

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS,  
AND THANK YOU TO ALL OUR  
FINANCIAL PARTNERS.

FEBRUARY 2026



**MATTHEW & SARAH THOMPSON**

Missionaries to the Bibleless of Papua, Indonesia

Hello Friends,

### More in Common Than We Realized: Life on the Move with the Murkim

When asked to describe the Murkim people, one of the words I often find myself using is semi-nomadic.

A semi-nomadic lifestyle is when people move from place to place but regularly return to a more permanent home. Unlike fully nomadic groups who are always on the move, semi-nomadic communities usually have a base village and travel (often seasonally) for things like gardening, hunting, or trading.

### Packed in a Net-Bag

It's not uncommon for us to ask, "Where is \_\_\_\_?" and hear responses like, "Oh, they went to their family garden for a few weeks," or "They're staying with relatives in another village for a month or two," or even, "They went to the city for medical care and will stay for half a year." At any given time, the number of people actually in the village might range anywhere from fifteen to fifty.

Sometimes I stand in quiet amazement watching the women. They load up their babies and a handful of belongings into their net bags and head off into the jungle, walking toward wherever "home" will be for the next little while. They are incredibly flexible. They don't seem rattled by the transitions. In fact, they often grow restless if they stay in one place too long.

### Packed in a Suitcase

Recently, after a two week stay in the city, at 6:00 in the morning, I was packing the boys' favorite stuffies, pacifiers, and the noise machine into a suitcase before catching the little plane that would take us back to our village. It struck me then that, in this sense, we have more in common with the Murkim than I realized.

While we aren't semi-nomadic in the traditional sense (moving for hunting or gathering) we do live a very mobile life. We spend most of our time in our village home, but we frequently travel to the city for supplies, work, and Christian community, and will soon also be traveling to the States for furlough. It often feels like we are always on the move.

I'll admit, I (Sarah) am not quite as flexible as the Murkim women. But again and again, God provides the strength we need for each transition.

Love in Christ,

Matthew, Sarah, Azariah, & Malachi

### Prayer Requests & Needs

- Grace in transitions
- The translation team formation process
- For ongoing language and culture learning



Murkim ladies with their net-bags



Sarah & the boys on the plane



Malachi is six months old

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MARCH 2026

**MATTHEW & SARAH THOMPSON**

Missionaries to the Bibleless of Papua, Indonesia

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS,  
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FINANCIAL PARTNERS.

Hello Friends,

This month was full of language learning, assigning roles for the translation team, and training for OneStory/Project24/7.

While we were in the village, we gained good momentum in language learning. It is so exciting to understand more of what is going on around us in what not long ago was just a wall of sound. Now we are recognizing words, understanding simple commands, and even beginning to follow basic outlines of conversations.

During our time in the village, we also made decisions about the translation team. Out of ten candidates from different villages, we selected four as main translators who will come to the city with us for translation workshops. The rest of the team will help between workshops while we are in the village. They will help with checking stories for naturalness and clarity, and with continued language learning and linguistic analysis. We were able to make announcements about the team in two of the main Murkim villages before returning to town. The people received the selections well and are very excited about translation starting soon.

After a good time in the village, we returned to town for a week-long OneStory/Project24/7 training. Fourteen facilitators attended, who will each help lead seven language groups in translating twenty-four stories from Genesis through Revelation. The workshop focused on equipping them to guide the MTTs (mother-tongue translators) in putting together and checking the stories.

Together with the MTTs, consultants, and the wider cluster, we will walk through the process of shaping each story from Scripture. Facilitators will prepare and share the story in Indonesian for the MTTs to understand themselves then translate into the local language, and together we will check and refine it. Through multiple layers of review, community feedback, and collaboration, we aim to ensure every story is clear, natural, and accurate to Scripture. Through this process, we not only translate twenty-four Bible stories into the local language, but also have opportunities for evangelism and discipleship with our team.

Please pray for us and the Murkim team as well as the other facilitators and translators for the other seven language groups in this cluster as we begin training with the MTTs in a few weeks.

Love in Christ,

Matthew, Sarah, Azariah, & Malachi

### Prayer Requests & Needs

- Wisdom to lead the translation team well.
- The translators to come to know Jesus.
- Project24/7 starting this month



Murkim Translation Team



The boys in the jungle



Facilitator Training

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