HUMBLE BEGINNING IN THE SOUTH

By Uri family

We arrived in Hat Yai City on September 2, a trip by bus which took us 14 hours. Hat Yai City is the business center of the Songkhla province, being the gateway to the three Muslim provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat leading to Malaysia and Singapore. The southern heat was quite bearable with cool winds compensating its bustling city atmosphere. Pastor Luesak Yang, Hat Yai SDA Church Pastor, happily ushered us to a local vegetarian place, a family business for many years, and there we first savored the warm welcome of Hat Yai’s diverse cultures of Thai, Chinese and Malay. Then we proceeded to the church compound where a room waited for us, while our AMR Director, Sir Ranny De Vera, stayed at Pastor’s house. When Sir Ranny left a day after, that’s when Abraham’s life sank in.

Just like Abraham of the old days, we packed our needed belongings and accepted the call to be assigned here in South Thailand. We didn’t know where specifically we will start the work among Ishmael’s descendants. The South is too vast area to start with. Our minds were filled with excitement, with happiness to be working alone as family again, letting God fulfill His promise in us. The initial results were…Expanding circle of friends, venturing nearby places, participating in church activities and sharing God’s wondrous love.

Hat Yai is like Philippines in so many ways and where the common profession is teaching. For our tent-making, especially for securing our working visas, we scouted for schools and submitted our pertinent documents. We asked Tata’s schoolmate from MVC to give us a ride within Hat Yai area for applying. Moreover, Pastor Luesak accompanied us to Bang Khan (3hr-drive) and Tab Jin (2 hr-drive, visited twice) for nearby schools and we got the same reason for not hiring this time: no school budget. Others told us that most work abounds last week of October and so we continued submitting our applications in Hat Yai and neighboring cities. Our SULADS Philippines’s experience prepared us for greater work here, understanding on how He led us in the past that He will do the same for us, in His time. Someone said he was inspired to look at Heiaggy being God’s little servant, accompanying her and got used to living simple life wherever God called us.

Few weeks ago, we received a call for job interview at a government bilingual school and some friends also recommended schools in which we eagerly responded. On the other hand, Pastor Luesak recommended for the last time any chance for us to be at Betong since plans for Bang Khan and Tab Jin didn’t materialize for considerable reasons, he opened the plan for Betong. Betong is very near in Malaysia which means that practical for visa run and five Filipino SDAs longed to have more Filipinos in their area since it took 5 hours to get there. We prayed for Betong and finally communicated a Filipino family there who talked to the Mayor of any teaching job vacancies. The mayor contacted school directors and waiting for the school’s decisions. A lot of opportunities are in front of us but we rather choose to wait for His perfect time at the same time never slacked to do our best in applying.

While we continue with our “tent-making hunting,” and being away from the rest of our co-missionaries, we found a home here. Our philosophy in life will also be: Our mission school is our HOME. And we believe, we have it here already in the South and we will have a specific one very soon. Things never turned out always as we wanted them to be but the words of hope in Job 8:7 has it all: Though thou beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. With much prayer and meditation, God will do great things here.