

SIVINI WAS IN CHARGE OF REVENGE

Dear Friend ... How long since you last met *a killer*? Give me three minutes, and I'll introduce you.

His name is Sivini, and for years, hatred was his business.

Hatred is a commodity among the tribes of Papua New Guinea (PNG). One tribe, attacks another; people die. Then the other tribe seeks revenge. *Sivini* was in charge of revenge.

Among the Usarufa people, in the eastern highlands of PNG, he was the legendary fight commander from the village of Moife. Time and time again, he led his team into neighboring areas to carry out **revenge killings**. You've probably never met a man with so much blood on his hands. Somehow, in his many years of fighting, he escaped the slightest injury. His people, young and old, revered him for his almost **magical longevity**.

But today we know God wasn't sparing Sivini for the sake of more dying ... He was sparing *Sivini* for a **whole new life**—life, and more abundantly—an extraordinary new assignment ... that would bring the life-giving Word of God to the Usarufa people and beyond. It happened like this.

The people of Moife grow wheat; for decades they have threshed their wheat by hand. A threshing machine would speed things up. So *Sivini* traveled from Moife to the city of Ukarumpa to arrange transport of the new contraption. But Ukarumpa is also a major Bible translation hub—with 275 translators working out of this center to meet needs throughout the country... one of the biggest operations of its kind in the world. By God's perfect timing, a Translators' Training Course (TTC) was under way that same day. With such urgent demand among the people of PNG for the Scriptures in their many languages, every course is filled to capacity. But at the last minute, one man learned he would be unable to attend; someone would have to go in his place. A friend of *Sivini's* knew he was in town—grabbed him—told him he could get in—it would be really interesting, he promised—and a blood-thirsty tribal leader found himself learning how to translate the Bible into Usarufa!

Then, as the group made their way through the tragedy of Cain murdering Abel, translating Genesis 4, Sivini was stunned. "Abel's blood calling out to God from the ground," he remembers—"the words pierced my heart." He could almost hear the blood of his many victims calling out to God from the earth where he had so brutally slain them. In that defining moment, *Sivini* began to feel something he had never felt before: **the possibility of cleansing**.

The very next Sunday, he walked to the front of the local Christian church to publicly repent of his past. He asked for prayer—**he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ**—and in that moment, the God of forgiveness and peace lifted *Sivini's* burden of guilt.

Everything about **Sivini is different now**. Hatred has turned to love, by the miraculous power of God's Word! "Even my looks have changed since *I accepted Jesus*," *Sivini says joyfully*, "because now I no longer carry the weight of the guilt of my past. **Who but Jesus could do such a wonderful thing?**"

Today Sivini is committed to the Usarufa Bible translation, "turning God's talk into the Usarufa language so that my people can know the Lord. I want them to find peace, freedom and forgiveness of sin, just like I have." *Wycliffe Associates every verse, every tongue, every task: www.wycliffeassociates.org*