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"See You Soon" Abraham told Sally
by Sally Lam-Phoon in BLESSED, the 2013 Morning Devotional book for women
Text: 1 Thess 4:16
"Abraham was seated on a front-row pew in the church when my daughter introduced us. As soon as I spoke to him, he said, 'I recognize your voice—you are Sally Phoon, the woman from the radio program Spirit-Filled Moments.'

"Years before, a debilitating nerve disorder had left Abraham blind, so he always sat in front where he could hear best. A year before he had listened to my radio program over the Hope Channel in Singapore. On it I shared short devotional thoughts and through this program he had become acquainted with our church and began attending.

"Despite his blindness, Abraham lived a full life. He offered to take me out for lunch at a very special hotel that served Penang food (Penang food is super-delicious!), but we were leaving Singapore, so we promised to do that the next time we visited. A few months later my daughter sent me the sad news that Abraham had died and was finally resting in Jesus.

"The 2010 Christmas season will remain etched in my memory for as long as I shall live. Nine days before Christmas, my mother was snatch away from us, losing her battle to cancer. It was not an easy thing to discuss the subject of death as we watched her dying. Tears would come as we anticipated a separation, but we thanked God for the resurrection morning; thanked God for the hope we have in Christ; thanked God for the peace that passes all understanding as we go through these unavoidable times when we have to say good-bye.

"I hate saying good-bye. To those who believed in Christ, I would rather say, 'See you soon!.' It won't be long until the last trumpet call will sound, and those who are asleep in Jesus will rise. What a morning that will be!

"As the graves open, and those who are dead in Christ rise to meet Him, I will be looking for my parents, for Abraham, and for many dear friends who have gone before, resting in Jesus. I will look for Abraham and say, 'Come, I'm collecting my rain check. Let's feast at the banqueting table, Abraham.

"A little heart is longing for that day. Yes, come quickly, Lord Jesus!"

[Sally Lam-Phoon serves the Northern Asia-Pacific Division as children's, family, and women's ministries director as well as coordinator for a unique leadership program. Her passion is to help people unleash their potential as they seek to live out God's purpose. Married for 40 years to Chek-Yat, a gospel minister, she has two married daughters and one granddaughter.]
land near them in the rice field. Many, so many, of the people were pleading with me to baptize them in the river that was flowing nearby. I assured them that it was too late for that, but if they would give their hearts to Jesus, He would accept them as they were, without baptism. and we would meet again when Jesus comes. I had a prayer for them, loaded as many of them as I could take and took off for my last flight out.

Many of them later walked for days out of the area, raised up a church near the Thai border, and spread the Word to many that we expect in the Kingdom of heaven. As our group in Chaing Kong, we started a church worship there among the trees on a beautiful piece of land I purchased for $250.00.

"Not long after that, the Union asked us to transfer to the Sarawak Mission on the island of Borneo and leave the work in Chaing Kong under the direction of Pastor Pangan and Pastor Mun. My brother Lee and his family decided is was time to go home to the U. S., so in great sadness we departed and went our separate ways to take up work where the Lord was calling us. It was so hard to leave our precious Lao and Thai people. We were happy, though, to have Pastors Pangan and Mun to carry on the Lord's work there to bring the message of salvation to this northern Thai community.

"In Borneo, I was privileged to serve as president of the Sarawak Mission on the northern coast. We worked there for 12 years during which time I became known as the Jungle Pilot. We made little air strips near the villages out in the jungles. We were able to raise up churches wherever we had air strips and in the nearby villages. We were able to help many people by bringing them to the hospital in Kuching as well as to spread the good news of Jesus. We returned to the U. S. in 1974. We had many more adventures after that but our time in what is now the Southern Asia-Pacific Division will always hold a place in our hearts."

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III. Burma Vignettes-- Early Missionaries # 62

Mervin Myat Kyaw <mervinmk@yahoo.com.au> and his wife Nan are Karen Adventists who worked many years in Burma and Thailand and now live and work in Australia. He has written a manuscript covering Adventism in Burma from its very beginning to the present and of his work in Thailand.

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#62. Joseph C. Johannes (Doctor)

Dr. J. C. Johannes arrived in Myanmar at the end of the Second World War. It was the time of rebuilding the work in Myanmar. He was assigned by Mission President M. O. Manley to find a location for a hospital in Yangon. A building on Signal Pagoda Road was found and an appeal was made to the General Conference for an appropriation to purchase it. It was authorised from the thirteenth Sabbath overflow offering of the fourth quarter of 1947, December 18. It was officially opened in 1947 and Prime Minister U Nu very kindly attended the opening ceremony of the hospital.

Dr. Johannes carried on alone when two or three doctors were needed to care for the patronage. From the founding of the institution, Mrs. Johannes acted as the superintendent of nurses. Dr. & Mrs. Johannes were later released to answer a call for their services in India.

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IV. Desire of Ages in Thai Project

Kirk & Dede Van Buren <kirkdeme@hotmail.com> <dede@jesus4asia.org>

I just finished watching a powerful, yet disturbing, video on Vimeo.com.
The video is titled: IWTC 06 Spirit of Prophecy. It's a 28 minute program featuring the challenges we face in publishing Ellen White books in Thailand. Currently, there are NO Steps to Christ and NO Desire of Ages found in the Thai language at the ABC in Thailand. Jon Wood interviewed Pastor Gary Krause, Adventist Mission Director at the G.C., and Pastor Sirachet, Spirit of Prophecy Director at the T.A.M., at the Thailand Adventist Mission Office in Bangkok. Pastor Krause searched and found that there was no Desire of Ages or Steps to Christ available. The Desire of Ages has been out of print for more than 15 years.

Why is this? Why is there a lack of Adventist material in Bangkok, a city of more than twelve million and a nation of 65 million? To name a few reasons: Lack of workers, lack of funding, and the closing of the printing press, unfortunately, there are just no tools or funding to publish material.

Pastor Krause stated that "Over 90% of all Christian giving goes to minister to the 8% who speak English." Also, "About twenty times more money goes to the Local Church Budget than foreign missions programs." Per a quote in the video, "The North American Adventist gives, on average, $21/year to foreign missions (which is about the cost of a bag of dog food)."
The beginning of the video shows Jon interviewing Pastor Doug Venn, Church Planting Coordinator, Hope for Bangkok, at the Voice of Prophecy Office, an office that contains sixty year-old Bible lessons, which are black and white, unreadable, and covered with ink blobs. The lessons are copies of copies. It would cost $3-5,000 to print new material. Where is the budget? Sad to say, there isn't one. Here in the United States, we have lots of colorful tracts available, which we can use to clearly communicate truth.

Across the seas, they don't have this.

Pastor Sirachet was asked the question, "What do you believe is the most important Ellen White book to translate and print in the Thai language? The pastor responded with, "Desire of Ages". As a former Buddhist, Pastor Sirachet, himself, was drawn to Jesus through this book. Gaining an understanding of who Jesus is, and the hope He gives, is the most effective way to draw the people to Him.

Good News...On August 20, 2013, the Thailand Adventist Mission Officers Committee met and approved the following action:

'VOTED. Fund Request - Desire of Ages in Thai'

A project has been approved to print "Desire of Ages" in the Thai language, however, the Thailand Adventist Mission does not have the budget to print this book. So, they voted that all expenses for this book will be funded through Jesus for Asia, Inc. This is an exciting project for us and also an important one. We will begin raising funds for the Desire of Ages to be printed in Thai.

V. The Klimes Establish Scholarship at Walla Walla

--from WWU's WESTWIND, annual report 2013

"Rudolf Kline's favorite greeting, 'Blessings on us,' reflects the Klimes' gratefulness for the opportunities that the couple has had. Rudolf and Anna, both teachers, met while attending Walla Walla University and were married in 1954. Both dedicated to education, they would later earn multiple post-graduate degrees. Rudy and Anna served as missionaries in the Far East for 26 years. After their service, they taught at the Andrews University School of Graduate Studies. In 1986 they returned to Korea and established the Sahmyook University School of Lifelong Learning. In recent years, now living in the United States, they have periodically taught in Ukraine. Rudy is the founder and president of LearnWell Recourses, specializing in health and drug prevention and development assistance for Ukraine. The Rudolf and Anna Klimes LearnWell Physical Education Endowment provides scholarships for students majoring in health sciences who demonstrate academic merit and financial need."

VI. SULADS Story -- Too Many Gods

By Dawn Rodriguez, Balobo Mission School

"Teacher, please come to my son's wedding!" A mother came to me one day in school, inviting me to her son's wedding.

After the class that morning my teammate and I went to the place where the wedding would be held. As we neared the place we heard "dasang". Dasang is a chant type of blessing to the couple being wed performed only by a tribal chief or chiefs in the village. They said this chief was calling the many gods they worship. The gods of the woods, gods of the rock, gods of the waters, gods of the harvest, gods of the rain, of healing, of war and many more gods. He is asking this multitude of gods to bless the new couple as they start their journey as husband and wife.

We joined the crowd. I noticed that one of the chiefs performing the "dasang" was the former elder of our church in the village. He had backsidden as his spirit god friends constantly disturbed him with illness. So he was back again to his old ways. I could not understand what they were chanting as this language is performed in a ritual not common in conversation. As the "dasang" was being performed, everybody listened attentively in respect to the gods present.

And they were present really. Because as I listened attentively, I felt goose bumps as if I was in another strange crowd.

"I don't belong here!" complained my heart.

Then suddenly I heard a whisper on my left ear in a dialect I could understand. I felt it was a translation of the ongoing "dasang". It said, "God of the harvest, bless this couple with bounty." It continued calling all the spirit gods in the woods asking for many blessings for the new couple. Blessings of children, blessings of good health, blessings, blessings and more blessings according to what god was addressed.

The next scene that happened before my eyes after the loooooooong dasang was the killing of the chicken. Betel nuts, coins and candles were prepared on a plate. After the chiefs cut the necks of these poor sacrificial birds, they sprinkled
the fresh blood spurting from the necks on the plate. The chiefs and the newlyweds started chewing the betel nuts soiled with chicken's blood. "Yuck!" I said to myself. "Why do they have to do this yucky thing?"

Then I heard again the small voice whispering, "They do this to appease the gods they serve for more blessings in their married life."

Then it dawned on me! "Why am I hearing this whisper?" I realized then that my teammate and I were on the ground with the crowd where we are not supposed to be. I remembered in our lecture about culture that we should stay away from rituals of these animist mountain tribes. Because if we are present, we will be under the control of the power of these underworld spirit gods they worship in the woods. Our guardian angels cannot go with us to protect us if we go to these places.

When we reached home, I still had goose bumps! I couldn't understand my feeling. That whisper, though no longer there, kept coming to my imaginations. During worship that evening, I was not able concentrate on our worship. That whisper was still haunting me. "Lord," I cried, "please rescue me from the evil one. Give me rest from these spirits." We sang many songs.

We prayed, sang again and prayed some more. I read my Bible before I slept asking God in prayer to deliver me from the hand of the evil one.

He did! I had a good rest that evening in the arms of my God till morning. It was a victory! But.... my heart goes out to the people I serve.

They are still slaves to these spirit gods they serve in this mountain. I can see far ahead that their struggles will be long under the power of these spirits.

"Lord, let me come back and extend my term to this village and strengthen me with the Spirit of Jesus to lead them to the Straight Path and introduce them to the only GOD who is more powerful than their many gods."

My family and relatives were reminding me to stop serving SULADS and continue my studies. But I have promised my Lord to continue serving Him in this mountain for the sake of these people whom I have learned to love for my Lord.

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