



November 2019



Dear AWR Friend,

"Can God forgive me? I've killed so many people. I don't deserve His mercy."

When Daniel asked me that question with tears in his eyes, I was deep in the jungles of Mindoro, Philippines, in rebel territory. I was there with our AWR filming crew specifically to meet Daniel, because his story is so unusual in a very tense situation.

DANIEL THE ASSASSIN

At a young age, Daniel was trained to kill. His father was a commander in the New People's Army (NPA) communist rebel forces, and his cousin and uncle also joined the rebel troops. Daniel was born into that life, and he knew no other way to live, except hiding in the mountains—and learning how to use an AK-47.

It turned out he was good at it. So good, in fact, that when he was just 13 years old, he killed for the very first time. He became so good at killing that he was promoted to executioner of the NPA, and soon he was the

lead hitman for the NPA—not only in Mindoro, but in other parts of the Philippines as well.

Whenever a termination order was issued, Daniel became the enforcer. He was like a messenger of death, always duty-bound to execute everyone on his hit list.

Daniel found that it was easy to kill corrupt politicians, policemen, rapists and robbers, but others troubled his conscience. He didn't always understand why certain people had to die, but he knew he needed to be the best executioner in the NPA. He even killed the vice mayor of Roxas in Mindoro. The more he killed, the more numb Daniel became, never wanting to remember the faces of his victims.

KILLING A CHRISTIAN PASTOR

Then one day, Daniel was ordered to kill a Christian pastor. He thought it would be just another kill, but when he saw the man, there was a kindness in his eyes that moved him. The pastor begged Daniel to reconsider, but he hardened his heart and showed no mercy, brutally ending his life.

Daniel told himself he was just doing his duty—the best job that he could for the rebel cause—but he could not forget the pastor's face. It troubled him, and he finally decided he needed a break.

By this time Daniel was married, and he missed his wife and family. Rebel soldiers are allowed home leave for three days every two months, and he was past due for a break. So he requested his leave and headed home.



Daniel was trained at an early age to work as an assassin for communist rebels in the Philippines.

When he arrived, everyone was glad to see him, but he noticed his family was listening to the radio. His wife called him over and insisted that he listen with her. Whatever it was seemed important, so Daniel joined them.

The interesting thing is that Daniel recognized the station to be Adventist World Radio. He knew of other rebel soldiers who had been listening to AWR, and several who had given up fighting and been baptized. But this was the first time he himself had listened to the program.

Daniel heard about peace, and how it was possible for him to have it. He heard of a loving Savior who would leave 99 sheep and go out in search of the one that was lost. His heart was moved, and in that moment, Daniel understood *he* was that lost sheep. But surely, God wouldn't forgive him. How could He? He'd killed a pastor.

This troubled Daniel, but then, just as his leave was ending, he learned that his closest cousin and friend had died in battle. Suddenly, rage filled Daniel's heart, and he vowed revenge.

As he prepared to leave, Daniel's wife noticed the murderous rage in his eyes, and she knew it meant more people would die. She also feared for her husband's life. Praying that God would help her husband, she asked him to listen to just one more program before he left.

She turned up the volume on the radio, and in just that moment, the speaker was talking about forgiveness. Daniel had never heard such words. Forgiveness was not a part of his life. He felt the speaker was talking directly to him. As he listened, his hardened shell collapsed. God's words pierced his heart, and he knew he could never be the same again.

Could God forgive Daniel? Can Jesus love and forgive even the most vile killer?

Daniel returned to the NPA headquarters and requested an extended leave. He contacted our AWR headquarters in Mindoro and he and his wife received Bible studies. As we studied with him, Daniel made the decision to be baptized. He said, "Looking at my past, I know I am unworthy, but still, God has forgiven me. Only He could change my wretched heart."

Daniel takes courage in the story of Saul—a killer for a wrong cause he believed in—until Jesus called him.



Cami Oetman along with Duane and Kathy McKey at the dedication service of the newly trained "rebel army" for Jesus.

A few days after our trek in the jungle, Daniel was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But that was not the end of the story, because we gave him a projector and our *Revelation of Hope* evangelistic sermons, and Daniel is now sharing the precious message with the rebels in the mountains of Mindoro!

When I gave Daniel the projector, I put my arms around him and said, "You're now an AWR evangelist!" He smiled the biggest smile ever and said a resounding, "Yes!"

God took Daniel not only from "Broadcast to Baptism" but from "Saul to Paul!"

There is one more story I need to share from the opposite side of the world. Last month I promised you an update on Pastor Borjan and his work in certain unnamed countries. Here is that update:

THE OX — THE REST OF THE STORY

A few weeks ago, Pastor Borjan's* phone rang. A very quiet voice on the other end said, "I only have two minutes. Is this the pastor who sends the audio messages of hope?"

"Yes," Pastor Borjan said.

"Well, listen carefully and don't say anything."

The man proceeded to tell Pastor Borjan that he was the commander in a well-organized anti-government force that has been creating chaos and terror for many years. "I've been listening to the audio messages and I have many questions. Would you be willing to meet with me? I'll personally guarantee your safety."

Pastor Borjan was astonished. He swallowed hard before replying, "Certainly. I will be in your country soon and will meet with you."

So, after the border crossing I shared with you last month, Pastor Borjan met this general in an undisclosed location. Quickly offering a prayer for wisdom and protection, Pastor Borjan entered the room where this tall, powerful man stood. He immediately realized why they called him "The Ox"—he was an ox of a man!

His face was deeply lined by a life of hate and crime. Now at retirement age, he had been in this organization since he was 17 years old. After a few pointed questions to verify that he was indeed Pastor Borjan, the commander began to speak with a quiet voice of authority.

"I have never been a religious person and have lived an active life of crime. For most of my adult life, I have been unable to sleep much at night. All I do is replay in my mind the things I have done. I am not a good man."

For the next two hours, this powerful man confessed crime after crime. "Despite all this, when I began to receive the audio messages, I knew for the first time in my life that God is real, because as I listened, I had a strange sense of peace and of God's presence. I now sleep much better at night, but I would like you to pray for me. I simply can't believe that God can forgive me."

Pastor Borjan said, "Yes, you have done terrible things, but God's grace is greater than all our sins combined. He is able and willing to forgive you if you ask Him. He died for you even before you were born—before you committed your first crime."

They spoke into the wee hours of the morning as the general asked questions and received answers from God's Word.

A few weeks passed, and Pastor Borjan received another strange call. He didn't know the caller who said, "Do you remember the man you spoke with the last night you were here?"



Pastor Borjan was evasive, not knowing who was calling, but the man continued, “I’m talking about the man who said he didn’t know if God could forgive him. Well, he now believes God has forgiven him and wants to be baptized!”

By the time you receive this letter, “The Ox” will be baptized—his baptism is scheduled for next week!

Isn’t God amazing? You’ve heard me say that during the last year, something has been happening—it’s no longer “business as usual” at AWR and around the world. God’s Spirit is at work! We are reaching the “unreachables”—those whom the world deems beyond help and beyond hope.

We have seen whole churches accepting the message. Even as I write this letter, we just received news that 15 churches in Papua New Guinea have just become Adventist! Next week, I’m headed to Israel to baptize a group of Arabs who have accepted Jesus. Something is definitely happening!

This month, we celebrate Thanksgiving—the most famous dinner of the year. But there is another famous dinner mentioned in the Bible, where the King invites all of humanity—every kindred, nation, tongue and people. He commands us to “go out quickly to the streets and alleys and bring the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame . . . go to the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in!”

If there is anything to be thankful for this month, it’s that Jesus is calling sinners to the greatest banquet of all time. He’s calling the Daniels and “The Oxes” of the world—and He’s calling you and me. But He’s also asking us to send the invitation, because He doesn’t want anyone to be left out.

Thank you for partnering with us in this—the greatest calling ever—the saving of souls for the kingdom of heaven!

Yours in the Blessed Hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Duane McKey".

Duane McKey
President



The AWR film crew on the way to Daniel's rebel village.

P.S. What amazing stories of God’s love! I know you are thankful this month for the privilege of knowing Jesus—I know I am! But it’s a privilege we must share with others. That’s what AWR is all about. That’s why we exist as a ministry—to share the good news that Jesus is coming soon! Thank you for your prayers and support, which make this possible.