

WEEK 38 • SEPTEMBER 23, 2023

Indonesia: The Sabbath-Keeping Dog

Exodus 20:8-9—“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.”

The villagers gathered along the airstrip as mission pilot Gary Roberts landed his plane at Suminka, a remote village on an Indonesian island.

As Gary stepped out of the plane, one man pointed to the three angels painted on the plane and asked, “Is this a Seventh-day Adventist plane?”

Surprised, Gary asked the man how they knew about Adventists. Gary listened as the villagers told him how their dog had taught them to keep the Sabbath.

Several years earlier, an Adventist pastor named Moses and a lay person named Darius had a dream in which an angel told them to go to Suminka and preach. The two men knew God was calling, so they set off on the three-day hike to Suminka.

Arriving at the village, they announced that they would hold evangelistic meetings for a week under the village tree. But on the first day, Pastor Moses fell sick with malaria. The villagers thought he would die.

Pastor Moses was feverish all day. Then at 5:00 his fever broke. He stood up and preached, but when he was done, his fever returned. This happened every day. He was sick all day, but at 5:00 he preached about God’s love, the Sabbath, and a healthy diet.

But when Pastor Moses appealed to the villagers to accept Jesus, no one responded. The meeting ended, and the two men returned home disappointed.

Life returned to normal in the village—until Saturday. The village’s hunting dog, Dolby, got up early and plodded over to the tree where the evangelist had preached. When his owner called him to go hunting, Dolby refused to move. Dolby hunted every other day, but not on Saturday.

The villagers noticed that Dolby had stopped eating wild pig. “Dolby has become a Seventh-day Adventist!” one villager said. “If he worships on Sabbath, we should too,” said another. Many villagers began to keep the Sabbath and stopped eating wild pigs.

When Pilot Gary told Pastor Moses the story, Pastor Darius flew to the village to teach the villagers. Today, about half of the 200 villagers worship God on Sabbath.

We worship God in many ways—by keeping the Sabbath, by praying, by telling others about God, and by returning God’s tithe and faithfully giving our regular offerings, called “Promise.” God doesn’t need our money, but He wants us to learn to trust Him to meet our needs (Phil. 4:19) when we put Him first in our lives.

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