

CAST YOUR BREAD UPON THE WATERS

“Are you really sure this is God’s call to us?” asked Ruth as her husband confided that he felt they were to go as pioneer missionaries to a certain closed country where few Christians had ever visited.

“Well, for several weeks I haven’t been able to shake off this conviction. It seems so preposterous, my dear, that I hadn’t mentioned it to you before,” admitted Wayne.

As the months went by, the couple prayed about this matter together. Soon Ruth shared her husband’s conviction that indeed God was calling them to be pioneer missionaries in this far-off land. They contacted a private Adventist organization that serves as an umbrella for such ventures and before long they were selling their house and packing essential items to start a new way of life.

As they reached their country of destination, excitement pounded in their hearts. What miracles would they see God performing through this faith venture? They placed their lives and future entirely in His omnipotent hands. He seemed to direct them into a remote area deep in the interior of the country. There they would pour out their service in a small Muslim village. Their first task would be studying the language, so they began immediately to mingle with the people who became their models of new speech patterns and strange sounds.

As pioneer missionaries have so often found, there is more hard work, prayers, and tears than romance and adventure in such a calling. When would they see the fruit of their labor? After much time one young man that we’ll call Sayram began to show interest in them and the message they bore. They began to concentrate their efforts on him in the hopes that he would be God’s instrument to share with his countrymen. He had a deep commitment to his land and his people, a quality that pioneer

missionaries eagerly look for. Their hopes were now based on him. Wayne and Ruth perceived that Sayram had a deeply spiritual heart. He yearned for truth. In his sincere and earnest way, he took everything he learned from the Bible to the local imam for consultation. Though he highly respected the imam, the power of truth held his highest loyalty.

After several years’ work with him, Wayne and Ruth felt that Sayram was ready for baptism. In 2005 Wayne took him to another Muslim country where two seasoned “insider” believers who had had great success in their ministries could participate in the final work of preparing him for his big event. There Sayram perceived for the first time that Jesus was more than a prophet. The stories of Jesus along with what he had learned over the last several years left him with no doubt about the rightness of his decision. The main spiritual leader that Wayne had taken him to was convinced of Sayram’s sincerity and commitment. It was a joyous day for Wayne as he saw his first convert lowered into the waters of baptism on a warm Sabbath afternoon. Surely it was God that had called them to work in Sayram’s country. Now there would be one who would join them in holding up the torch of truth. Sayram and Wayne returned home in awe of God’s transforming power.

It was with dismay that Wayne received an urgent summons to return to his home country only three weeks after this marvelous victory of seeing their first convert. The situation was beyond their control. With heavy hearts they bade farewell to Sayram with tears and prayers for his faithfulness. This baby Christian would be totally alone to maintain his faith. He was the only believer in his entire country. Communications were so poor there that there weren’t even hopes of frequent phone or

mail contact. The Holy Spirit would be his only mentor. How difficult it was for Sayram, Wayne, and Ruth to accept this reality. They could only pray.

Five years later David, an “insider” ministry leader, remembering the story of Sayram, felt that it was urgent to contact him. He tracked Wayne to his present place of employment and told him that he had an extremely deep impression that they needed to contact this lonely convert that had no one to encourage him. After a search Wayne found an old phone number he had used a few times to call Sayram.

“Praise God the number was still valid,” says David. “I was able to contact Sayram due to improved communications in his country.” Soon the two were talking quite regularly across the continents and oceans by phone and Skype.”

Learning that Sayram had remained faithful, David raised funds for Ahmad, another convert and “insider” ministry leader to travel to Sayram’s country to encourage him. Before Ahmad left on his trip, David, who was now very involved in the case of this lone believer, felt convicted to pray that Sayram would be given a dream of Ahmad and that there would be a deep spiritual connection between the two. And to the great comfort of both men, Sayram, did have a dream in which he saw Ahmad teaching him. To Ahmad’s even greater surprise, on arriving Sayram immediately took him around to meet many believers!

When Wayne and Ruth had left this country there had been just one believer, and now almost the entire village was being prepared for baptism. Not only was his home village being prepared; it was the case in village after village. On Sabbath morning Ahmad was invited to speak in a mosque. To his astonishment the mosque was packed with eager listeners who wanted to hear more Bible truths. Yes, this was inside a mosque on Sabbath morning!

The two men had to press on to another village to teach them also. In that village the people insisted that they wanted to be baptized that very day. They just wouldn’t wait for another trip. Ahmad questioned them over and over. It was clear that they were ready. That day he baptized 32 precious persons that were breaking with the customs and traditional belief of their countrymen. As the sun was setting and the two men were getting ready to leave, a group came from another village pleading for baptism. Ahmad, feeling that it was necessary to examine them doctrinally before he could baptize them, insisted on their waiting until a promised later date since the one and only bus he and Sayram could take back to his home was scheduled to leave very soon.

What a potential in this country! Wayne and Ruth had followed God’s call. They did what they could; Sayram and God have done the rest. That dear couple surely know the reality of Ecclesiastes 11:1, “Cast your bread upon the water, for you will find it after many days.” God’s Word doesn’t return void.

Travel in this country is very expensive, but the evangelistic opportunities are great. God is preparing a host of people for His kingdom. Wouldn’t you like to join this project helping Sayram and Ahmad to spread the Word of God across this closed country?



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