

Mattocks Missionary Mosaic

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Asiame said, "I prayed and watched God break bow strings, bows, arrows and spears!"

Asiame told Joyce her miracle story during the PNG national election in August. It all started during the ballot counting for the Members of Parliament for our district. Some young men supporting the 3rd-runner-up Gadsup candidate got drunk and held up a truck carrying passengers who lived in the winning candidate's Tairora language group. The Gadsup men attacked and badly hurt two innocent Tairora passengers near an elementary school on the road leading out of the Aiyura Valley to Kainantu town. The conflict made this main road impassable for days. In the valley, there are government facilities, a national high school, a dirt airstrip, the Ukarumpa mission center and surrounding village settlements. After 29 years here, we knew we were safe, especially since extra police were sent into the valley, but we were concerned for our coworkers.

A few days after the incident on the road, fighters from Tairora villages came into the valley with their shields, spears, bows and arrows. That morning, no one showed up to work, and so I (Rich) called James to see if he was safe. James replied, "*The Tairora and Gadsup men are fighting near the airstrip. A group of Christians and I are standing in front of the national high school gate with our church flags praying, and the men are running past us to fight each other.*" As I hung up, I was reminded of five years ago during the last election, when James and I got stuck in the middle of a stone-throwing election riot when we were filming the sorcery movie. (When sorcery is blamed, it can also cause this kind of trouble.) Most of the time, women are able to travel in and out of fighting zones, while the men, especially from the clan involved, are vulnerable. By the next week, some of our friends returned and shared their stories. **Asiame** and eleven other prayer ladies had stood near a building at the head of the airstrip, with a line of police in front of them protecting a building where aviation fuel is stored, while nearby hundreds of warriors faced each other. As Asiame and the other women prayed that spears, bows and arrows would break, they looked up and saw God answer their prayers as bows, strings, arrows and spears broke. Then, the ladies were asked by the police to go to a ditch and recover a Tairora body that had been killed by another Tairora man. Not only had Tairora villages come to fight the Gadsups (also burning down nine houses), but two Tairora villages were still at odds from an old dispute; so one warrior took the opportunity to "pay back" and kill another Tairora man. A warrior had told the police about the location of the body on his way home. As Asiame shared her story, I was working on another Bible formatting issue with James. He nodded and then said, "*That makes sense, because I was on the Red Cross team that recovered three bodies, but we searched and could not find the fourth. We kept getting calls after the fight, after they did a head count, and one man was still missing.*" Several days

later, Joyce was working with the Gadsup translation team in the book of James when Kennedy got a text from his sister to come home quickly because she had heard Tairora men were coming back to fight again. So I stopped typesetting at 2:30 pm and drove three Gadsup men across the valley to safe locations so they could get to their villages. (It turned out to just be a rumor.)

The **Fore Bible translators** who live in settlements close-by, surrounded by these larger language groups, did not feel safe to leave their houses, so they had been home drafting Bible verses for the previous 8 weeks during the election campaigning and vote counting. Since we had arrived back in PNG (June 10), we had only seen several of our Fore team members. The Gadsup team had been meeting most of the time to translate. Even with the occasional disruption from fights in the settlements and town over candidates, the Kamano-Kafe team continued to work diligently daily, as several live in settlements near Ukarumpa, so they could ford a small river or come through the back side of the mission center. However, they told us, "*We are leaving our computers at your house because they are safer right now than with us in the settlements.*" It is also coffee-

picking season, so they have been selling lots of MegaVoice players and micro SD cards.

With all the election difficulties, we are encouraged by the quality people who were elected to serve in PNG.

Please pray that God enables the newly elected government leaders to govern well, and that our translators will be safe and not fear traveling on the roads. In the valley, several schools are now closed until the new school year in February! **Pray for our team members to find new schools and safe families to house their children.**

Two days after the road was blocked, starting this string of events

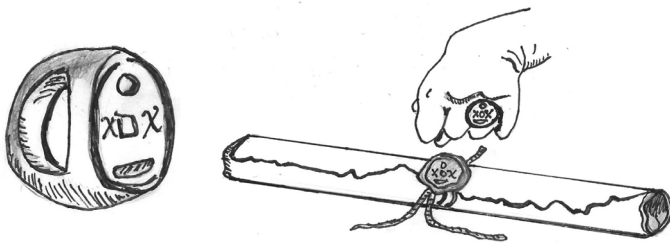
(mentioned above), Joyce's two new crowns fell out. She had to wait 2.5 weeks until the roads were safe enough for us to drive 2.5 hours on pot-holed roads to Goroka to see a dentist.

Since Kamano-Kafe is a newly written language without the 600 years of written literary development like English, many editing checks and daily decisions that would be taken for granted, are still happening. Last week, we found that a rule we had discussed and decided on as a team, had not been consistently applied. So rather than eight weeks of inputting changes and then doing a new layout on 1,200 pages, two team members are spending several weeks reading and marking needed changes on the printouts. Then I am putting the changes from 60-200 pages per day into both computer programs (Paratext and InDesign). A couple things that keep me going is the memory of a man who turned to me after reading a small Kamano booklet and asked, "*Do you have a Bible written like this in my language that I can buy?*"...and the day after the New testament dedication in 2014 when the crowd agreed loudly, "*No, we want the full Bible, not a dictionary next!*"



Photo of two Kamano team members' fingers (2 days after they voted). In PNG, after voting, a long-lasting ink is wiped on the pinky of each voter. Since they waited in their home villages several extra days due to delays, Rich asked them, "Did you vote?" Instead of answering, they just raised their pinky fingers and smiled. (The table underneath had been painted red).

- ☞ **Praise the Lord we had negative results on the required PCR COVID tests after 59 hours of flying (with layovers) the long way around the globe through Doha and Singapore to PNG, arriving Friday, June 10.**
- ☞ **Pray for the Kamano-Kafe team to finish their final read-through editing and that we catch issues before we send their Bible to the print shop.** Pray that Rich can finish the typesetting and get the full Bible to the publishers hopefully by September 20.
- ☞ **Advertising** the coming availability of the Kamano-Kafe Bible will be difficult across the 283 remote villages. **Pray that those who are literate and who want a Bible will hear about it and save their money to purchase a Bible when they arrive.**
- ☞ **PTL—Exciting news! A non-profit family foundation has provided enough funds to purchase 1000 water filters for PNG!** Hopefully, in the next year, we will have placed 2,152 filters, making families more healthy! **They also provided enough funds to print 2,000 (instead of 1,500) Kamano-Kafe waterproof Bibles!**
- ☞ **Please pray for more new missionaries on the foreign field** to help us with translation team advisor work, financial and government paperwork. **Please pray for governments to be wise with their vaccine travel requirements so we can get missionaries serving here again.**
- ☞ **PTL—God has provided a single man with construction experience to live in our RV-trailer on our Deer Park property we purchased March 25.** He will do some construction and grass cutting work in lieu of rent. The wood to frame the pole barn was delivered August 17th! We are praying for our pole building builder, Brent, and his team, that this project will further God's Kingdom.



We have only put pictures in the Kamano-Kafe Bible that our team members feel their people don't understand. Since we could not find a usable line art drawing of a signet ring, Joyce drew several, and one of Rich's hand "stamping a wax seal on a scroll".

☞ **Praise the Lord with us—a long-term prayer answer!** We asked you to pray that our three-year work permit renewals would be approved quickly without more stress and hours of documentation work. After a week of full time work in the USA, and after arrival in Papua New Guinea (PNG) June 10th, we handed in our passports and work permit cards to our agent to take to the Government office. We wondered if we would need more documentation. **Not only were our 3-year work permits approved, but the second week in August we were also awarded PNG Permanent Residency!** We had asked you many times from 2017 onwards to pray about that. Thank you! We had continued to fill out and submit forms etc. each time we were asked for more documents. Permanent Residency (PR) requires a higher scrutiny than a work permit, and means we will not need to reapply for work permits to serve in PNG. It allows us to come and go as long as we are not out of PNG more than 12 months at a time. The PNG law states that volunteers and missionaries need work permits and may not come in on visitor visas, even for short work visits; but as permanent residents, we can work with a clear conscience. We don't know the future, but the PR will potentially save much future work, expense and stress on not having to reapply, partly because the price of work permits has gone up significantly. The question now, since Joyce is 65 and Rich is 60, is how long will we be healthy enough to help with the work in PNG. Serving God brings the most joy in life! Can we do more good in the USA as Tyndale Director to recruit young people and helping challenge the next generation? On Rich's bucket list, after we publish the complete Kamano-Kafe Bible, is to continue mentoring and supporting others to finish many more languages like the Gadsup NT (about 80% complete) or Fore NT (about 60% complete), and form a team of translators to get the Bena Bena NT revision started.



This Bible is their baby! Left to right: 5 Kamano-Kafe team members: Jayson, Kossack, Timothy, James and Korry. This was an impromptu meeting

looking at the Table of Contents and several of the 881 pages of the Old Testament, discussing layout and Bible book names for the Kamano-Kafe Bible. Hundreds of audio players have been in the community for a year by the time the written version gets to the print shop, which has allowed better feedback and a less rushed final editing process.

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(Some mail is getting to PNG now, though months later!)

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Moving?

Please send address changes either to us, or to Joyce's sister:

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Giving Options for Financial Partnership:

TBT has a very inexpensive and safe bank-to-bank transfer option!

1. For help, call or text Kim (TBT Office) at 971-231-4196.

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3. Or send a **check made out to Tyndale Bible Translators** with a note attached stating: "for the ministry of Rich & Joyce Mattocks" to:

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