



Ron & Cheryl Myers GOD'S LIVING WORD FOR ALL PEOPLE February 2025

A Faith-based Ministry Sustained Through the Prayers and Partnership of God's People

Saved and Kept by Grace Alone

Pastor Jarat Sirimontri's Unique Testimony

By Ron Myers

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It came to mind recently that I should share the amazing testimonies of men who trusted in Christ through my ministry. Last month I spoke briefly about Pastor Prakop, my *Hoodlum for Christ* brother. These men were saved, taught and/or disciplined by me, one of whom (Jarat) became one of my best Bible translation assistants. His name means shining or radiant. When I began the Isan Bible translation, I set about to locate suitable and qualified men as assistants—not an easy job. Jarat immediately came to mind. I asked around only to learn he was working on construction in Bangkok, but that he would be returning home soon.

Early Life and Miraculous testimony:

When we first met, Jarat was living in the World. A very bright fellow, he was born into a peasant farmer family and raised in Thailand's vast Northeastern or Isan Region. His parents were untaught Christians, yet deeply loved the Lord. Jarat later related how he'd been taught a false Gospel. A strange *gospel* that taught if he sinned after believing, he would go to Hell with seven times greater punishment—legalism. He shared if that were the case, he could never meet that requirement. So, if he was hopelessly Hell-bound he might as well enjoy himself now. One might ask, was Jarat a Christian? God knows. I've come to the conclusion that, yes, he was an infant in the faith, fleeing from a false Gospel and living a back-slidden lifestyle.



1982: Jarat, Pastor Then: Construction Now: Church Planter Prakop, Pastor Hoodlum Church Planter Ron Missionary Sanoh, Pastor Patrol Sergeant Army Colonel (Ret.)

Life-threatening Construction Accident:

A few weeks before returning to Nakhon Phanom, Jarat had been shocked literally to death on a Bangkok construction site. It was quitting time and the construction crew was busy picking up before going home. One man had been assigned the job of switching off the 440-volt feed line to the site. However, the man forgot that day; so, the high-voltage did not get shut off. Meanwhile, Jarat was busy unplugging and gathering up the various high-voltage electrical cords strung around the site. As with most construction sites there were piles of building materials and miscellaneous trash, as well as mounds of dirt and deep pits. It had rained and the pit was flooded near where Jarat stood as he separated the electric cords.

Pulling hard to disconnect two electric cords, he lifted them chest-level for a better grip. When they separated, the high-voltage current arced through Jarat's body, constricted his arm muscles, drawing the connectors tightly against his chest. He was now being electrocuted by 440 volts of raw electricity. The high-voltage current began to burn a deep furrow through his skin and underlying flesh and bone, inches from his heart, which stopped beating as he fell headlong into the flooded pit. There he lay, being electrocuted at the bottom of the electrically-charged pool of water. For all practical purposes Jarat was dead, except for the fact that the God who loved him had other plans for his life.

Construction workers wondered where Jarat was. One man spotted his limp body and the arching electricity burning brightly at the bottom of the flooded pit. Shouts rang out as someone ran to disconnect the feed line, allowing Jarat's mortally-injured body to be lifted out of the pit. As "coincidence" would have it, the construction was an addition on the front of a huge hospital, and Jarat's potential watery grave was a few feet from the Emergency Room entrance. Nurses and doctors were summoned as Jarat's coworkers carried his limp body into the Emergency Room. The heart defibrillator paddles shocked him quite a few times before Jarat's otherwise strong but now dormant heart finally began to beat again.

After the doctors and nurses cleaned and dressed the gaping wound burnt into Jarat's chest, he was taken up to the trauma ward where he stayed a few weeks until he was strong enough to be sent home to Nakhon Phanom. I was glad to see Jarat again, not knowing what he had just undergone. We became close friends as we worked together on the Isan translation while I poured God's Word into him at every opportunity, which eventually took root. He later showed me his deeply scarred chest and related this account of what had happened.

Jarat and Tiw's Marriage and the City Church:

Around the time Jarat arrived back home from Bangkok he met Tiw, a local village girl. They married in a civil ceremony previous to Jarat becoming my translation assistant. That was around the time I had moved from our village work with the Nyaw people to Nakhon Phanom City to initiate the Isan translation project. The city church's pastor soon resigned and went to Saudi Arabia to seek his fortune (following the dreams of thousands of other Isan men) while abandoning his wife in the church parsonage. She soon became disgruntled and a huge burden for everyone through various misunderstandings before moving back to her home province.

This left the church's waning congregation without pastoral oversight. I did not want to become heavily involved in the city church; yet, of necessity, I became their interim pastor since unwanted elements were wanting to move in with their false doctrines, which they tried again later. Jarat's parents were faithful members there and the only family left when I assumed leadership. I don't believe missionaries should pastor churches on the mission field, but train up faithful men to become local church pastors who start new churches (2 Timothy 2:2), yet it was expedient that I fill that gap. I later saw five new churches established around Thailand under my ministry.



By then Jarat was working as my assistant as we translating Genesis—The Book of Beginnings. This was vitally necessary for people groups without a Judeo-Christian or Biblical worldview. This is the situation with the greater majority of Asians who grow up under a metaphysical philosophy. When Jarat and Tiw started attending church with his parents I sensed it was time I counsel them, which I did one evening at his parents' field house where they were living. Their hearts were tender and receptive as I spoke to Jarat about dishonoring and to Tiw about Salvation. In response, Jarat offered up a beautiful prayer of repentance, referring to himself as "*your child*" to God. Tiw then prayed to receive Christ as her personal Savior. This couple has been faithful and stalwart from that moment on through good times and bad.

Week days, Jarat and I, and Uncle Preecha (my other faithful assistant) translated the Book of Genesis. Both men learned to touch-type in Thai. Saturdays, Jarat and I would travel 50-plus kilometers south along the Mekong River Road, riding double on my 125 Honda Trail Bike to the *Phu-Thai* ethnic peoples' area. There, Jarat and I evangelized, taught, and baptized numerous new believers. We saw fledgling cell groups form in two adjacent *Phu-Thai* district towns, Renu and Naa Kae. I truly enjoy working with the Phu-Thai people because, although Buddhists, they are more open to listen to the Gospel.

Another *Phu-Thai* village asked me to come explain the Gospel, a rare event in Buddhist Thailand. After a few lessons, one man said he now understood there's a Creator God—a new church was forming! Then, the unthinkable happened. I was called before inept leaders and abruptly forced to return home, all on the baseless accusations of a bickering and complaining jealous missionary. The claim was I had made him "feel bad." What insanity. I had done *no* such thing. This also left the Phu Thai villagers abandoned. These things happen too often with inept leaders. As missionaries, we are engaged in spiritual warfare for unreached souls. Satan is a cunning foe, adept at fostering lies and suspicions. His goal is to hinder or prevent fruitful missionary work, all to keep hopelessly lost souls from hearing the Gospel. Jesus said "*Satan was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it*" (John 8:44).

Judy – God's Grocery Delivery Dog:

I paid Jarat and Prechaa a good salary as my translation assistants, matching the local economy. One month, Jarat and wife Tiw had some extra expenses which exceeded his salary. They were too embarrassed to share their need with me, else I would have helped them if I had known. The bill they owed took all their spare cash, straining their food budget. They prayed that God would send them some food.

The following day during our devotional time, Jarat shared that when he returned home the previous evening Judy was waiting at their door, wagging her tail. A plastic bag containing a sizable piece of freshly cut pork at her side. Jarat said there were no teeth marks in the bag, meaning Judy must have carried it from the nearby open market, grasping the top of the bag in her mouth. Jarat surmised she must have gotten it from beside a market shopper who had laid it down. He said there was no way of knowing who it belonged to, so enjoyed a good meal that evening with thankful hearts. God had used their dog Judy to answer their prayer for food. I'm sure she was rewarded for her faithfulness with a few tasty morsels.

Passing the Test:

A few mornings later, Jarat came to work exclaiming, "*Whew! I passed that test.*" He explained that, as he peddled his bicycle up the alleyway, headed for our house, his gaze fell on a huge bankroll of bills laying in the street. Looking around, he saw no one, so pocketed the money. He peddled on, wondering if that find was in direct answer to their prayers. Further up the alley, he saw a huge crowd gather around a husband-and-wife couple sobbing and lamenting how they had somehow lost their life's savings on their way to the bank.

The test Jarat spoke of was, he realized his find belonged to this couple. He could have easily peddled on with the money, but he stopped his bicycle beside the crowd and asked the couple if the bankroll he was holding up was theirs. They quickly came over and took it from Jarat's grasp, turned, and headed for the bank. He told me what irked him the most was they didn't even say thanks or offer him a tip. Would we not have been just as tempted if we were hungry and broke and came upon a suitcase full of Ben Franklins? I'm sure the Lord has a reward awaiting him for his honesty.

Saved and Kept by Grace, Period:

As I stated above, while we translated, I would find opportunities to pour God's Word into both Jarat and Prechaa. I knew they had been taught (like most all others in Thailand) a mixture of Grace plus works to gain and maintain Salvation. These men needed to understand that, "Salvation is found in Scripture alone, in Christ alone, through faith alone, by Grace alone, and for the glory of God alone," period (Ephesians 2:8-9), with nothing added or nothing taken away from these eternal truths! Many wrongly combine verse 10 (maintaining a daily walk) with verses 8 & 9 (Salvation), the primary cause of much unnecessary confusion.

It soon became evident that God's Living Word was enlightening these men. When they realized that they were saved and kept by Grace alone through the power of God alone, their faith literally blossomed as they *let go of wrong thinking and believed God*. Prechaa began to insist the Isan translation needed to teach Grace clearly, not works as most Thai Bibles teach, nor was he still afraid that if he didn't attend meetings regularly his flame would go out, like glowing coals out of a fire. Jarat, in turn, saw that what he had been taught about making a single slip would send him to Hell with seven times greater punishment was entirely bogus, all teachings by *good* missionaries, so-called, and further propagated by the Thai.

I told Jarat he ought to try teaching, which we later we took every other Sundays. I vividly recall how Cheryl and I sat wiping away tears of joy as we listened while Jarat expounded freely on the Grace of God. A literal grass roots movement soon began taking place as we swapped Sundays. The congregation grew until seating capacity overflowed as people brought their friends and relatives to church. They came to hear the Word of God being preached and no other reason. When I went on furlough Jarat took over the pulpit as the congregation continued to grow. When I returned, we picked up where we had left off.



Time to Branch Out:



By now Jarat and Tiw had a growing family. They sensed God was leading them to start a new work with the ethnic So people located in the Kusuman district town in the adjoining Sakon Nakhon Province. The New Tribes Mission, where Cheryl and I received our initial missions training, had a work with the So people there at one time. Yet because of various factors, the work was abandoned. However, a church had been started in one of the So villages, along with a remnant of So believers in town. This was the perfect place for Jarat and Tiw to settle.

Being native Isanians, they and their growing family were welcomed with open arms. The Kusuman church began to expand and grow strong under their leadership, as well as the remote village church, which took on a new life. The Isan translation is now finished, printed, and distributed in churches throughout the Isan region and beyond.

The So translation work had been started by New Tribes missionaries, but it wasn't completed to the best of my knowledge. PTL, Jarat's children took opportunity, assisted by So believers, to convert the Isan New Testament into the So language.



Jarat is well liked and appreciated by all who know him. I'm not aware to what extent, but I know he has now been given a further leadership role in an advisory capacity over many believers in the Isan region. **Please pray for Jarat in this.**



Ron and Cheryl Myers
Your Missionaries to Thailand

When Cheryl, along with our youngest daughter Michelle and her family, accompanied me to Thailand, we were invited to feast at Jarat and Tiw's home. What a grand time we had reminiscing and laughing. To say that Cheryl and I love both Jarat and Tiw and appreciate how God has used their lives would be a gross understatement. We know they feel the same about us. There's a sense of satisfaction just to think that God allowed us to have an integral part in their lives. **Please pray us too as we serve God.** "To God be the glory and majesty, Dominion and power, both now and forever" (Jude 1:25).