



## LEGACY TEACHING INSTITUTE

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Brethren in Na Mawn, Kachinland, Myanmar. L to R: Htoo Gay, Ngai Nu (Ah Thang's younger sister), San Mai (Ngai Nu's daughter), Ah Thang (Lashi Naw's wife), Hkawn H pang (Seng Aung's mother), Seng Pan, Blessing, Seng Aung, Naw Naw, Htoi San (music teacher), Tan Oo ( Ngai Nu's husband), Lashi Naw, Ma Tang (Lashi Naw's brother).

25 January 2018

Dear Brethren and Fellow Laborers,

Over the winter break, SengAung, our pastor in Jawk Taing, Myanmar, and his family went to NaMawn in Kachinland. HtooGay, a Legacy grad (who is also finishing up his last year in high school), went along. There we have a small group of brethren of which some are also family to SengAung. It's quite a long trip. Here is what Seng Pan wrote to me: "Thaungoo to Mandalay 8 hours, Mandalay to Kachin state Hopin town (18 hours by train), Hopin to NaMawn 1 hour by motorcycles. It takes two nights and two days long. We can go by bus too, more quick one and half day long but, more expensive."

Leon and I have been on that train from Yangon and we call it the "rock 'n roll" train. It was so very cold. Even in Chiang Mai, it was in the '60s and we were all bundled up as if it was going to snow. There are no heaters in these tropical countries of Burma and Thailand, so we wear three and four layers of clothes.

Since it was during the school Christmas break, Seng Pan wrote the following to me on Viber: "Seng Aung give sermon about X'mas and Jesus was not born on December, we should be careful and wisely

to think and avoid pagan worship at NaMawn. We didn't visit the lake (Indawgy) because very cool. We sit (*outside*) beside the fire wood all the time. During Seng Aung at Myitkyina (capital of Kachinland) his grandmother's cousin died. He was 106 years old. That place was where we studied at high school—SengAung went there too. Moe Palel family also doing well except Naw Eh Eh Hku (his mother's sister). She just drink only liquid and cannot eat yet.”

Now as I write to you brethren, please pray for her, as she is getting weaker, and for God to help her at this time. Seng Aung just called me and she will be going into the hospital tomorrow (that is the 18<sup>th</sup>). So this letter is getting urgent. Seng Aung called me this morning again and said that the doctor wasn't there yesterday and they need to go again on the 19<sup>th</sup>. That's Burma...but she is in God's hands.

Seng Pan, the pastor's wife also had phoned me after she and her children (Blessing and NawNaw) had safely returned to JawkTaing. SengAung stayed back and was going to try to visit the town of Bhamo. He said he wanted to make sure things were safe before he continued, due to the fighting that is still ongoing in Kachinland and other parts of Myanmar—news that we don't usually see on T.V. or in the papers.

Violet, a church widow, lives in Bhamo. Leon and I have not seen her for many years and she is in her 70's. Long ago, before we even met her, she received the “*Plain Truth Magazine*” and that's how she learned about God's way of life. She is the only member there. I used to write her letters, but she never received them. On a couple of previous visits, I had once seen the luffa vine growing by her home and asked her if she could give me some when ready. Then one day I received a sack of luffas.

I decided to buy them from her to give away to my friends and family. SengPan wrote: “About Bhamo, on the way **not** safe time... He really wants to go. He wants to go to Shan state too. If possible this summer . . . “

In the meanwhile, as the pastor Seng Aung and family were away from Jawk Tiang, MoPalel, the assistant pastor, took care of matters. Here is what MoPalel wrote: “Hi Aj Gloria, when Seng Aung was away at Kachin state, I preached two sermon and two bible teaching (*studies*). First, there was, ‘Do you know the grace of God and count it in your life?’ Second, sermon was, about Daniel's visions (Daniel 2, 7, 8 and Matthew 24:24). Bible teachings were about the feasts, reviewed them about the feasts. Another bible teaching was about Kingdom of God. The Topic was, a safe place... Every topic are from Legacy (*school*).”

I also spoke on the phone with MoPalel about the family of PweSay (who had died a couple of months ago). Her husband NohNohPoh became very discouraged after his wife's death. Two of the youngest



Myitkyina and Bhamo are on the northern Myanmar border with China. You can see Chiang Mai in the northern part of Thailand, and to the left in Myanmar, is Taungoo, about thirty minutes from where our Jawk Tiang brethren live.

children were in an orphanage. The oldest (14) had decided to quit school and work for his family. MoPalel and SengPan went to encourage him, and also to encourage his son to continue school. He is 14 years old and in the fourth grade. They all took the advice and, thanks be to God, the children are all back home and the son decided to go back to school (though the SDA school said he had missed two months, which will require he repeat the entire grade next year). The family is all back together. Please pray, especially for NohNohPoh for strength and wisdom, as he must continue to lead and provide for his children.

### UPDATE ON LEON

Leon has already been home for about two months. Though he is still progressing daily, he still has a long way to go. His speech therapist says if graded between 1 and 100, Leon is somewhere between 55 and 60. The words he is speaking are quite clear and he is communicating more than before. But, answering the questions spontaneously is difficult. He is still struggling with memory. As it is coming back, we are very amazingly surprised at times. It comes in spurts. During all of this, Leon is still joking and can be quite humorous. He is realizing that he cannot say the words he wants to say and knows now that this is really a difficulty. The speech therapist told him that all the words are there in his brain—but are all scrambled—and that he needs to concentrate on pulling them out, so as to bring the neurons back together. Even as I am writing this, Leon has made continued improvements over the past week. From the very beginning I have kept Leon in on our meetings and Legacy discussions.

Leon is continuing with physical therapy and now walks longer distances more quickly. Sometimes he rests a couple of minutes. AhJar is helping him with physical therapy, so I can work on Legacy matters during that time.

As Leon and I continue to read daily from the Bible, it is always very moving and deep for him, as he has a love for all of God's words. In his prayers he is always so thankful for God's blessings, His Holy Spirit, the whole truth, and even being able to pray. Leon's prayers are getting longer and more detailed for those who are also suffering and going through trials. For the first time, he prayed for himself—which means he realizes that he had a stroke and lacks speech and memory. Leon is also starting to read a little on his own and was encouraged to try and write down his thoughts. His block letters are clear, but the cursive words are not so legible. We just keep on practicing. Every day he wants to see the news to know what is going on. At this time, due to the recommendations of the therapist, he has not yet been on the internet. We get a few news channels to watch, such as such as R. T. (Russia Today), Aljazeera, or Thai news.



Before Leon's walk during Brandon's visit.  
L to R: Norah, Brandon, Leon, Bronson, Jib

Monday, Leon had a very important doctor's appointment with the brain surgeon who has been treating him. He had put Leon on Enalapril (an ACE inhibitor) and had halved it before Leon went home. His blood pressure was getting too low, so I had taken him off it completely. It still remained too low, so I slowly started to take him off the Beta Blocker. I told the doctor about this, and he said that it was very good—that Leon's blood pressure should be a bit higher to help with the brain function. Now Leon's BP ranges between 120 and 140, whereas before it could dip as low as 100. I also mentioned to him that the heart doctor would not agree, and asked what I should tell him. He said, "Tell him I said to do so." This is the same doctor who put him on magnesium after reading a report about stroke victims that was sent to me by a church member. It seems that many stroke victims are very low on magnesium, and Leon's was very low.

Leon and I were actually able to attend services this past Sabbath in Chiang Mai for the first time since the stroke. We are extremely grateful for this progress, though he will not at this time give sermons. We were so very encouraged; this truly shows God's intervention. I had asked a few COG speakers to please send me a sermon once a month. Vince Szymkowiak responded immediately and sent us an audio sermon ("Passover Demonstrates to Us: God's Love"!!) with notes attached. "Mr. Vince" (as they say in Thailand) and his wife, Carol, served in the Fort Worth church at the same time Leon and I were serving in the Dallas East church. At services, Leon very nicely introduced his "'ol' buddy, Vince Szymkowiak." Can you believe that Passover is just ten weeks away? I will also be sending these sermons to our pastor, SengAung in Burma, as well as a few other dear Karen friends.

Our son Brandon came to see his father for three days after serving in the Philippines for a month with a COG group. He has been living in Australia for some time already. This was very positive and uplifting for Leon, me, his brother Bronson, and his family.



First evening with the Dobson's. L to R Back Row: Denise Dobson, Dave Dobson, Gloria holding Eamon, Norah (center), First Row: Bronson, Owen, Leon, Ganya, Brennen, and Jib

Recently, Leon and I were so excited to have Dave and Denise Dobson visit us. They, too, were in the Philippines for UCG meetings. Since being near to Thailand in this south-east Asian part of the world, they decided to come. Years ago, in California, Leon was assistant pastor to "Mr. Dave" (as they say in Thailand). We have kept

in touch over the years, and now had the time to catch up a bit. Friends are friends, whether near or far, but always close in heart. Leon did incredibly well in conversation as we discussed issues and circumstances. Their visit was truly a godsend! I am including what Denise wrote in her e-mail about their visit, because I thought it would be good to hear it from another's perspective:

David and I were absolutely amazed at Leon's progress during the three days we were with you. If we described it to someone who wasn't there, they would be

incredulous because it would sound like a great exaggeration. But it's true. God is definitely working very visibly in Leon's healing and recovery!

We arrived on Monday, January 15, and Leon was able to walk into the airport and sit to wait for our arrival from the bag claim area. That afternoon and evening, he spoke a little bit, very slowly and slightly slurred. He seemed happy and satisfied to mostly listen to conversation. He really perked up when the grandkids arrived -- naturally! On Tuesday David and I were amazed at the great improvement in Leon's speech in just one day! He spoke more fluently and fully participated in the long discussions we had that day. His speech was not so slow and halting. Occasionally he would get frustrated when he couldn't think of a word to express what he wanted to say. Leon shared his thoughts and understanding on the establishment of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by God in His promises to Abraham. He was sharing deep thoughts and was able to verbalize very well. Our discussions moved quickly, and Leon was able to keep up and fully participate.

On Wednesday, Leon's personality showed more as he made jokes and playfully teased the children. He and David shared family stories with each other and laughed quite a lot. The family dinner at the restaurant was beautiful and memorable, with Leon fully participating in the banter and also helping himself to all the goodies on the table. ;-)) On Thursday, you and Leon drove us to the airport and stayed awhile to chat before we had to go to our gate. Leon was walking better, more confidently, and he was expressing himself so well. We so enjoyed our conversation over coffee before saying goodbye.

#### **PRAYER REQUEST FOR ANITA SHOWERS (LEGACY VICE PRESIDENT)**

Anita Showers, Leon's sister, has been working with Legacy from the very beginning (almost 20 years), and even before that, when we called our letter the "Karen Letter". Anita has been suffering with hip pain that extends into her side and lower back over the past six months. It is really limiting movement, as she must rest it quite often during the day; it even keeps her housebound days at a time because of the pain and exhaustion. Any issues she has like this are multiplied because of the fibromyalgia she has suffered for years.

Let it be known that Leon and I pray for all of you, our brethren, wherever you are; and that we bring before our Father God your trials too. We continue to ask for God's mercy and miracles. Leon and I appreciate all your prayers you have sent to our Father in Jesus' name.

We also want you, our Fellow Laborers, to know that we appreciate all the support you have given to us in so many various ways to keep God's work going all these years; and the kind words of assurance to continue to keep Legacy going in the future.

We are all one body and we suffer and/or rejoice together as we continue on the "road less traveled," until Kingdom come.

In Christian love,  
Gloria and Leon