

Long Walk to God, Part 2

THAILAND | May 10

Pada



Last week: Twelve-year-old Pada wondered why his big brother, Morja, left the family religion and became a Seventh-day Adventist in Thailand. Morja invited him to find out for himself by moving in with him, his wife, and their three sons.

Weeks and months passed as Pada accompanied Morja and his family on the long eight-mile (13-kilometer) walk to church every Sabbath.

Pada continued to wonder why Morja had become an Adventist. He didn't have any immediate answers. But he noticed that Morja was very faithful about going to church on Sabbath. It didn't matter if it was raining or cold, the family always got up before dawn and took the long walk to church. He also noticed that Morja was very faithful with tithe and offerings. Every Sabbath, he put some money in the collection plate. Morja explained to his younger brother that the money actually belonged to God.

"I'm returning to God what already is His as a thank-you gift," he said.

Pada had lived for the first 12 years of his life with his mother in a very poor home. He didn't understand how Morja could afford to

give away money. But he noticed that Morja never seemed to lack money. There always was enough food and other necessities.

A year passed. Two years passed. Three years passed. Morja's three sons grew older and went to an Adventist school in another town. Morja was not rich, but somehow he found the money for his sons' tuition.

Pada had never gone to school. Now he was 15, and he wished that he also could go to school. As he thought about his predicament, he wondered, "Could it be that this is why Morja became an Adventist? He isn't rich, but he never needs anything. He has food and clothes and can send his sons to school. He loves the God of heaven, and the God of heaven provides for all of his needs."

A love for God took root in Pada's heart. He longed to live for the God who provided for all of his brother's needs. He longed to live for the God who had been providing for all of his needs even before he knew Him. He gave his heart to God and was baptized. Even though Pada didn't have any family who could help him, he entered first grade at the Adventist school when he was 17. He studied hard. He worked hard to pay for his studies.

When he finished school, he decided to



teach others about the God who provides for everyone's needs. He went to Mission College (now Asia-Pacific International University) and became a pastor.

Today, Pada is a pastor and a leader of the Adventist Church in Thailand. He has a wife, whom he met at the Adventist school, and they have three daughters. He has a good education. He drives a nice car. He earns a comfortable salary, and he faithfully returns tithe and offerings. His family always has enough food and clothes.

More than anything, he loves telling others about the God of heaven. He returns to the village of his childhood in the mountains on the border between Thailand and Myanmar. The mountain people who live there remain very poor, and few believe in God. Pada always stuffs 50 or more envelopes with 50- or 100-baht banknotes to give to the villagers. It isn't a lot of money, but it's a valuable gift in their eyes. When he hands out the envelopes, the villagers greet him with big smiles. He hears them saying to one another, "Pada is one of us. He grew up here, but he has a good education, a nice car, and a comfortable salary. His God is taking care of him. Maybe his God can also take care of us."

He prays that the mountain people, his people, will know one day that his God is already taking care of them and wants to save them for eternity. 🌍

Part of a 1988 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering went to help build a dining hall and second building at Asia-Pacific International University, where Pada trained to become a pastor. As a student, Pada helped construct the dining hall. Just as the impact of that Thirteenth Sabbath Offering is still being felt through the lives of Pada and many who have studied at Asia-Pacific International University, this quarter's offering will also have a long-lasting influence with God's blessing. Thank you for planning a generous offering.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show Thailand on the map.
- Pronounce Pada as: PA-da.
- Pronounce Morja as: MORDG-a.
- Download photos for this story from Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Share Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Southern Asia-Pacific Division: bit.ly/ssd-2025.
- Know that this mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's "I Will Go" strategic plan: Mission Objective No. 2, "To strengthen and diversify Adventist outreach in large cities, across the 10/40 Window, among unreached and under-reached people groups, and to non-Christian religions"; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, "To disciple individuals and families into Spirit-filled lives"; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 6, "To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults"; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, "To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview." For more information, go to the website: IWillGo.org.

Fast Facts

- Muay Thai is Thailand's national sport and is referred to as "the art of eight limbs" because of its use of fists, elbows, knees, and shins in combat.
- Thai forests are home to elephants, leopards, tigers, wild ox, and the Malayan tapir, which is covered in black fur on the front half of its body and white fur on the rear.
- Thailand is where you can find the smallest mammal and the largest fish in the world. The bumblebee bat weighs only 0.07 ounces (2 g) — about the same as two paperclips. The whale shark, which can be found in the ocean around Thailand, weighs about 20 tons (18,144 kg) and can be 62 feet (18.8 m) long.