

August, 1994

Dear friends,

Greetings in Jesus' Wonderful Name!

Jackie and I want to thank you for praying and supporting us on our trip to Asia. We could tell that we had a prayer covering! The Lord was faithful to go before us every step of the way!

We arrived in Indonesia as scheduled, and the time with Rob and Ria went very quickly. It seemed one of our primary purposes was pastoral, praying through many things with Rob and Ria, and also praying with many of the new people who are now working with the same people group as Rob and Ria.

Just before we arrived, Rob had gathered these workers at a secluded beach house for a day of worship and prayer. There were fifteen, including Rob and Ria, plus four children. For reasons of security, they had never been together before, and even on this day were instructed not to get to know each other, but to spend the day purely in worship and intercession. (Working in a Muslim group requires much secrecy; the community must not be aware that these people are missionaries. Each of them has other "public" reasons for being there, such as teaching English, so that they can be accepted in the community.)

The number of new workers was remarkable to us, and a sign of answered prayer for this unreached people group! Do you remember that when we visited them two years ago, they were the only missionaries living there? The new workers are from various nations and various mission agencies, but they all look to Rob and Ria as their leaders. This has meant an increase in responsibility for Rob and Ria in counseling and pastoring these new workers.

A great highlight of our time there was meeting and praying with a young lady code named "Five", who is Rob and Ria's first convert from this people group. She is eighteen years old, and has been living with them and working as their house girl. After some weeks with them, she asked for a Bible, began to pray, and soon had her own experience with Jesus! "Five" told them she was now Christian, and so they knew they had better lead her through the prayer of salvation! Now a joyful believer in Jesus, "Five" loves to worship and sing to the Lord! This is definitely a miracle for a Muslim orphan who had run away from an abusive home. Later, when Rob and Ria took her to try and reconcile with this difficult family, they were ready to kill her for running away. They told Ria they did not kill her only out of respect for Ria as guest in their house! Finally they were able to leave with "Five", and she will continue to live with Rob and Ria.

We had some times of intercession for the release of the harvest. The Lord was impressing us that there are many ready to come to the Lord -- just like "Five" -- people who are hungry and like fruit ripe for the picking! Please pray for the harvest in this people group, and for all the workers.

With tearful good-byes we left Rob and Ria and

proceeded to Hong Kong for an adventure into China. It was unclear when leaving home what we would do, on arrival in Hong Kong. We could no longer carry Bibles to Guilin as planned due to the arrest of the believers there. While in Indonesia, we learned that the church in Hong Kong had made new plans for us to carry Bibles to another city located about a thousand miles into China, near Shanghai.

After a day's rest and exploration of Hong Kong, we were briefed about the plan and made preparations for the journey. Two of the staff from the church were to accompany our team, so we knew we would be well taken care of.

We took a train to the border, and crossed into China with just a few personal belongings in backpacks. Our assignment was not to carry Bibles across the border, but to pick up suitcases of Bibles inside China, which had been stockpiled there by many who had made "border crossings". Together, we picked up about 600 pounds of Bibles, referred to as "bread". Thankfully we were provided with strong luggage carts, which made the impossible possible. It was very strenuous work at some points, such as traversing flights of stairs, lifting the luggage through train windows, etc. All in all, it went smoothly -- we believe due to your prayers!

The heart of the trip was a 30 hour non-air-conditioned train ride in 104 degree weather. Thankfully, bottled water was available, and God's grace was abundant. At the end of the journey we got off the train weary and overheated, lugging our precious "bread". We dragged it to a parking lot, where two believers waited with a small covered pickup truck. After we "whisked" the suitcases into the back of the truck, they were gone. What sorrow to realize the difficulties these believers live with, and what joy to see their truck full of "living bread"!

Two days in a comfortable hotel revived us, and we had some time to intercede for China. The trip back to Hong Kong was mostly by plane (Aeroflot -- the Russian airline -- not a nice way to fly!!) and a train ride that was a Chinese cultural adventure! It was so packed, aisles and all, that there was not room to move so much as a foot!

We left Hong Kong for a plane change in Taipei, weary but with a sense of "mission accomplished". Our flight across the Pacific was the last one out before the airport in Taipei was closed due to an approaching typhoon -- so we came home with a fresh sense of being in God's timing and His divine protection!

Thank you for praying, and thanks to those of you who have been standing with us in financial support, both for this outreach and for our personal ongoing needs. You are greatly appreciated! May the Lord richly bless you in return during the fall of 1994!

Yours in Christ, *John and Jackie*

*p.s. Jenni and Jayme did great on the outreach! They were real troopers, always flexible, helpful, and a great blessing!*