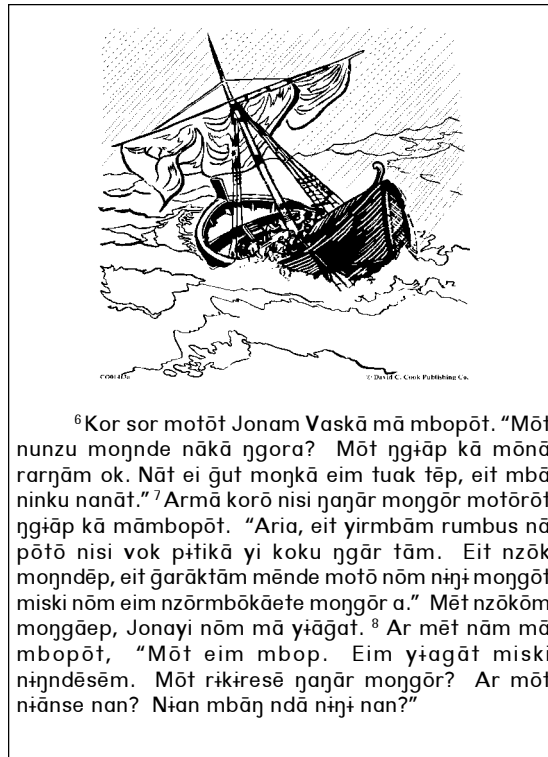


check the section carefully against the Hebrew to make sure that the meaning was expressed accurately and that nothing was left out. On the basis of that check, we met with the participants and went over the section verse by verse to make the needed corrections. Then a copy of the section was printed out so that spelling and grammar could be verified. It was a lengthy process but one which yielded some good translations. Of course, this being a first attempt, we know that there will need to be further edits. But we were all very happy both with the enthusiasm and commitment of the participants and with the quality of the work that they did.

Each participant took home a printed copy of Jonah complete with illustrations, a preface, and Bible study questions covering each chapter. In addition, each group was given a set of questions that they can use to check the translation in their villages. Over the next few weeks they are to read Jonah to as many people as possible and use the checking questions to verify that the meaning is being communicated clearly and naturally. If they find any corrections that need to be made, they are to bring those to us and we will then print a final batch of copies for distribution in the villages.

Three other Lower Ramu language groups were not able or ready to attend this workshop. In October we will be repeating the Jonah workshop for the Marangis, Kayan, and Awar language groups. When that workshop is completed, every Lower Ramu group will have started the process of translating God's Word into their language.

We want to express our thanks to all who faithfully prayed for this workshop. God's hand and Spirit were evident in the cooperation, commitment, and dedication displayed by the participants and in the high quality of work that they completed.



<sup>6</sup>Kor sor motōt Jonam Vaskā mā mbopōt. "Mōt nunzu moṅde nākā ḡgora? Mōt ḡḡiāp kā mōnā rarḡām ok. Nāt ei ḡut moṅkā eim tuak tēp, eit mbā ninku nanāt." <sup>7</sup>Armā korō nisi ḡaṅār moṅḡōr motōrōt ḡḡiāp kā māmbopōt. "Aria, eit yimbām rumbus nā pōtō nisi vok p̄tikā yi koku ḡḡār tām. Eit nzōk moṅḡdēp, eit ḡarāktām mēnde motō nōm niḡi moṅḡōt miski nōm eim nzōrmbōkāete moṅḡōr a." Mēt nzōkōm moṅḡāep, Jonayi nōm mā ḡiāḡat. <sup>8</sup>Ar mēt nām mā mbopōt, "Mōt eim mbop. Eim ḡiāḡat miski niḡiḡndēsēm. Mōt rikiresē ḡaṅār moṅḡōr? Ar mōt niānse nan? Nian mbāḡ ndā niḡi nan?"

Above is a page from the translation of Jonah in the Bosmun Language

### Kyle and Kathy Harris Pioneer Bible Translators

PO Box 203  
Moline, IL 61266-0203  
(309) 762-7516  
email: [kandkharris@flyingfox.org](mailto:kandkharris@flyingfox.org)  
Web: [www.flyingfox.org](http://www.flyingfox.org)



Pioneer Bible Translators is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.



# Ramu Ramblings

Kyle and Kathy Harris  
Pioneer Bible Translators

*Serving the people of the Lower Ramu river valley  
of Papua New Guinea*



Summer 2003

Vol. 17 No. 2

## Three Groups Hear God's Word in Their Languages for the First Time

What a thrill it was to hold in our hands the first scripture ever produced in the Bosmun language. After two weeks of hard work, three men from the Bosmun language group had just completed their translation of the book of Jonah. During the two weeks of the Jonah workshop, the participants from Bosmun and two other language groups had drafted, revised, checked and further revised the book. And now we were looking at the result – a small portion of God's Word in another language. Their pride was obvious as the men passed the copy around and read out loud from the text.

And that was just the beginning. The next day the translators from the Akuhum language group finished their translation of Jonah. They were joined a couple days later by the people from the Abu language group. By the end of the two-week workshop three people groups were able to hear for the first time the Word of God in their own languages.

This was the first translation workshop held among the languages of the Lower Ramu. It was hosted in Akurai by Mark and Diane Shreve and the people of the Abu language group. Originally four groups were supposed to attend but due to a death in their village, the Kayan contingent was not able to make it. As the workshop progressed we were somewhat thankful for the smaller number. It certainly made the workload more manageable.

During the first week of the workshop, the participants alternated between listening to lectures on translation principles and applying those principles as they worked on their translations. The importance of accuracy, clarity, and naturalness in the translation was a major emphasis. Each participant was given a translation guide for Jonah that we had developed in Melanesian Pidgin. This covered exegetical issues and gave suggestions for translating various difficult passages.

By the second week, all three groups were heavily into translation. Each group would translate a chapter or a portion and produce a back translation of that section in Melanesian Pidgin. Then we would



Adam, Max, and Clive, the Bosmun translation team, work on their translation of Jonah.

## A Day in the Life of a Missionary

It was a beautiful cool morning and I was laying in bed at 6am, trying to decide whether or not to try to get a bit more sleep. Suddenly there was a loud knock on the door and one of the village ladies hollered in that during the night our boat had cap-sized and sank. Hmmm. Maybe I should get up.

I jumped up, threw on some work clothes and headed off for the river. To get there this time of year requires a lengthy hike through knee deep muck and water. Between that and missing my morning coffee, I was in wonderful humor by the time I got to the landing.

When I arrived, the boat was floating upright and a bunch of guys were bailing frantically with buckets and pots. The boat was down at the stern but was generally looking fairly good. Apparently the river had dropped by a couple of feet in the night. The bow of the boat had gotten up on the shore and the stern canted back into the water. The drain plugs were out so that if it rained the boat wouldn't fill up with water. But raising the bow up like that caused the water to rush in through the drain holes. As the boat filled with water it listed way over to the point that when the guys discovered it in the morning it was resting on the bottom with one side completely under.

We got it bailed out but it was still way down at the stern so it was obvious that the bilge was full too. So back through the muck and water I went to get some tools and the bilge pump. We set up the pump and got it going and in a couple of hours the boat was dry.

Now we were ready to start the engine. Outboard engines are not designed to be submerged. But it was obvious looking at it that most of the engine had remained above water. There was a bit of water in the lower air intakes but I was hoping that nothing had gotten into the cylinders.

We tried to crank it over but after two hours of running the bilge pump, the battery figured that it had done enough for the day. So once more it was back through the muck and water to get the spare battery.

We tried to start the engine again but now the starter wouldn't turn over at all. It seemed like there was no power getting to the starter. I traced the problem to the starter switch assembly. Disassembling the controls showed a loose wire at the starter switch (where the key goes). This had nothing to do with the sinking. It apparently just decided that with everything else was going down the tubes it might as well join the party. In a couple of minutes we had fixed the loose wire and were ready to try again. Now the motor turned over, sort of, but it was acting weird and there was no way it would start.

"Well maybe there really is water in the cylinders and it is keeping the pistons from compressing." I pulled the bottom spark plugs and turned the engine over and water gushed out. OK. Got the water out, sprayed WD40 in the cylinders and tried it again. Finally we got it started and ran up and down the river a bit to charge the battery.

I was tired so we went to bed early that night. But after we had laid there a few minutes Kathy said, "There is something in the house." "Well, Duh," I thought to myself. There are rats, geckoes, lizards, probably a snake or two and about 50,000 mosquitoes in the house. And it sounds like a some kind of animal is walking around on the roof.

"No." she said, "Something is flying around in the house." Then I heard it too - a bat. I told her "Great, maybe it will eat some of these mosquitoes. Now go to sleep." For some reason she didn't share my perspective. She burrowed under the sheet and told me to get out of the mosquito net and kill it before it bit someone. A biting bat seemed to me to be a good reason NOT to get out of the mosquito net

but I could see that she wasn't going to appreciate that bit of logic either.

Obviously there would be no sleep until the winged vermin was disposed of. So I got up, turned on every light in the house, grabbed a rake, and went forth to battle the forces of darkness (well, ok, force of darkness - and not a very big force at that. Maybe more like an influence of darkness).

I quickly discovered how difficult it can be to hit a radar equipped flying mouse with a rake while not destroying the house in the process. The bat was zipping back and forth the length of the house and seldom found itself in the same room with rake boy. I would hear it in the bedroom so I would charge in there but by that time it would be on the veranda. And so on, and so on, and so on, and so on. My humor, which had improved a bit when the boat finally started, began a long trek south.

Every now and then, the bat would fly by emitting little bat laughs while I flailed away with the rake. I was beginning to think that maybe I could just go stay with friends for the night when I heard it again on the veranda. I rushed out there in time to see it swooping around the light eating bugs and mosquitoes. Nice bat. And as a reward for this exemplary behavior I smacked it with the rake as it went by. It hit the wall and dropped onto the floor. I scooped it up and took it in to show Kathy. For some reason she was not interested in seeing it. Instead she hid under the sheet and expressed her rather heated preference that I just take it out and throw it away.

Finally it was back to bed but by that time sleep was out of the question. So I laid there listening to the sounds of the jungle and the footsteps of the animal walking around on the roof and basked in the glow of my victories over machine and beast.

