



Tha Dah Der church, burned to the ground.

Global Day of Prayer for Burma

March 10, 2013



Tha Dah Der church, rebuilt, one and a half years later.

Positive Change but Ongoing Oppression

Dear friends,

Thank you for praying for the people of Burma. We believe prayer has been part of the beginning of change here and we want to keep praying and doing what God has for us in order to be part of a heart change, justice, freedom and reconciliation in Burma. Thank you for joining us in prayer this year. We thank God for all the recent good changes in Burma and congratulate all those who have been recognized for their efforts toward a free, just and reconciled Burma. At the same time, oppression continues. Here is an update on current events in Burma and, especially, how we experience the situation on the ground.

Good news:

- 1) Aung San Suu Kyi holds a position in parliament and she, along with others, has received honors on behalf of the international community for her dedication to freedom for the people of Burma.
- 2) Many political prisoners have been released.
- 3) Censorship and travel restrictions have been eased.
- 4) The government of Burma is in ongoing ceasefire negotiations with many of the ethnic groups and there is an overall reduction in fighting.
- 5) Burma Army leaders have signed an agreement to end forced labor and it has decreased in some areas.
- 6) The Free Burma Rangers (FBR) had the opportunity to meet leaders of the new government.

At the same time there is ongoing oppression:

- 1) Burma Army attacks against the Kachin continue, with over 70,000 Kachin people displaced by over 100 Burma Army battalions in northern Burma.
- 2) In the Shan State, fighting and displacement continue and in the southern Shan State there have been over 30 clashes between the Burma Army and Shan resistance this year. FBR medics have given medical treatment to many of those wounded in the fighting.
- 3) In Karen State, the Burma Army has used the ceasefires to supply their camps beyond the normal supply rate and continue to use forced labor. They have also built three new camps in violation of the ceasefire agreement. Border Guard Forces under the authority of the Burma Army have continued attacks in Karen State.
- 4) Currently, at least 311 political prisoners remain under arrest.* Censorship laws such as the Electronic Transactions Act remain in effect as does the threat of arbitrary arrest. *Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP).
- 5) In Arakan State, 120,000 people have been displaced by inter-ethnic violence between the Rohingya and Arakan. This has been partially fueled by repressive Burma government policies.
- 6) Humanitarian access is still blocked in many areas of Burma.

We see two things happening at once, positive change and ongoing oppression. We will continue to give help, hope and love to those under attack, to get the news out and to stand with the oppressed. Please pray with us for changes and wisdom as we continue to develop a relationship we have with some in the new government, as well as with Aung San Suu Kyi and others, for the purpose of reconciliation, justice and freedom for all.

Thanks and God bless you,



Dave Eubank

Christians Concerned for Burma/Free Burma Rangers

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“...the **truth** will
set you **free.”**

John 8:32

“Only God can help us be honest in our attempts to work together. I want my actions to be as authentic as my words are, and I want to pray that God will help our group and our people be united. Please pray for that standard of honesty in those in current positions of leadership.”

--Maw Naw, relief team medic

Pa-Oh relief team sings with children.



Chin relief team member checks a patient.





Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story...

Story One: Redemption

K'Paw Say

Note: K'Paw Say has had several back surgeries and must be careful with his level of physical activity.

To go to Tha Dah Der (TDD) to the church dedication or not, I was not sure; I wanted to listen to everyone's advice, and especially to God. I did not want to make a mistake because of pride or going my own way. The reason I wanted to go was to share what God has done for us. This is very clear through how and what He has done with TDD: that God is always for us, and I want to share how great and faithful He is, to every situation and every one of us.

I got extra pain in my back the night before I was going to leave. I prayed to God, "Please help me to go because I want to go. Even if you do not want me to go, I still want to go. Please let me, and help me." I still had pain in my back in the morning. When I arrived at the river, I saw nobody had come for me, as we had arranged. I prayed to God again and said, "Lord, I will go or not I am not sure now. Please help me. I will wait for someone to come for me until noon, as we arranged. If not, I will go back from here."

At about 10:00 a.m., someone came and said, "I am coming for you and we will go tomorrow at 3:00 in the morning." I am very happy but still pray: "Lord, is this your favor for me? If yes, I will go and please give me strength to walk." I planned to take two days, but my partner wanted to walk more quickly. I was afraid of injuring my back, but walked carefully and, because of your prayers and God's help, made it in one day.

Before the dedication service, the head middle school teacher and I sat on the log in front of the Church and talked about how real God is, and merciful to us. He teaches us through problems but holds us again with His loving and merciful hands immediately. He said,

"God let us see this problem to remind ourselves and improve ourselves. Who are we? How much do we obey Him? And then live in a new life that goes closer with Him. God gave us to face the problem, but very quickly He returned everything even more through His people, our brothers and sisters around the world who we never see." He pointed to the church and said, "Look at the church, bigger than before and nicer."

In the service, the pastor preached about Nehemiah's rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall, even though surrounded by enemies. For him, he believes that God is here with the villagers. They were able to return to the village and rebuild very fast. The church is big and nice. Without God, it would not be this big, nice or done so quickly. The pastor reminded us, "God is with you right now, just keep going with him closely in the rest of the days."

As I walked down the hill after the service, I was thinking of Nehemiah and the villagers of Tha Dah Der. It is true. God is with them. God gives them love, unity, boldness and strength. Without these they would not have returned to the village right away after the Burma Army soldiers went back to their camp. They would not have rebuilt the church, school, and homes, and not this fast too.

It reminds me of a friend who has said many times, "In our life we may face difficulties. Most of us have wondered, 'where is God in my trouble?' - and think the bad thing is winning and God is silent." God is with Nehemiah and Tha Dah Der. And God is with each of us too. Now I understand why my friend says the Burma Army is not winning. I did not really understand before. The Burma Army cannot stop anyone loving, serving, reuniting and rebuilding the community again - not only in Tha Dah Der, but the Karen people, all the

Story Two: God's Mission

Doh Say

Four days ago six of us rangers went down to get ID cards. I was praying a lot before I made the decision to go. It has never been safe to travel here and I was doubtful that things had really changed. But after a lot of prayers from many friends including Rev. Edmond, and checking the situation from several sources, I felt peaceful to go there. Of course I was nervous. I did not know until the last minute of the trip that God wanted me to go there. What happened was amazing.

We had a letter from a friend and went down by boat. We stopped the boat before the town and gave the letter to the monk who arranged a fancy car to drive seven of us downtown. On the way we passed by the police station and many high ranking officers and then in the next place, we passed by many Burma Army high ranking officers. None of them stopped us and we arrived downtown in 15 minutes. The immigration officer, who was directed to help us by the monk, started working on the ID cards right away without asking many difficult questions and in the afternoon we all got our cards. This is unusual and many people have to wait for up to ten days. Some of the rangers were praising the monk a lot. I said they were admiring him too much for his help, but I reminded them that God is first and foremost in helping us do all

these things, and the monk is behind Him as number two or three in importance.

The next morning the monk sent a car to bring us to his temple. When I first met the monk, I noticed that he is very friendly and hospitable to us. I was thinking, what could I give back for his kindness. I thought praying for him the best gift. But I did not first have confidence, as he is very powerful, has tens of hundreds of followers, many plots of land and many cars. So that night I asked God to give me courage to pray for him. I remembered how a friend prayed for many high ranking Thai officers and educated and rich foreigners. So the next morning in his temple, I told him, "You helped us a lot but we have nothing to give you back but I want to pray for you." He said yes. I was happy and started praying for him. While I was praying I was thinking that he might not say 'Amen' in the end of my prayer but I was wrong. He did say Amen. I was more than happy for managing to pray for him in his temple.

Now I know the reason God wanted me to come here. It did not matter whether we got the ID cards or not but God gave me the mission to pray for the monk and I will continue praying for him.

Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story—

those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,
those he gathered from the lands,
from east and west, from north and south.
He turned rivers into a desert,
flowing springs into thirsty ground,
and fruitful land into a salt waste,
because of the wickedness of those who lived there.
He turned the desert into pools of water
and the parched ground into flowing springs;
there he brought the hungry to live,
and they founded a city where they could settle.
They sowed fields and planted vineyards
that yielded a fruitful harvest;
he blessed them, and their numbers greatly increased,
and he did not let their herds diminish.

Psalm 107:1-3, 33-38





Christmas in Burma

Christmas 2011

Dear friends,

We are relaying this out from Karen State and want you to know how grateful we are for each of you and to join you in gratitude for the gift of Christmas this year. Here in Burma, as is true all over the world, there is plenty of bad news but evil is not the only power in the world. The power of good is also here, and is stronger.

We were just in Tha Dah Der village that was burned by the Burma Army in July 2010. It was the fifth time the village had been overrun by the Burma Army since 1958 and the third time it had been burned. Even their large teak church was burned to the ground. In spite of these attacks the people have chosen to stay and rebuild and now a beautiful new church stands on the grounds of the burned one, a testimony to the power of hope and faith. The dedication of the church is on Christmas Day.

At the rebuilt village we all joined together for a

Good Life Club Program (thanks to Partners for all your help in this), a Run for Relief and an outdoor medical/dental clinic. The sounds of children laughing and people singing lifted our souls. As the sun began to set, we finished with a meal served on long bamboo tables in the rice fields.

We are now further north in Karen State, continuing the Good Life Club and medical programs in an area we haven't been to before. Our 59 multi-ethnic FBR teams representing different faiths and serving in 11 ethnic areas are united with us in love and service, as we are with you this Christmas.

As I was working on this message I went to give out some gifts. I asked if anyone needed anything else. We all stopped still when Hsa Kae (Living Star), one of our lady medics, said, "I want my father and mother." When she was 16 years old, on Christmas Day, her parents were shot dead in their home by the Burma Army. I went over to her, held her hand and prayed. I told her I was sorry. She looked at me and said, "It is ok," and as I looked into her eyes, she

Children eating dinner after GLC program.



Children from four villages run in the run for relief.

smiled. Hsa Kae has chosen in the midst of her sadness to reach out and help others. It reminded me of what one of my teachers taught me, "You can live well with sorrow but you cannot live well with shame." Christmas reminds me that God has sent Jesus to help us in our sadness, to free us from any shame and to help us live well.

This year I have also been reminded to take God at His word and to believe He will help us do what He has led us to do. God wants a close relationship with each of us and we can expect Him to answer when we call, lead when we are willing to follow and bring good from anything we offer to Him. I have also been reminded that the story we live is not so much what are we doing for God but it is about God's dealing with us. I want our story to be something like: "The story of God's dealings with the Free Burma Rangers, for the glory of God and, I hope, for the good of others." I want to say, "Look what God is doing." No matter what situation we find ourselves in, we can trust Him and when we do we are free.

Thank you,

God bless you and merry Christmas.

Dave, family and teams

Hsa Kae helping a patient.

Photos, top to bottom: Medic prescribes glasses · Mon relief team sings for Karen villagers during Good Life Club · Kids at a GLC program · Rebuilt homes next to homes burned down by the Burma Army





SHAN RANGER

This is the story of many answers to prayer, and God's working in one man's life. Sai Nawng is married and has one child; he is the coordinator for all of FBR's Shan teams. He first came to FBR in 2004, came back and became a team leader and soon was the coordinator for all the Shan teams. Sai Nawng is a joy to be around, always joking, and can make those around him laugh even across language and cultural barriers – he has brought his team on several headquarters missions in Karen State for training, and is always ready to help with the children's program, never failing to make the children – and all the mothers around – laugh. Sai Nawng is humble and willing to help with anything, equally ready to cook for everyone, write a report, translate, or whatever might be required. He leads the Shan teams like a family, working in some of the most difficult areas of Burma – areas both dangerous and physically challenging to get to.

Here is his story in his own words:

"Originally I was Buddhist and I was converted to a Christian in 2007. Why? Because a problem came into my life. I met a missionary friend and he said to me that whenever you have a problem or disappointment you should pray to God. And I said I do not know where God is – but I did pray for a test and finally God answered my prayer so I learned that God also tests my faith.

When I became a new believer I was faced with many difficulties: my parents, my friends, my relatives, even my leaders started disliking me. They said, "Hey, why do you change your religion after being with strangers?" I honestly said to them that I chose my own way and personal belief. I was even rejected by some friends. They said, "Don't come back here. We don't have rice for you. We don't have water to give." My father was so sad for me.

One test was in 2010 in Shan State while we were on a mission. After we arrived at the village it was even a miracle that God did not allow me to sit down

peacefully but made me anxious so I surveyed the situation and checked the whole area. I did not know what would happen in the coming hours but I felt something, some worry, in my heart. Though I had no peace at that time, I had come to do the mission and trusted the villagers would take care of our safety.

At that time the Burmese soldiers were coming from another route. This wasn't normal and what happened next wasn't normal, but God touched my heart so that when I heard dogs barking I could sense that it was not normal at all and I wanted to find out what it was. I saw a Burmese soldier go across another trail. I could not see very clearly because it was almost dark so I was not sure whether he was a villager or Burmese soldier and I asked the head of the village who that man was and he said it was just a villager returning from his fields. I prayed to see good things then I sat down and talked with the village head and after a while I heard the dogs barking again so I asked the village head again why the dogs were barking so strangely. He said, no, it's not strange.

However I was sure it was not normal and I put on my shoes and looked out at the village and it was full of Burmese soldiers. This was not a good situation and so I put my computer equipment in my bag and unplugged all the chargers and wires but held them in my hands and went down from the house. My friend, Sai Yod, then said that we had forgotten something so I rushed back into the house and grabbed it. When we were out the door, the Burmese soldiers were coming into the village from every side. Then I prayed to God and said, "Help me Lord! I have many things in my hands, and wonder if something happens to me if I will still be able to help the villagers on my mission. I don't want to die now." I closed my eyes and prayed earnestly without paying attention to anything else. I saw the Lord in white clothes standing right in front of me and I went straight at Him. At that time the Burmese soldiers shot me in the back from about 2-3 meters away. While running the impact of the

bullet and my running pushed me into a stream and I felt heat and burning on my back. I thought I was injured and I patted my back with my hand but the pain was from the computer equipment I carried that had stopped the bullet and shattered, burning my skin (I now still have the scar on my back).

As soon as I realized I had survived I said, thank you Lord. Because they were still firing with guns and heavy arms, I asked God to show me a way. I was energized by Him and avoided them firing at me and went around to the right side and about 10 minutes later as I reached the hillside I looked back to the village and it was full of Burmese soldiers. They were shining lights all over the village. I found myself completely safe. I kept praying as I walked on the way. I think God saved me again, as I had never been here and didn't know the area. I prayed the whole night, and for my friend also because we were separated from each other. I was thinking very seriously and kept on praying all night long. The next day I found my team but my friend wasn't there.

At about 3:00 PM that day, the village headman came to me and told me sadly, "One of your men was shot in the back and killed by the Burmese soldiers. He was shot twice in the back." Afterwards, the Burmese soldiers had questioned the village headman about whether my friend was an insurgent; they said he was not because he didn't have any weapons or ammunition. Finally the Burmese soldiers ordered the villagers not to tell anyone about the event or they would come back and kill the village headman.

I escaped and I said thank you to God. I realized that God really blessed me greatly. Since then I trust in him more and more. However, I feel very sad for my friend who was killed. He was the camera man and Good Life Club leader. He was very quiet, patient, very cheerful and loved children. I feel sorry for the loss of his life, he was still young and I always think of him until today." (See FBR story on the death of this team member: <http://www.freeburmarangers.org/2010/09/29/shan-team-member-gives-his-life-for-love-and-for-freedom/>)

Sai Nawng continues to lead his teams on difficult missions to some of the more volatile and unpredictable areas of Burma, and he continues to keep us laughing when we are with him. We thank God for his life and also for his spirit, and for the family that He gives us here on earth that is also eternal. Thank you for your support and encouragement of Sai Nawng and all of us.

God bless you,
The Free Burma Rangers

Photos, from top to bottom: Sai Nawng prays at a GLC program in Shan State · Sai Nawng playing with children at a GLC program in Karen State · Administration · Sai Nawng with his wife.



In Memoriam



Kyar Shell

On 3 July 2012, Kyar Shell, Lahu relief team leader, died of liver failure while on a mission. He leaves behind his wife and young son. He is loved and will be missed by his family, his team and the people he died serving. He was trained in 2004 and served with great dedication until his death. Kyar Shell was a pioneering team leader, leading the first Lahu team in a challenging and dangerous area of Shan State. His efforts resulted in saved lives and needed relief for thousands of Lahu and Shan people. He was a calm, humble man with keen insight and compassion and a man of action who took great risks to help people in need and never sought fame or glory. He was a servant of man and God and we learned much of humility, patience and perseverance from him.



Kler Lay

On 28 March 2012, Saw Kler Lay was killed by a lightning strike during a heavy thunderstorm. He was working inside Burma in his home area of Karen State. Kler Lay was a video cameraman as well as a deputy team leader, and he had been serving his people on a relief team since 2008. He was tough, smart and kind, and always willing to help and encourage others. He set an example of love, service, perseverance and professionalism that reflects great credit on him, his people, the FBR and the KNU. He will always be remembered as a real Ranger who gave his all for his people. In life he was a willing servant and a hope for the oppressed. In death he was a hero giving his all and dying while on duty giving help, hope and love.



Hsaw Reh

On 6 March 2012, eight months into a long-range relief mission, Hsaw Reh drowned while crossing the Pon River in central Karenni State. He had been on his way to pick up a supply of medicine so his team could continue their mission. Hsaw Reh was 23. We are saddened by his death and extend our love and sorrow to his family, his team and his people. His loss will be greatly felt not just by all of us but also by those people he served so faithfully. To Hsaw Reh we want to say, "Thank you and we thank God for you. You were a good teammate and you served your people well – you are an honor to your family, your team and your people and we are blessed to have known you. We look forward to meeting you in what the Karen call 'the undiscovered land.'"

DESOLATION


Karen Eubank

Yesterday, as our trail wound through a deserted area of tall grass and weeds, Doh Say pointed out that it used to be inhabited by 60 houses. I looked again, as that was hard to imagine in the current overgrown state. What I was being told was that it used to provide a full and rich life for many people, but what I saw was a picture of abandonment and desolation. Disheartening – and all the more so because this was at least the third time in our two months that Doh Say had told me the exact same thing in different places. The first time was in December as our team passed by rice fields within mortar range of a Burma Army camp. The second time was as we walked through a two-kilometer stretch on either side of a Burma Army road. This last section was in a river valley with easy access from Burma Army camps in the plains. All these areas had been abandoned, not because they weren't fertile, but because they weren't safe. The nearby presence of the Burma Army forced the farmers to sacrifice the long-term maintenance of their land as well as immediate food supply by pushing them into the mountains where the farming is low-yield slash-and-burn, with long-term consequences of deforestation

and soil erosion. How much more would families be able to produce and eat if oppression was really removed? No one is farming these areas – not even the Burma Army who casts the shadow; they are desolate and abandoned, yet the richness God put in the soil is still there. This desolation is a choice and a consequence. The land itself is not desolate and is full of potential – it is waiting for something – for someone to take courage, for someone to have mercy, for someone to take action. Desolation is not of God, it is not eternal.

What is my response to desolation in myself and others? What is FBR's response to the desolation we witness? What is God's response? The times I have felt desolate, empty, and abandoned are probably the worst I have known. In high school a friend wrote out this verse for me and I've always been thankful for the translation she had that I've rarely seen since: "I will not leave you desolate, I will come to you" (John 14:18). Jesus' words go right to that deep place saying that what I feel is overcome by who He is.

another way to pray



Many families live on very basic foods: rice, vegetables, chilies and salt. On special occasions they may have meat. Decide with your family to prepare and eat a 'meal of prayer' for ethnic people in Burma.

As you cook together Pray for ample fuel for the people, and safety as they gather it. In some regions firewood is scarce. Pray for good, clean water supplies. Many people must carry water a long way.

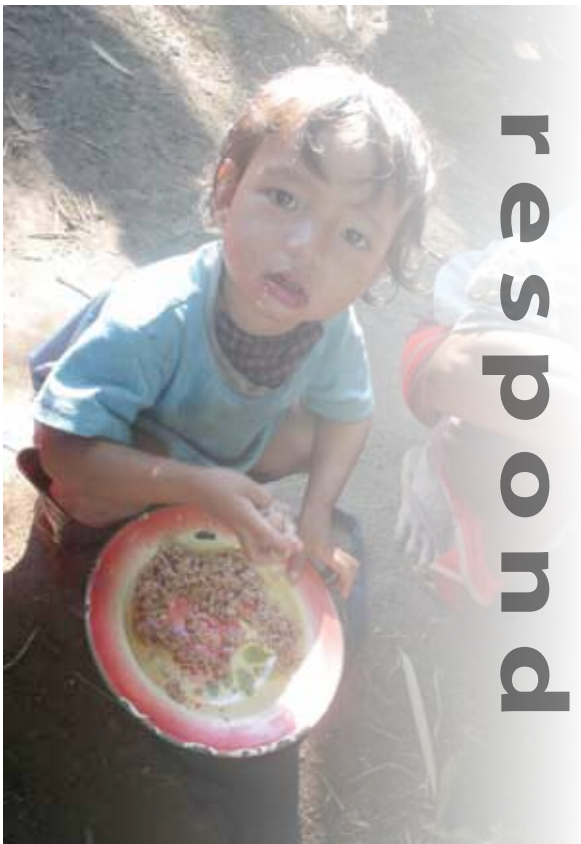
As you set the table Pray that the people of Burma can really settle in their homes, free from fear of having to run away. Pray that all the ethnic groups will have a seat at the table of dialogue in the new government.

As you serve each other Pray that servant leaders will rise up to serve their people, and for wisdom for the people of Burma to know best how to serve each other. Pray for outside groups to know best how to help as changes come.

As you eat Pray for enough rice this year, and every year.
Pray that peace will bring farmers the chance to grow good
food for their families and communities.

As you wash up Pray for the cleansing of lives and hearts after so many years of war and going without the basics.

respond



No Ceasefire Here: Homes Destroyed, Families Separated but the Kachin People Still Stand

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for all your love and support. We are now on a relief mission in Kachin State, northern Burma and here there is no ceasefire. During the training of the new teams, we could hear shells explode as the Burma Army shelled villages nearby with 105 Howitzers, and 120mm and 81mm mortars. Over 50,000 people remain displaced and during this mission we saw over 12,000 of them in eight different sites. The FBR staff trained 12 new teams here: nine Kachin teams, one Arakan, one ABSDF (All Burma Student Democratic Front), and one Ta-aung (Palaung) team, and went with them on an extended relief mission. We gave medical care, put on Good Life Club programs and got as close as we could to the Burma Army to document their activities. Attacks have slowed down this month to three in our area and one we witnessed, but there are still over 110 Burma Army battalions operating in Kachin State.

The first IDP site we visited was a factory on the outskirts of a town that has been designated by the Kachin Refugee Committee, of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), to serve as a temporary home for over 2,000 displaced people, out of over 50,000 in other, similar areas. The first people arrived in early June 2011 after the fighting started and have been here now for one year. The KIO is doing their best to give food, education and shelter to the IDPs but it is still a difficult way to live. In this first site we visited, each family has a 3-meter by 3-meter plywood cubicle, with over 70 of these stuck together under a tin roof in the main part of the factory. It is hot here now, and in the cubicles, stifling.

During this first program, and seeing the situation of these people, anger rose in me at why people were forced to flee and live like this. I thought, "This is why we are in FBR, this is what our mission is about - stand with these people and help them until there is change."

One man who had lost one of his children asked me, "Who cares, and who do I complain to, who do I make a legal complaint to? I have lost my home, my village, animals and one of my sons is still missing since the attacks. What do I do?" I prayed with him and told him to



Homes destroyed by Burma Army in Nam Sang Yang Village.



Homes burned 28 May 2012 near Nam Sang Yang Village.



Children newly arriving to IDP site.



Child in IDP site.

write out his complaint. I told him to give it to us and we would put it out as news and pass it to some new contacts we have in the Burma government and anyone else we can. I told him maybe the government will do nothing but that, above all, God cares and will help him. He said, "Thank you, that makes me feel like I can at least do something, it gives me peace. Thank you, I will try. I feel better now." He had new hope and conviction based on actions he would take and based on his faith that God does care and will help.

We did multiple reconnaissance missions of Burma Army camps, usually only able to get no closer than one kilometer away but sometimes we were able to move within 200 yards of their camps. We took photos of the Burma Army as they occupied the ground that belonged to the Kachin people and as they sat in dominant positions overlooking villages, towns, bridges and the Taping River Dam they had taken. Even as we observed them, I felt sorry for them: they looked hungry, unkempt and not motivated. Their mission is not a noble one and I believe they know it. So we crawl as close as we can, document as much as we can, and even though sometimes we do not want to, we pray for them. All of us are in need of redemption and while we stand with the oppressed, we know the line between good and evil runs between each heart, not between people. We also pray for ourselves to not be wounded, captured or killed as we do this.

On the way to a reconnaissance of a highway bridge held by the Burma Army, we passed five burned homes that the Burma Army had torched two weeks ago on May 28th. They had come through in a 200-man resupply column for one of their forward camps and as they approached the homes they opened fire with rifles and machine guns. Then as the Kachin soldiers tried to hold them off, the Burma Army fired two rifle grenades with chemical munitions. White smoke came out as the grenades impacted and immediately all those caught in the cloud of smoke began to choke, become dizzy and nauseous and their eyes began to burn. Although no affected person has died from these munitions, this may be a chemical more potent than tear gas or military grade High Content CS, as the symptoms persisted for up to three days. As I looked at a broken piece of the empty canister of gas munitions, the Kachin soldier who showed it to me said, "They were 200, we only 12, but we slowed them down and kept them from doing more damage to the village and we are still here." He is less than 5 feet tall and is the same soldier who led us creeping through open rice fields in between four Burma Army camps, right up to a Burma Army position on the Bhamo- Myitkyina Bridge. He is all smiles, all courage, and all commitment.



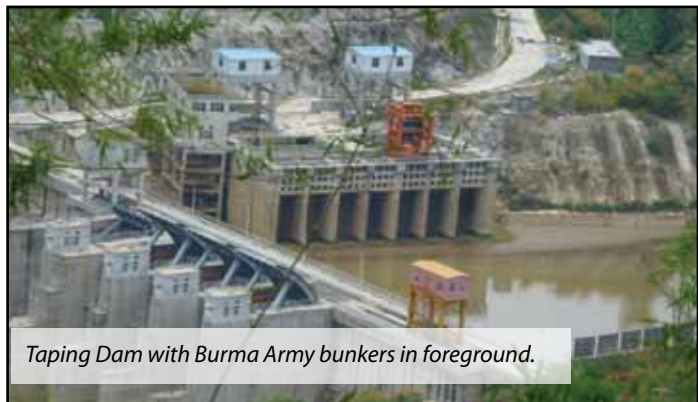
Medics treat patients.



Good Life Club program.



Kachin kids during Good Life Club program at IDP site.



Taping Dam with Burma Army bunkers in foreground.

Remnants of a *home....*

One night as we slept in the pillaged compound of a family who had fled, I found wedding photos of the parents and a series of photos of their young son at different stages of schooling. The pictures that struck me most were of the boy on a podium receiving his 8th grade diploma. The parents had this picture up in almost every room - they seemed so proud of their son. The home, ransacked as it was, still had charm and you could see it was a place of love, warmth and, most of all, a home for someone. The other picture was of the mother in her wedding dress, beautiful and serious. This I found outside the house in the weeds and trash. I was told that the father became sick and died after the attacks started, that the mother and boy fled and now the boy might be in lower Burma in boarding school and the mother in China with relatives. I am not sure how, but I hope to get in touch with these two people to thank them for their home and to tell them it is still a fine home and that I pray one day they can return. On our last day here we were in the middle of an exchange of fire between the Burma Army and the Kachin resistance. No one was hit by the Burma Army machine gun and rifle fire, but the Burma troops remain in their camp above the village and the village remains empty.



I write this from a small dilapidated bamboo hut on the edge of a town ransacked and burned by the Burma Army, and it is clear that the situation in Burma is not simple. In Burma there is more than one government. There is the central government and there are many representative ethnic governments. While positive changes have occurred, there are still attacks and oppression. We had a very good meeting in March with representatives of the central government and we felt mutual warmth and a shared sincerity for change, but on the ground in some areas we see other realities as well: children killed, homes destroyed, churches desecrated, people fleeing. As changes occur in Burma, how can people under oppression and attack be helped in a more comprehensive way? What do you do when oppression which is destructive to both oppressed and oppressor goes on? We thank you for your part in standing with and helping those who are in need and not yet free.

May God bless you,

Relief Team Leader, Family and the Free Burma Rangers
Kachin State, Burma



*Photos: Box - pile of pictures in ransacked home.
Above, top - 5 Burma soldiers in trenches and bunker with machine gun. Bottom - remains of a chemical munitions container used against the Kachin.*

An Unplanned Meeting

***** Update from the CCB and FBR team*****

Dear friends,

Last year we prayed and decided to write a letter to the Government of Burma (Myanmar) telling them that we pray for them, encouraging them to reconcile with all people in Burma and telling them that we were willing to be of help in any constructive way. They let us know indirectly that they were interested in meeting. We discussed this among our teams, praying about the right steps and timing, and trying hard to reach a consensus among ourselves. We were not sure if a meeting should take place, or when would be the best time.

Several weeks later we had an unexpected meeting. On the border, a delegation composed of former Burma Army General Aung Min, the chief negotiator for the government and ethnic groups in the ceasefire process and the one we had been praying about meeting, and others, arrived where we were staying. They were in the middle of a Karen National Union (KNU) / Burma government prisoner release/negotiation.

This is what happened:

We had just returned from a mission and were invited to discuss facilitating a possible future multi-ethnic unity meeting. I had prayed to God and said, "Lord, I want this to be of You, can you just do all the arranging of meetings? That way it will be of You and not be me wasting time or going the wrong way. Thank you, Lord." He did indeed arrange more than I had in mind.

As we prepared to leave the next day, we learned that a delegation of the Burma government was on its way for a negotiation with the KNU. I prayed about what to do and decided that I would see if this was an opportunity to meet. As the Burma delegation, including Aung Min, approached it was taken out of my hands. They

approached me and said, "You are David Eubank, leader of the Free Burma Rangers." I said yes and said that I was glad and surprised to meet.

The meeting was warm and I gave them our FBR DVDs and annual report and told them they may be angry when they look at all of these but that we reported what was true and tried to speak the truth in love. They told me they would like to meet again and invited me to come to Burma.

I asked Aung Min if I could pray. He looked surprised but smiled and said yes, so I prayed – first in Burmese – "May God bless you" – then in English, asking Jesus to lead, help and bless us as we try new ways that we do not know. Aung Min squeezed my hand as we prayed and I felt God's love with us.

As the delegation met our family and the kids' pet monkeys, Aung Min shook hands with Karen and our children and said, "We do want you and your family to come to meet us in Burma. We want to start a new way. Please come." I told them we had been praying about it and, yes, we wanted to come at the right time and looked forward to that.

We do not know what will come of the meetings with the Burma government and if there will be any more. We are grateful to God for allowing us to meet these, who have been our enemies, as human beings. We pray that God will lead us all in new relationships with each other. As we pray, we continue to stand with the oppressed and pray for reconciliation for all in Burma.

Thanks for all of your prayers for this.
God bless you,
Dave, family and teams

Stand for the right Reverend Edmond

Most important for Karen people is unity and understanding the right way for the peace process because now many of the Karen people around the world need the KNU to stand for the right way. We pray for the Karen people's future. Now they have an election and will see how they can work with the government. We also need to pray for Karen churches in Burma: in 2013 they will celebrate 200 years since the Baptist mission arrived in Burma, and also the Karen Baptist Convention's 100-year anniversary. We hope that the Karen will celebrate peacefully at that time. We need to pray for the new Thein Sein government, that God will touch their hearts to have softer hearts, and that they will try to do the peace process the right way. Because now in Burma there is the Muslim and Buddhist problem in Rakhine, and we do not need the religious problem of ethnics against ethnics in Burma. And also we need to pray for the people from Burma along the border that they can come back home peacefully: Karen, Kachin, Karenni, Shan along the border as IDPs to be able to go back home soon and rebuild the village peacefully. I think God will touch the leaders in Burma and open their hearts and they will know Jesus, not be religious but only know Jesus. If they know Jesus, they will do as Jesus said and love each other.

PEACE

Prospects in 2013

Ashley South

The election of a military-backed, semi-civilian government in Burma in November 2010 represented a clear break with the past. The new government, led by President (and ex-general) Thein Sein, surprised many observers by instigating a series of significant reforms. Since late 2011, the country has experienced the most significant political changes since the 1962 military coup, including the release of most political prisoners and relaxations on censorship and freedom of association and the rapprochement between the President and his closest advisers with the country's most famous citizen, Nobel laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, whose National League for Democracy successfully contested by-elections in April 2012.

The other key development has been the agreement of preliminary ceasefires with many non-state armed groups in Burma, including 10 of the 11 most significant. However, fighting continues across much of north and northeastern Burma, and particularly in Kachin State.

A previous round of ceasefires in the 1990s had brought some respite to conflict-affected civilian populations, while not engaging with ethnic nationality representatives' political demands. This time, the government seems willing in principle to engage in political discussions. One of the great challenges is for the government - and particularly Burma Army - and leaders of non-state armed groups to reach agreement on the process and substance of political discussions. In order for peace to be substantial and sustainable, it is necessary to ensure greater buy-in from a broad range of opposition actors, and to include the participation of civil

society and political actors, and conflict-affected communities. In the short-term, one way of achieving greater participation is to promote community-based monitoring of the peace process. In the longer-term, a broad range of stakeholders must be consulted in discussions of a political settlement for Burma.

Many ethnic leaders regard these peace overtures as the best opportunity in decades to address the social, political and economic issues which have long structured armed conflicts, while others are sceptical of the government's motives and afraid of losing control of the process. The sceptics have legitimate concerns regarding the peace process - in particular the lack of substantial political talks (so far), and the on-going fighting in Kachin areas. It would however, be a grave mistake to allow such concerns to undermine the peace process as a whole.

The stakes are high. If Burma can re-invent itself as a country with respect for basic rights, this will be a major achievement - a rare example of a 'pariah state' coming in from the cold. In the process, Burma will likely move away from the Chinese sphere of influence - an important geostrategic objective for Western countries.

The political, social and economic issues at the heart of the conflict will not be easily resolved. In order to address deep-rooted, structural problems, both the government and non-state armed groups will need to act with courage and imagination. Otherwise, the present window of opportunity may close, as the peace process loses momentum.



On 2 May 2012, **Aung San Suu Kyi** was sworn into Parliament in a historic session in which the long-time opposition leader and political prisoner officially became part of the democratic process for which she has fought for so long. Her decision to contest the elections at the lower level of Parliament denoted her acceptance of the process towards peace being implemented by the current central government - though there is still widespread uncertainty and speculation about President Thein Sein's motives and ability to implement true democracy.

Her election to parliament was followed by a tour of Europe and the USA in which she received numerous honors and awards, including delivering the Nobel lecture 21 years after receiving her Nobel prize, and receiving the Congressional Gold Medal. Daw Suu has been picked to head the Parliament's Committee on the Rule of Law and Stability. Her status as democracy icon coupled with her official role as MP will be a challenge to balance, as already shown by criticism of her silence on both the Kachin and Rohingya conflicts. She, as so many in Burma, is navigating the transition, trying to balance responding to immediate crises with the need for long-term preparation.

Arakan State: Communal Violence Displaces More than 120,000

Violence was sparked in Arakan State when a young Arakanese woman was allegedly raped and murdered by three Muslim men on 28 May 2012 in Kyauk Ni Mor Village, Ramree Township, Arakan State. On 3 June 2012, a group of Arakanese people attacked a bus in Towngoo Township and killed 10 Muslim people who were inside. Following these events, violence broke out across Arakan State between Arakanese Buddhist and Rohingya Muslim communities. Many villages and whole neighborhoods of cities such as Sittwe, Mrauk-U and Kyauk Phyu were burned to the ground. Well over 120,000 people have been displaced and conflicts have continued. Most of the displaced are Rohingya people living in camps outside Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State.



Arakan IDPs.

There have been tensions for many years between Arakanese and Rohingya people, many of whom live in the same villages. The Arakan people, who have faced discrimination and oppression at the hands of the Burma Army for decades, feel that they are also threatened by Muslim Rohingyas. The Muslim Rohingya population are widely considered in Burma to be unlawful Bangladeshi immigrants, though there has been a population there for years, and are denied citizenship by the government. However, in the wake of the violence, those who have attempted to flee to Bangladesh have been turned back as illegal immigrants. This leaves the IDP camps in Burma as their only refuge; once in the camps they are not allowed to leave, and, as many of them have lost everything, the camps are their only foreseeable future. As conflict has worsened, villages been burned and people killed, anger and hatred have increased on both sides.

Seeking change: "We struggle not against flesh and blood..."

Stu Corlett | Partners Relief and Development

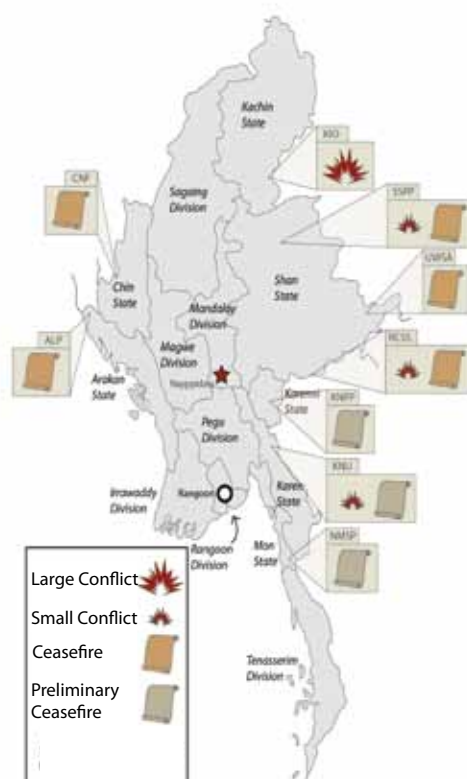
While the world appears to be rejoicing over changes happening in Burma, the reality for the everyday poor person on the ground has a long way to go before the pressure is released.

Earlier this year two of us visited an area six kilometers from Lashio, a large city in Shan State. This area is a "ceasefire" area where little conflict has been fought in recent years. It is under the control of a proxy for the Burma Army. In that area and further east, almost 10,000 acres of land have been "confiscated" from local farmers and sold by the controlling military to mainly Chinese businesses. We met a family who, having had their last parcel of land stolen from them just this year, are now resorting to selling their 14-year-old daughter into prostitution just to survive. This beautiful young girl is being ruined by economic, military and political forces she does not understand.

These communities are being destroyed by evil controlling forces much larger than themselves. I am reminded of the words of Ephesians 6:12: "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and the rulers of this dark world."

For communities to change, leaders must be raised up who will challenge these powers. Voices must rise for the voiceless, and defenders must rise for the weak. Burma has a long way to go until things change for families like these.

Burma: Ceasefires and Conflicts



Note: All groups are in some form of talks with the Burma government.

Good Life Club

Abundant life in the midst of change

Hosannah Valentine

Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh... Ezekiel 11:19 (NKJV)

Karen State, Burma: The tarp hangs loosely, strung up between two crooked goalposts. On it is a hand-drawn map of Burma. Some 300 children sit on the ground, looking at this map of their country. At least, we tell them it is their country – they know it as Burma, while their country is “Kawthoolei” and both are distinct nations. Most of them have never traveled beyond their village tract and the hand-written place-names on the tarp are so much empty space – rising to life only in the attacks of the Burma Army. But today is different. Today the map has come to life through the presence of new FBR teams. Five Arakan rangers stand in front of the children and introduce themselves. They teach the crowd phrases in Arakan language: “Have you eaten yet?”, “Where are you going?”, “Where are you from?” and finally, “I love you.” They sing a cultural song and one team member, 20-year-old Niang, in baggy fatigues and with an irrepressible smile, performs a traditional Arakan dance. Before the next group is called up, the program director asks someone from the audience to come and point out Arakan State on the map. A shy girl comes to the front and points to the space that is Arakan State – but now it has changed: it is no longer empty and abstract but is filled with Niang’s smile, with a graceful dance and new song, and with the strange sound of the words, “I love you.”

Niang wasn’t the only ranger filling in gaps on the map for the Karen children we saw on our mission: this year’s Good Life Club mission included team members from eight different ethnic groups in Burma: Arakan, Karen, Karenni, Lahu, Mon, Naga, Pa-Oh and Shan. We asked, everywhere we went, “Have things changed? Do you notice a change now that there have been elections and the government has changed?”

The answer was almost always “No” – often with a laugh. While their teachers voiced concern, the children laughed, shouted and played through the program put on by our teams, their joy rising spontaneously and seemingly independent of their circumstances. In January, part of our team traveled to relocation sites in the plains of western Karen State. There they met leaders of the underground resistance in these heavily oppressed areas. One of these leaders said, “We have been praying for the leaders to change and thank God we do see some changes. But still there is oppression, so it seems the change is only of the mind. We need a change of heart too. We pray now that God will grab Senior General Than Shwe’s heart!”

We had hoped to bring our full children’s program to these areas as well, as they are so far from the reach of outside help. However, and despite the rhetoric of change from the Burmese government, there was still too much insecurity. We traveled to a small military outpost about four hours’ walk from the plains and



FBR medic and high school student teach health with the anatomy apron.



Student at GLC program, identifying Shan State on map of Burma



Arakan ranger with Karen children.

put on a program for the few teachers and pastors that made the walk to meet us. When we asked them about the possibility of visiting their villages, there was palpable fear as they replied that they wouldn't survive the repercussions of our visit. We were disappointed and discouraged that there was actually so little real change. Several days later, as our mission drew to a close, we took time to interview our group of interns. One by one they told us their occupation, where they were from and why they had chosen to come on the mission. Only then did we realize that they were from the plains and were the very group of people we had been hoping to reach – and after a month of helping with GLC they would have a solid message to bring back to their homes. What had seemed like a blank wall turned into an open window and we were able to see God's hand at work in unexpected ways.

In Ezekiel 11:19, God promises to replace a stony heart with one of flesh. This is a change we want to be a part of, in Burma and wherever we find ourselves. We are so grateful for our teams, for young people like Niang, who are also part of that process – filling in blanks with joy and love. And we are grateful to all those that support us in prayer and materially, to be part of God's work of changing stony hearts to hearts of flesh.



Photos: Top - Lahu ranger performs health drama for Karen children. Bottom - Mon, Lahu and Karen rangers sing in Karen State GLC program.

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. John 10:10

One way to help the Good Life Club is to put together children's packs and mom-and-baby packs. These packs are then delivered to mothers and children by relief teams.

KIDS PACKS

- Small comb and mirror
- 2 children's toothbrushes
- 1 fingernail clipper
- 1 small toy
- 1 picture of you
- 1 postcard from your city or state with a Bible verse

MOM-AND-BABY PACKS

- Small fingernail clippers
- 2 outfits for baby, including cap, mittens, shirt (not a onesie) and socks
- 1 teether
- 1 picture of you
- 1 postcard from your city or state with a Bible verse

SHIPPING INFORMATION

Thank you for your help in sending the packs to us. At this time, it is still not possible to send charitable bulk shipments to us. Please send standard household/gift size boxes with the description "household/ personal goods, no commercial value" on customs form.

Send packs airmail (USA: not to exceed 79 inches length/width/ girth) to:
Christians Concerned for Burma (CCB),
PO Box 14, Mae Jo PO,
Chiang Mai 50290,
THAILAND.
Mark the Package: GLC



God comes alongside us...



We had just finished evening rounds, when they arrived, walking down the mountain path from a village several hours north. "My baby won't feed," her mother explained. "And she has been coughing for 4 days." The 10-month-old girl lay, sweaty and weak, in her mother's lap. We did the work all medics do, determining the diagnosis (severe pneumonia and dehydration) and picking the treatment (IV fluids and antibiotics, paracetamol for the fever). We satisfied ourselves that the child didn't have malaria, started an IV and calculated our doses. We pulled out our green bottle of oxygen, carried in over the mountains for just such an emergency. Placing the tubing under

By Dr. Kaw,
Teacher at Jungle School
of Medicine-Kawthoolei

the baby's nose, we turned the regulator knob and watched for a while, satisfied that we'd taken all the steps we could. We prayed together and I went off to bed, leaving the midwife, staff and students to care for her.

I got up at 3am to take my turn. Mars, glinting red on the black stage of the sky, hung above the jungle hills surrounding our school. As soon as I came into the hospital I heard the difference. The hiss of oxygen passing through its tube had diminished. I could barely hear it. I checked the regulator and saw that the bottle was nearly empty. I turned it off for a moment, and, after explaining the situation to the staff, we turned it back on until it sputtered to a stop a few minutes later. No more oxygen, and a very ill infant. As we sat together around the parent and infant, we prayed. I thought of this girl's life, stretched out ahead of her like the dark hills around us, one beyond the other. A village girl attending school ... a teenager helping her parents farm the rice ... a young bride ... and becoming a mother herself. I prayed, "God, don't take those hills away from her. Don't let it end here. Give her the gift that we can't."

In the dark, the midwife helped another patient through a miscarriage. A boy with malaria woke up, cold in the final hour of night, until his father built a fire behind the hospital and brought him out to warm up, wrapped in a blanket. We sat with our little girl, praying and watching as the sky slowly brightened. She began to cry, and the mother put her to the breast. She took it eagerly, and was able to feed. I leaned back against the post and watched her doing what babies do, and knew that she had turned the corner.

Over the following days she recovered fully, and headed back up the path home with her mother and father. So often, when we have given the best we have, it still is not enough. But God sees, and comes alongside us, and brings His own hand of healing into our little hospital and the lives of our patients. And for that we are grateful.

*Photos: Above - staff medic gives oxygen.
Background - the inpatient department
at JSM-K.*

One Medic's Perspective

Toh Win

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Matthew 9:37-38

Jesus said these words to his disciples. But this is also the word that Jesus gives me. As I look at the Karen situation, there is no doubt that they need help. We have only a few workers, with less skill.

I am a medic working with Free Burma Rangers based in the Jungle School of Medicine Kawthoolei (JSM-K). Since I was small, I have been interested in medicine. When teachers used to ask me, "What do you want to be?" I used to say, "A doctor." During the many years of civil war in Burma, the Karen people have had poor access to health care. There are simply not enough health workers. The few we have do not have the chance to study medicine to a very high level. So many Karen people die from causes that are simple to treat.

Therefore, considering the Karen health situation as well as my own interests, I began school, even though I only had the support of my mother. My father had died when I was seven. I studied hard and knew that God was going ahead to open a way for me. By the grace of God, I finished Kawthoolei High School and joined a Bible school for four years. I graduated from the Bible school in 2005. In that same year, I chose to attend Community Health Worker (CHW) training. After I finished the CHW training, I worked for the Karen Department of Health and Welfare (KDHW). I worked in the office and helping to work with TB program. In 2008, I joined the Free Burma Rangers, and continued to learn more about medicine. As I had grown up in Karen State and continued working in Karen State, I learned much about the needs of my people, especially relating to health care.

In 2011, according to these health needs of the Karen people and with the support of the Karen leaders, FBR established the Jungle School of Medicine-Kawthoolei (JSM-K) inside Karen State. There were many needs to be met. FBR needed more skilled medics to serve Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs). Karen State needed more skilled medics for its clinics. New medics needed supervised medical practice. They also needed to learn skills and knowledge that matched the needs of villagers and IDPs. The whole region needed standards, medical guidelines, medicines and research. With those needs in mind, JSM-K was opened in February of 2011 and graduated its first intake of 20 new medics in February 2012. 18 medics will graduate from JSM-K in February 2013. We hope that this school will produce enough skilled medics each year to begin meeting some of these basic healthcare needs.

We call this school, "the Jungle School of Medicine" but we have high hopes that our standards will become very professional. It may happen slowly, but I have a strong belief that through God, the school will continue to grow in this direction.

My final hope is that students and staff will be healthy both physically and spiritually and that we will continue to gain the knowledge and skills to be able to provide good healthcare. I pray that through our work and service people will directly experience God's love.



Photos: Top - Toh Win · Bottom - Relief team medics from JSM-K on a mission.



New Legs for the Wa

"Sha" was 8 years old and on her way to school when mushrooms caught her eye. As she stepped off the path to pick some, the landmine exploded and her life was forever changed. Sha lost her right leg almost to her hip. That was nearly nine years ago and she has grown from a little girl to a young woman, unable to run and play with others.

In late 2010, a Wa pastor found Sha a very shy 15-year-old, using crutches made from plastic water pipe, who couldn't keep from crying when he took her photograph. On this same trip he met 53 other people who needed prosthetics. This pastor set out to find a way for them to request help from the Prostheses Foundation of H.R.H. The Princess Mother of Thailand.

It took two years of negotiations, but, with backing from the Royal family, arrangements were finally made for patients to cross the border into Thailand and return to Burma each evening. The project was eventually scheduled for early 2012, to take place in the town of Arunothai, Thailand.

On Friday, April 27, 2012, the big trucks rolled in and the Prostheses Foundation of H.R.H. The Princess Mother came to the very small town of Arunothai. By Sunday morning all was ready and the first 28 patients were picked up at the border crossing. Sha was among them—more shy and withdrawn than when she had first met the pastor. She cried. She didn't want to talk. She didn't want her picture taken. She put her head on the table and cried some more. Her life was over, and she knew it. If there was any hope for her, Sha certainly couldn't see it.

The most dedicated and kind female technician and our church team worked to encourage her, speaking words of hope and love. They prayed with her – for her. But Sha couldn't see hope yet.

The next day 22 new patients arrived and nine returned for fine-tuning of their new legs – including Sha. Walk a little....adjust, walk more, adjust some more. Suddenly, hope was born in Sha. She was walking. She could see it. We could see her seeing it. Over the next two days, Sha's leg and the others were finalized. In all, 58 people from the Wa area received legs along with ten patients from Thailand who also received legs. On the last day, all 68 patients returned to receive their new legs and join in a ceremony of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving to God. Thanksgiving to the many people who worked and gave behind the scenes. Love and hope opened the door to Sha's receiving the gift of a new leg and a new faith to begin a new life. **"Now faith, hope, love abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."**



Sha, one year ago.



Sha and others cross the border.



Sha, laughing after receiving her new leg.

Wait Until You Receive

Doug Yoder

Gathered together, they asked Jesus, "Lord, has the time come for you to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, for you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit ... and you will be my witnesses ... to the end of the earth."

Acts 1:6-8 (translation by author)

As Acts opens, Jesus had shown himself alive to the disciples by many demonstrations (v. 3). We can only imagine their joy, wonder, and relief. After some weeks for reflection this must have moved into the direction also of a question: what next? Given all the extraordinary events and some time to reflect on them, maybe the time had now come for Jesus – who without question is the resurrected Messiah of Israel – to restore the kingdom to Israel? Israel was still under Roman occupation even with Jesus resurrected. Maybe the time had come for Israel's kingdom to be fully restored?

Jesus' response to his disciples' question is the last thing he tells them before being swept up to heaven before their very eyes. They are Jesus' last words. He says two things: one about knowledge, the other about power.

He says first that it is not for us to know the times or dates the Father has decided. This comes like a gentle rebuke to natural human curiosity. This curiosity can be strong, especially when it comes to the restorations of kingdoms to their just and rightful owners. We can want to know, and to know now, when this is going to happen. This can be dangerous because this isn't far away from jumping the gun like Saul did, who got out in front of God's timing and lost his part in what God was doing. It is just "not for us to know" some things, maybe especially the big things that people would really like to know. We wouldn't know what to do with this kind of knowledge anyway. We couldn't handle it

and we'd mess up.

The second thing Jesus says is that when we wait on the Lord (v. 4) we will receive power – the power of the Holy Spirit. What an unexpected thing to say in response to a question about a human kingdom! Jesus explains right away that the power we receive from God is not an earthly kind of power for a human purpose. The power God gives us is the power of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses for Jesus, even to the very ends of the earth.

So the Book of Acts gets started, and the early church gets going, by Jesus telling his followers two simple things right before he goes to heaven:

1. Knowledge about the rise and fall of human kingdoms is not for you.
2. Wait on God to receive power from the Holy Spirit to be my witnesses.

When will Burma be free? We don't know, and Jesus tells us we don't need to know.

Let's wait on the Lord to receive power from God: not earthly power to bring political change, but spiritual power to be witnesses to the Messiah of Israel, the only Savior of our souls and systems.

You number my wanderings;
Put my tears into Your bottle;
Are they not in Your book?
When I cry out to You,
Then my enemies will turn back;
This I know, because God is for me.
In God (I will praise His word),
In the Lord (I will praise His word),
In God I have put my trust;
I will not be afraid.
What can man do to me?

Psalm 56: 8-11 (NKJV)



Girl looks at new IDP site in Kachin State.



Mon team medic treating a patient in Mon State.



Karenni team medic treating a patient in Karenni State.

"Never Surrender"

Dave Eubank

'Never Surrender' are the final words of the motto of the Free Burma Rangers, which reads:

*Love each other.
Unite and work for freedom, justice and peace.
Forgive and don't hate each other.
Pray with faith, act with courage, never surrender.*

I have always hated the idea of surrender and would never surrender. Whether in sports, climbing or as a soldier, surrender was not an idea I would tolerate. But as I look back at my life, I realize that I have chosen to surrender many times: to selfishness, pride, and sin. It took failure in my life to see that I had surrendered many times to bad things and had not surrendered enough to good things - and had not fully surrendered to God.

I had it backwards.

Surrender to God is humbling and leaves you wide open - open to His mercy, forgiveness, love, and way. When I do surrender to God I feel an instant release, cleansing, forgiveness and freedom. God loves each of us whether we surrender to Him or not but when we surrender to God a new life and relationship opens up for us. This is a relationship of love, forgiveness, direction and freedom. We are never to surrender to sin, selfishness, to the pressure of other people, but we are to surrender to God.

In our work in Burma we do not want to surrender to fear or fatigue, to oppression or injustice. But we do want to surrender to God and be part of His love for all people in Burma. I want the story of my life and the story of FBR to be: never surrender to sin but to constantly surrender to God.

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