

NTM News

Dinangats to urge Bible teaching

SAKAM, Papua New Guinea (Nov. 5, 2003): "Stay at peace."

Missionary Gary Smith was encouraged to hear those words from key men among the Dinangats of Papua New Guinea.

Just days before, the missionaries had been presented with a letter from some Dinangat leaders saying they were permitted to translate the Scriptures but not to teach. It weighed heavily on the minds of Gary and his wife Esther, along with co-workers Jeremiah and April Markley and Ralf and Ellie Schlegel. The team had just moved into the village of Sakam, built their houses, and was ready to start culture and language study.

Gary received some solace from Bauu, an old man in the village. Bauu told Gary that the missionaries should continue their work and not worry about the letter. "Stay here without causing any trouble and in time you can ask them about it and they will let you teach," he said.

Bauu, expressing his happiness to Gary that the missionaries had come, said, "We do not understand the foundation of the Word of God because when the first missionaries came they did not speak to us in our language. They gave us the skin, but God has sent you to give us the meat."

The next day Bauu took the initiative to talk to a few of the leaders.

While Gary was clearing land with some of the Dinangat men, Bauu called to him to meet with the leaders standing nearby. They men offered their "stay at peace" message, and told Gary that when the time draws near to teach they would personally travel around to the different villages and talk to the people.

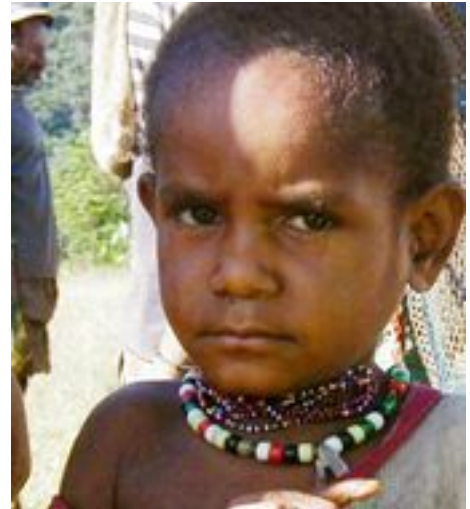
One of the men, a spiritual leader, said that he was very glad to have teaching done in their heart language. He said his people come and ask him questions but he has to tell them that he really doesn't understand. He said they have been crying to God for months and years for understanding.

Gary thought of the Ethiopian man in Acts 8 who was asked by Philip, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And the man responded, "How can I, unless someone guides me?"

The men emphasized over and over how glad they were that the missionaries were there to teach in their language.

God has encouraged the hearts of the missionaries and given peace.

Pray that the missionaries will continue to develop good relationships with the people. Pray too as they begin learning the Dinangat culture and language, that God will give understanding and speed His Word to the Dinangats.



Missionaries are learning the culture and language of the Dinangat people with the intent of teaching Bible lessons.



planting tribal churches

www.ntm.org