



An image comes to mind of the quintessential foot chase down a wet, dark alley. The criminal, ahead, kicks over barrels, scales walls, and throws anything at hand, attempting to trip up their pursuer. Depending upon the story being told, the “good guys” either leap over the obstacles, adroitly scale the walls, or power through the barriers like some juggernaut of justice – unstoppable.

As believers, by Jesus’ authority and call, we chase the enemy through the darkened, trash-laden shadows of creation with the intention of stripping him of his grip on humanity. His desperate response is to toss as much junk in our path as possible – to delay the inevitable. (Hebrews 12:1)

This prayer guide is intended to help us go around, over, even through the barriers he tosses our way in order to *give those walking in the dark the opportunity to walk in the Light of Life*. It is written specifically to address the needs of the Somau Garia people of Papua New Guinea, the missionaries God is sending to them (Todd and Angela Owen), and the generations ahead that will benefit from access to the Word of God in their heart language.

Our plea throughout this guide is that Jesus’ name will be honored and glorified through the answers to our cries to our Heavenly Father. Pray fervently and specifically. *Thank You for praying!*

DAY 1 – *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”* Matthew 6:33. *“You do not have because you do not ask God.”* James 4:2. The first verse is a precious promise given those who follow Jesus without reservation. The second a rebuke to those who quarrel and fight to selfishly acquire more. Somewhere in between we find the need to approach the throne of grace with full assurance of faith – trust – in a loving Father who provides for our needs as we serve Him. **Ask God to break through the barrier of financial need in order that the translation of the Somau Garia New Testament might resume soon – that Jesus’ name might be exalted in the nations.**

DAY 2 – *“Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.”* Philippians 4:14. Paul was writing the Philippian church, commenting on their faithful partnership in his ministry. They were at times the only ones concerned with his physical needs. Physical needs are more than just money. In the area of Papua New Guinea that we serve in, tuberculosis is pandemic, as is malaria, amoebic dysentery, etc. Our Somau Garia co-workers are at risk for debilitating disease. One of our Somau Garia co-workers, E.P. had tuberculosis in his bones and was hospitalized for five months a few years ago. It has affected his mobility. **Pray that God will protect and sustain the Somau Garia nationals (and their families) who have given themselves to the work of New Testament translation. Ask God to grant them strength and strong health so that nothing will hinder access to the Word of God in the Somau Garia language. Ask God to break through the health barriers that hinder the work of transformation (through the Word) among the Somau Garia people.**

DAY 3 – *“For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.”* Romans 6:14 In the years following the publication of the Gospel According to Mark in the Somau Garia language, one of the more skilled program workers, S. K., took a moral detour from the straight and narrow and has been banished from the team. **Ask God, by his grace and patience, to bring S.K. to repentance and renewal. Ask God to work powerfully through the Gospel of Mark to cut S.K. to the quick, that he might serve God with his whole heart. Pray also that, when he turns back, he will be restored to the translation team – we need his skill. Pray that God will break through S.K.’s heart issues, that he might be fully God’s man.**

DAY 4 — *“He [Jesus] disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”* Colossians 2:15. Somau Garia culture is what some call “shame-based”. Saving face is of high value in their social status and function. A few years ago, one of the clans neighboring our house in Uria Village burglarized our house. When I returned last year to lay the foundation for our return, most expressed a level of shame that will require ritual to make right. *Ask God to break through the pain and shame of being caught in the stealing, that Jesus’ grace and power will penetrate Somau Garia culture. Jesus shamed spiritual powers, not those he came to save.*

DAY 5 — *“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”* Psalm 133:1. Somau Garia culture is a consensus-based culture. Decisions are not made in isolation as there is a much higher level of interdependence than we know in the West. One spiritual battle that must be regularly waged in their culture is for *unity of believers*, especially those devoted to translating the New Testament into the Somau Garia language. *Ask God to break through the barrier of disunity among the Somau Garia co-workers — that His name might be honored and his body strong. Ask God to unite them by His Spirit.*

DAY 6 — *“The word of God is living and active . . . Discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* Hebrews 4:12. The Gospel According to Mark has been available in the Somau Garia language since 2007. *Ask God to break through ignorance of his word, his character, his power, his salvation by means of this slender little book. Ask God to break through the barriers of illiteracy and allegiances other than to Him, that these precious men, women, and children might know Him who died for them.*

DAY 7 — *“For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God . . .”* 1 Thessalonians 1:9. Somau Garia culture is filled with references to “bush gods” which hold many devotees to this day. Fear reigns supreme in so many peoples’ lives. *Ask God to break through barriers of old bondages and allegiances to false gods. Pray that through coming into a life-transforming relationship with Jesus, fear will flee and our friends will walk in freedom and joy.*

DAY 8 — *“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions . . .”* Galatians 5:19-20. All mankind has at one time lived in the flesh. Where idolatry (bush god) worship is present, a priesthood of those gods’ devotees are also present. In our village alone, five of our neighbors were active sorcerers — some claiming to do good, others evil. *Ask God to break through the barrier of sorcery and the bondage it creates in peoples’ lives. Ask God to set the Somau Garia free of bondage, freeing them with the Truth of the Word.*

DAY 9 — *“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.”* 1 John 4:18. The long history of false gods and bondage to sorcerers has created a fatalistic *fear* in Somau Garia (and many other Melanesian) culture. There is an ever present fear of reprisal for transgressing the will of the false gods. Reprisal? Being waylaid and consumed by demon monsters en route to the place of the dead, sudden death while sleeping, sickness, or ruined crops. *Ask God to break through the barrier of fear to establish the reality of his love for the Somau Garia people.*

DAY 10 — *“The king said to me, ‘What is it you want?’ Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, ‘If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it.’”* Nehemiah 2:4-5. It has been seven years since my family and I left Papua New Guinea. The Holy Spirit has quickened our hearts to return and finish translation of the New Testament. We have prayed. We are now in the process of making our needs known to “the king”. *Ask God to break through the barrier of resourcing the translation of the Somau Garia New Testament. Time is of the essence. Ask God to raise up ministry partners to resource this vital and generation changing work.*

DAY 11 — *“You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.”* I also told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me. They replied, *“Let us start rebuilding.”* So they began this good work. Nehemiah 2:17-18. There is a remnant of Somau Garia speakers drafting Luke and Acts awaiting our return so that we can work on checking and revising their work. Our houses and offices in Uria are in disrepair. **Ask God to break through the barriers to restarting the translation program. The foundation is there — it just needs repair.**

DAY 12 — *“Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, ‘The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.’”* Nehemiah 4:19. Spiritual warfare is intense. Part of our hiatus from PNG these last seven years is partially because of that fact. The mission community is hard pressed. Our Somau Garia co-workers are hard pressed as they work on translation, care for their families, and are opposed by the enemy of our souls. **Ask God to break through the barrier of spiritual opposition that constricts the life out of so many. Ask God to empower the saints through increased awareness of the spiritual landscape, through increased dependence upon the grace and power of the resurrected Lord. Ask God to carry us through the battle victoriously.**

DAY 13 — *“Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.”* 2 Thessalonians 3:1 While there are some Somau Garia who are open to the good news, many are resistant. **Ask God to break barriers of resistance to the gospel. Ask God to break through spiritual, physical, and social boundaries that it might spread rapidly and be honored. Ask God to open the hearts of the sorcerers and shamans to the gospel, the hearts of clan leaders, the hearts of those who fear loss of power if they submit to the King of Kings.**

DAY 14 — *“And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.”* 2 Thessalonians 3:2-3. Violence takes many forms — people hurting other people, earthquakes shaking the ground, traffic accidents etc. The Somau Garia people have known many tragedies due to violence either visited upon them or that they have visited on others. **Ask God to break through the barrier of violence that creates an atmosphere of fear and mistrust in many Somau Garia speakers. Ask God to grant his peace and forgiveness to those who would harm others.**

DAY 15 — *“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.”* Colossians 4:3. It is God who opens doors that no man can shut (Rev. 3:8) and it is right and good to ask him to open the door for the message of the mystery of Christ. **The Somau Garia people are a passionate people; an influential people. If the door stood open for Jesus to come into their hearts and dine with them (those who would open the door to him), thanksgiving would ring out and the gospel would spread in every direction across northern New Guinea. Ask God to open the door for our message, that Jesus’ name will be held in high esteem all across New Guinea.**

DAY 16 — *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”* Revelation 21:4. Burned into our souls is the sound of mothers wailing over dead infants or young fathers destroyed by disease or violence. Fear, anger, and ritual bubble up from a fountain of grief. **Ask God to break through the barrier of mourning and pain to show his gentleness, mercy, and power over death to these people made in the image of God for his glory. Ask God to fill Somau Garia hearts with the hope of redemption, with the dream of heaven, with the reality of the Comforter imbuing them with life.**

DAY 17 — *“Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now God has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”* 2 Cor. 5:2-5. **Ask God to break through the barrier of hopelessness. Somau Garia culture reflects a view of a very dismal and uncertain life after the grave. Ask God to show them, by his Spirit, life both now and forevermore.**

DAY 18 — *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”* Ephesians 6:10-12. The ten years we were living and working in New Guinea were pocked with the craters and scars of intense spiritual battle. **Ask God to strengthen us against the evil day, to give us wisdom and insight into how to employ the armor of God, to grant us victory over the darkness that looms on the horizon.**

DAY 19 — *“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”* Ephesians 4:1. Missionaries are called to a very different life than most people. The pressures and ongoing stress can push the missionary to the limit. Yet, we are exhorted to walk in humility, gentleness, patience, and long-suffering in love. **Ask God to break through the barrier of weakness that would allow us to live less than to our calling. Ask God to intercede in our hearts, minds, and bodies in such a way as to reflect the glory and majesty of Jesus from fragile and broken vessels.**

DAY 20 — *“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’”* Revelation 7:9-10. The Somau Garia people are a people with a unique culture and language and purpose given them by God for his glory. **Ask God to break through the barrier of hardened hearts to bring a remnant of this people into that great throng gathered before the throne in heaven.**

DAY 21 — *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations . . .”* Matthew 28:18-19. On Jesus’ authority alone we are given marching orders – a commission to go and make followers for Jesus from all nations. On one side are senders sending out those ones who go. It takes both senders and goers for this commission to be fulfilled. **Ask God to break through the barrier resourcing. He has called many to send and many will not. He has called many to go and many will not. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field. The harvest is plentiful! But the workers are few!**

THANK YOU

Thank you for setting aside time in your busy schedule over the last 21 days to intercede for both the Somau Garia people of Papua New Guinea and for our family, called and equipped to live with them, translating the New Testament into the Somau Garia language.

This call on our lives pervades our thoughts, intentions, and prayers as we seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus to bring his life and light and Word to a people who need the transforming power of the One who has conquered death and sin. We certainly need Him. We have shared 21 moments of prayer together as we’ve prayed through this guide. Yet there is much, much more for intercession.

Every moment, every event, every attempt at getting the word out regarding this call and this people is a distinct opportunity to connect with God in his dream, his vision, his promise to gather men and women from every language, people, nation, and tribe around his throne in heaven. Inasmuch as we go or send, we are participating with Christ in the realization of that dream.

Invest yourself in Him: in prayer, in service, in giving, in caring for one another, in surrender, in moving into your world with the message of the mystery of Christ. Embrace his calling upon your life.

Thank you for abiding with us in prayer these three weeks. Your investment is shaping history.