

CONSTRUCTIVE WORD

The Esala Prayer Letter-- August 2017

...attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:12-13



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DEAR PARTNERS IN MISSION,

Picture in your mind a person under water with bags of rocks attached to her. She slowly unties the bags, and as she does this, she starts rising to the surface. Bag after bag drops and then “ahhhhh”—to breathe fresh air again! Both Nathan and I have felt in that position this spring and summer. Hopefully this letter can provide substance for your prayer lives as well as an update in general. Again, we are so grateful for your partnership.

MAY MADNESS $1 \times 7 = 14$

Every year I keep the month of May as clear as possible, knowing that each of the activities in which the 7 of us are already involved will multiply quickly. May 2017 did not depart from tradition, with the exception of graduating Karissa (which is like 10 extra things). We also made the decision to enroll Annaka and Aili into school next year and to have Isaac change schools—more paperwork and appointments! **Please pray for our whole family as 4 out of 5 kids start at new schools this August.**

JUNE—PLAN, PLAN, PLAN

Nathan was hoping to squeeze in a trip to Ghana but visa issues caused a delay—instead he will go in September. **Pray for the Likɔ̀nl (Komba) Bible Translation team as it prepares for Old Testament checking sessions with Nathan. Pray for safety in travels, computer cooperation, insightful Bible studies, good communication to work out kinks and sustain healthy relationships. Pray for the community as it continues to interact with the Likɔ̀nl New Testament, that God's light would shine into their lives.**

JULY—HELLOS, HUGS, UNTIL NEXT TIMES, AND DUCKS

The focus in July was CMI (Concordia Mission Institute—a training week that LBT holds each year). Both Nathan and I helped with some of the sessions. A highlight for us was spending time with friends from Ghana who we rarely see but dearly love. I also explored issues of change with missionary kids (MKs) through games, art, and purposeful conversation. I love these kiddos so this was a treat for me.



MK's at CMI doing a team building exercise with their favorite “Aunt Sarah” taking the pictures.

ABOUT US

Nathan is a consultant for the Likoonl (Komba) Old Testament translation project in Ghana. He also works with LBT's international program ministries to help with broader translation issues. He frequently has his head in a book or is furiously pecking at a keyboard as he continues to work on his PhD.

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Sarah supports other LBT-ers as they face challenges of body, mind, and spirit so they can fulfill the call God has given them.

Pray for the MKs I worked with. Each kiddo was undergoing significant change, whether returning to America for a furlough, starting in a new school or switching to homeschool from school, moving... Especially pray that they will feel secure in God's love through all this transition and that God will help their parents guide them through the process.

Nathan finally got all his ducks lined up for PhD proposal approval! This has spurred him on even more, and he is now busy outlining his chapters. **Pray that Nathan's thoughts will come together in an organized way as he plans and writes. Pray that this process will continue to grow us (I'm learning so much too!) in ways we can do mission and Bible translation better and connect God's Word to even more people's lives.**

AUGUST—Ahhh!

My calendar appears busy...again (7 in a family will do that), but somehow the burden seems less. **Pray for each one of us as we prioritize and tune into where Christ wants us to put our focus each day and that we will abide in Him each moment.**



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Sarah for Nathan

And our 5 favorite MKs

Do you have a favorite Bible verse? One of the favorite verses of the Komba translation team is Acts 26:28-29. They just love how the shoe drops in the last line.

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

Try reading it with different tones of voice for *both* Agrippa and Paul? What does sarcasm sound like? Passion? Soft and pleading? Anger? Is there a twinkle-in-the-eyes kind of sound? Is there a dramatic pause before that last statement or is it a rushed explanation? Contemplating how that interaction might have gone can add richness and new discoveries to your understanding of the Bible. It's a great way to contemplate a familiar text in a new way.
