

Greetings Again in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ,

Here's the Latest News Concerning Isan Pastor Boonta and wife Pawn's Condition:

Following is a condensed overview from me (to-date: 10/8/2013)—followed by excerpts of new emails from missionary friend, John Middlewood

Pawn and Boonta (BT) have been on a roller coaster ride concerning her condition and his "sanity," but they're hanging in there. Pawn seemed to take a turn for the better shortly after I sent out the urgent prayer request letter concerning her condition, dated September 25—prayers do matter! (*Abbreviations are pre-marked and self-explanatory.*)

Pawn began to experience less pain, regained her appetite, sat up in bed and conversed. The Udon Provincial Hospital doctors later decided to send her back to the Nakhon Panom (NPK) Provincial Hospital for recovery and recuperation, with instructions for the medical staff in NKP to follow their directions specifically. (*NKP doctors had been at a loss, and now the Udon doctors had made some positive headway, so asked NKP doctors to follow through. I am not aware whether they did or not, since Thai people dislike taking advice from their equals or lessers.*)



BT was overjoyed. Thinking Pawn was as good as better, invited a crown of friends and relatives into her room for a celebratory get together, as is the custom of all Isan people. This sudden activity likely triggered the relapse: Pawn got worse than ever and BT was beside himself with despair—Pawn's condition has been a serious trial for his faith as well. The NKP doctors and my friend, missionary John Middlewood (*retired USAF*) and wife Maeo (*a Thai Christian lady and retired teacher*) suggested they go to Khon Kaen (KK) University Hospital, which they did.

KK University Hospital is one of the better Thai hospitals: it has more modern equipment, more up-to-date capabilities, and being a university hospital, has higher standards than both Udon and NKP provincial hospitals combined. KK University Hospital immediately sent a team of specialists to work on Pawn, who was in more-horrible condition by then. Meanwhile, Pastor BT was going out of his mind in despair, a serious trial on his otherwise strong faith. The KK University Hospital specialists, after conducting MRIs and a variety of other tests, concluded that Pawn had a brain tumor, but weren't sure whether it was malignant or benign. Later, they concluded it was benign and dormant, and not likely the cause of her troubles. They also surmised that her reactions could plausibly be caused by parasites, the type that migrate into one's brain and reside there—a result of eating uncooked meat food-types (*a quintessential part of all Isan and Lao people's dietary habits*).

The latest excerpts from missionary John M. in NKP:

(10/9/2013) As of last night, the word from Boonta is: was the benign brain tumor causing the problem? **No!** Was it Parasites? **Yes!** Caused by eating uncooked Thai-Isan/Lao foods. Pawn is presently getting medication to kill the parasites. Boonta said one set of doctors thought she could go home, but other doctors still had not decided... I am waiting to hear more from him later today as to what is going on. John M

(10/10/2013) Just spent quite a bit of time talking to Boonta on the phone, and here is the latest... He was able to talk to the doctors this morning. The results are: the brain scan and spinal tap came back positive for another "bug" [a generic Isan term]. I don't know what else to call it at this point. It is supposed to be smaller than the parasite, but can cause just as much damage... **The treatment is dangerous and can cause damage to healthy brain cells in some cases. So before treatment is begun, they want to be able to see the "bugs" and not just evidence that they are running around. At this point it is unknown as to how long this is going to take. Now, the doctors do not want her to go home until this problem is solved. PLEASE PRAY FOR GOOD SUCCESS**

Present costs are running about 1,000 Baht per day, or \$32.00 US. This provides lodging and food (three meals) for three people. Praise God, He has provided up to this point; pray for his continued provision for Pawn and Boonta and [invalid daughter] Bow God Bless, John and Maeo

(10/11/2013) ... the only thing I (*John*) can get from Maeo (*John's wife*) and Boonta is, it [the "bug"] is smaller than a parasite and comes from the same uncooked food as the parasite—raw pork - liquids - and other uncooked food that the folks around here love to eat... I understand, they are trying to isolate [the "bugs"] to a specific location in the brain... Boonta said they have seen the evidence in the brain scan and spinal tap, but haven't yet seen the things themselves. However, the doctors actually saw the parasites, which have now been pretty much destroyed. **MORE PRAYER & PRAISE**

The good thing is, the hospital is *not* going to release Pawn until they get this thing under control. The doctors told Boonta that if Pawn came home now, chances are she would be back very quickly and may even in worse shape... they have medication that can kill the thing, but it is pretty strong and might kill of healthy brain cells in the process, so they are waiting to see if they can identify the specific point in the brain where these things are.

We are waiting to get through the weekend. If we have to, we will make another trip to Khon Kaen. I will have to stay overnight because my [aging] body won't take the 8-10 hour drive in one day. I will see what kind of report I get from Boonta in the morning. Thanks for your prayers. John

So, you see, as modernized as Thailand seems, Bangkok and Chiang Mai being very westernized—along with other larger provincial cities, like Khon Kaen—the majority of the various more-remote regions are a long ways behind, namely the Northeastern region where the Isan people dwell (*and the Northern region's mountainous Hill Tribe areas*). In fact, the remote Isan village where we first lived and ministered was not unlike traveling back in time a few centuries, stuck in the Dark Ages. The lifespan of most people didn't reach beyond 40, if that. And, it was common for women to say how many children they bore, adding that only *x* amount are still living. Although it's better today, these are the areas and same conditions under which Boonta and Pawn grew up.

Please be in prayer as I return to Isan next weekend, October 19 (*returning December 18*). I will be concentrating on the review process of the newly-completed Isan New Testament. Printing will begin as soon as the review process is complete—hopefully by December 2014. Praise God; a Christian-owned business on the east coast has already committed \$30,000 towards this needy endeavor. That will certainly go a long way, but more is needed, what with a present population of 23-million Isan souls still without hope of God's Word in their language. Remember, this is the *very first* translation ever done in their own heart language of Isan!

It goes without saying that Cheryl and I are thankful for your interest and undying partnership, both in prayer and financial support, without which we would be unable to continue.

By God's Grace and for His Glory,

Ron Myers

Ron and Cheryl Myers

God's Word For Isan – www.IsanBible.org

Also, thanks to all who have given towards Pastor Boonta and Pawn's needs. I will be giving them your gifts when I arrive next week... Ron

