



SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST MISSION

International – Papua New Guinea / Malawi Africa

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Dear Pastor, Church and All Supporters;

Lu 15:4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

Lu 15:5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Lu 15:6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

Lu 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

This is Monday evening as I write this report, there is much to tell, and therefore I will break the report into parts in order to simplify things.

I started packing on Monday afternoon and between the domestic chores it was late before I was in bed. 03:00 hrs. I was up cooking my breakfast and doing final packing. There was a team of twenty people including myself so with all these strong men there was no problem with porters to carry the gear, and backpacks.

We set off from the mission station at 08:00 hrs. Security measures had to be put in place and directives given before leaving. It was not long after we started our hike that the jacket was ready to come off. Even at six thousand feet elevation with a brisk temperature it does not take long for the body to start warming up.

The climb was steady, and somewhat challenging, there is no such thing here in PNG as an easy hike. The mountains are rugged; the footpath is usually dotted with mud holes ranging from ankle deep to knee deep, jugged sticks, sharp stones that can slice through a boot's sole and clay mud, which is like grease. With two inches (50 mm) of rain a day, things stay wet, muddy and slippery.

There is either the straight forward engagement way of hiking, meaning you just walk through anything and everything (this is not recommended) or you pick and choose

where foot placement will be, this is the recommended way, however it requires careful foot placement, which in turn requires a constant measure of jumping from side to side, evading wet footgear, (wet feet).

It is both taxing as well as mentally exhausting. Our hiking went well, we were averaging two thousand feet an hour with short breaks in-between. The mountain streams found in various places are packed with natural minerals and maintain a constant temp of near fifty degrees. I usually fill up my water reservoir at one of these places; this particular one is tucked away in the mountains at seven thousand five hundred feet.

My hike food consisted of mixed nuts and honey. I usually carry the former as well as raisins and dates. They are a good source of protein, energy, and stay the course. After four hours of steady climb we reached the top of the mountain, taking thirty and then starting our decent into the Levini Valley. No matter how many times I have seen this valley and had the privilege of taking pictures, it is always lovely enough to capture again and again on camera.

At nine thousand two hundred fifty feet we topped out the last mountain, took fifteen min to rest and started our decent into the valley. To record the hikes on video here require an extraordinary sense of balance to eye coordination, one slip and it could cost you your life (literally).

Two thousand feet we descended, and though its quicker in terms of time, it is harder in terms of balance, and constant strain on the leg muscles. The next hour and half we hiked through swamp ground, until reaching our destination. There was a crowd of people well into the hundreds that were waiting to greet us.

It had been a good day, The LORD had *(Psalms 40:2) "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings..."*
(Proverbs 4:26) "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established."

It had taken us seven hours to travel what I estimate to be about twelve miles, the natives can do this hike in some four hours but I do my best to just try and keep up.

Pastor Phati, who is the pastor of the church hosting the Bible conference, had in days past constructed me a small bush house. All the materials used except for some nails, door hinges and a hasp/bolt lock for the door were all cut from the bush. I have some pictures of the house, it may not appeal much to some but it was dry and a place to hang my hat. Being seven thousand five hundred feet at the venue the daytime sun is more light then heat, night, morning and afternoon hours are quite chilly and require heavier clothing.

The Natives sleep with fire heat, but the 'prophets quarters' had no such place for a fire. The windows were simply framed windows with fly wire, the outside and inside material covering the walls is simply a reed that is flattened and woven to form a mat, therefore outside temp is easily translated inside.

I did not have a Temp gauge, but by what I could tell, night temps would have dropped into the low fifties. Yes I know many reading this, may call that mild and actually like it, but having spent twenty years in Africa where the temp's range into triple digits I still like the heat more then the cold.

The day being far spent it was more of a matter of settling in, setting up camp and preparing for the evening. One good thing about life in the bush here is that firewood is of no shortage and this means I can take a hot bucket bath. I even had my own little bathroom constructed, simple yet private.

Water was heated, food was prepared and the evening was under way. It was good to finally sit down even if it was on a wooden bench. Interesting how everything is relative to where you are in life.

These people are a simple people and live a simple life, their stomachs tell them when to eat and their eyes tell them when to sleep and outside of that, not much matters.

Until our next report may our LORD keep each of you in the centre of HIS will and smile upon your life.

....to be continued

In His Name,
Missionary Peter A. Halliman

