



Back 'Home' in the UK for 9 months we face many changes while colleagues in Nigeria help the Ashε and Wachi and other teams prepare for a crucial training event in September.

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We've spent the last 6 months nearly managing to finish writing a newsletter, and then getting delayed with bits and pieces of work or technical difficulties so that then what we had written seems not so fresh any more. So, I'm laying all that aside and we'll do something of a catchup and review of the last 3.5 years in Nigeria later on, but here's an update about what's going on now.



Play & Farewells

We're now in the UK!

That hopefully isn't too much of a surprise to many, but given our lack of communication you would be forgiven for losing track that we've been in Nigeria since March 2016 except for the occasional brief trip back. So we are due a furlough or 'home assignment' and wanted to time it so that the big 3 girls can slot into school at the start of a school year. They have just entered P7, P5 and P3 in Glasgow. Rebekah was shocked as she realised that little Abigail is now a big Primary 3 — just what she was in when she left Shawlands Primary school.



Abigail turned 6 in January,
Helen turned 4 in June

This is the first home assignment when we haven't been adding a new child to the family, but we're planning to stay for 9 months — June through to March — so that we can spend a decent amount of time (re)connecting with friends and supporters and serving in our sending church in Glasgow, the Tron. I will be working with translation teams remotely, and I hope helping Wycliffe Scotland in communication and recruitment.



Packed



Trains!



A Lift!

Leaving home to come home

Wherever you live things change but coming back to the UK after some years away, we've been confronted by lots of changes at once. We've been ploughing through the administrative things — different ways of registering the girls for school, lots of identity checks, universal credit and tax changes, updating lots of addresses and accounts, trying to remember PIN numbers and passwords we haven't used for ages, etc. Then of course all the little kids have grown up, some older friends (and grandparents) are noticeably slowed down and we notice some missing faces as dear friends have gone to be with the Lord. We've heard about these things from a distance but as we 'come home' it comes home more. Church life moves on too, which is exciting, but there's a lot to get our heads around as our home church now has 3 different locations with partially overlapping congregations.



Play in a new place



The price of mangos!

We have changed a bit too but we don't notice that so much. Perhaps others will notice it more and perhaps we'll notice how we've changed as we handle fitting back into the UK. Meanwhile, while we're here in the UK, a part of our hearts and thinking is still back in Nigeria, where our friends and colleagues continue with work and daily life.

Struggles for our friend Sarah Joseph and family

Sarah and family who help us about the house have faced quite a torrent of troubles and sorrows over the past few months: burying several close relatives — from sickness or inter-



communal strife — struggling to make ends meet with many demands from the wider family, hopes of various kinds dashed, and termites making a mess of their house. Quite apart from Sarah's practical help with things in our house, we value her friendship and the connection we have with another Christian family through all the difficult realities of daily life. Please pray for their trust in God and knowledge of him would keep growing through these difficult trials, and that they would all learn to rely on what we know about God from the Bible and not just on the usual empty platitudes and false hope it's easy for friends and neighbours to offer.

David's mum visited Sarah's family at home last October.

Ashɛ translation research: good progress and hard work

The Ashɛ Bible translators Moses and Arams had most of June off from translation work to focus on their farming, but now with colleague Kathleen have been resuming their study of how Ashɛ storytelling works. **New discoveries and surprises** keep popping up even though we've been doing this for a year and a half. Not a complete surprise, we have come to see more clearly that the Ishɛ word 'ba' (used for 'come') doesn't always mean someone is literally moving anywhere. Often it really just seems to mark a new but expected development. Greek and English tend to use conjunctions for that purpose, but if we're to tell the story as the original author



Helen 'helped out' while Kathleen, Arams, Moses and I worked on Ishɛ storytelling research in Kagoro in (sweltering) March.

intended, 'come' may need to come into it a bit more. Something similar goes for 'go.'

Still getting backups restored sensibly onto replacement computers, I need to spend August doing some research for the Ashɛ team in preparation for a month-long concentrated training event that brings together 4 or 5 teams from across Nigeria. **I'll be travelling back to Nigeria in September for that**, but its success depends



Arams helps tease apart similar expressions in Ishɛ language.

on getting the groundwork ready first. We have a British discourse consultant called Steve Nicolle coming from Canada to help us use our discoveries of storytelling to shape existing and future translation. It's complicated and uncertain for a non-Canadian to get a Visa to Nigeria while in Canada, so please pray that it would be granted so he can join us.



Richard leading (L-R) Joseph, Ibrahim, Amos and Jonathan in Wachi language discovery

Koro Wachi translation research: probably harder than Ashe

Our colleague Richard Chiabuotu has been working away hard with the Koro Wachi translation team for which I am greatly thankful. The Lord has given him **great patience and a very sharp mind** to learn languages quickly and to analyse them, and he's learning a lot about trying to get the best out of a well-intentioned and enthusiastic but utterly inexperienced team of translators. Richard has joined us for some sessions with the Ashe team, and I've also tried pouring what I've learned from Ashe into our work with Wachi. Fortunately colleague Kathleen who has much more experience in this area has been able to lend a guiding hand.

Together we're all working towards getting a body of stories well enough studied that translators and advisors can all quickly draw conclusions for how the Bible stories should be told. The Koro Wachi language is interesting enough that it's been particularly baffling and frustrating whenever Koro speakers have rushed headlong into writing and translation in the past; we'll spare you the gory details unless you really want to know!

Do please pray especially for Richard as he not only leads the team in their research, but also as he seeks to explain to his family and friends and other Christians in Nigeria how life-changing and vital this work is. It's a hard sell, especially when 'ministry' charlatans abound, and when anyone supporting Richard has little to gain themselves from his translation work.

Seminary teaching: handed over

It's been a privilege for me (David) to teach at 2 seminaries over the last 8 years — two computer-based courses in the Linguistics & Translation department of the multi denominational Theological College of Northern Nigeria, and in the last 3 years, some awareness-raising courses for pastors in training at a denominational seminary in Kagoro. 4 years ago when we were in the UK for Helen to be born, a couple of colleagues helped me

teach those courses and again this year I won't be around to teach. I've been quite keen for a number of years to involve others in the teaching and so I'm grateful to God for providing several colleagues who can help with this. It's a new responsibility for most of them, and while they know the subject matter well it would be good to pray that they teach it well and don't get too distracted by all the things that can go wrong.



Pray for **Daniel** and **Othaniel** teaching **translation-support software**, **Tim** (+another?) teaching **linguistic software** and **Nim & Princeton** teaching '**Translating the Bible into Action**.' You may remember that Princeton and colleagues pioneered this course last year, and several pastors in training were helped to see how their ministry can be more meaningful. Do pray too for a decent number of students to hear about and sign up for the course, and for all the logistics as Princeton & Nim use our car to drive the hour and a half from Jos to Kagoro each Friday. That all started last week.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good

- We successfully packed up our house in Jos and made it to Glasgow!
- We've loved seeing friends and family in Glasgow and Northern Ireland.
- All of us appreciated teaching and fun with friends in Keswick.
- Friends very kindly gave us their computer for me to use and I'm slowly making progress restoring as much as I can.
- He has helped Arams, Moses, Kathleen and me to learn much about the Ishe language.

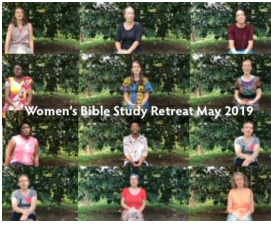
Take it to the Lord in prayer

- After all the transition I (David) need to find a good routine and way of working from home on Nigeria-focussed work; pray I'm able to get replacement computers up and running quickly, with as much data restored as possible. Please pray for stable IT for the rest of the team too - Arams' new computer has completely failed.
- Transition into a UK routine: pray for Rebekah and Elizabeth starting back at Shawlands primary again and Abigail beginning there for the first time. Do pray for good friendships and for them and us to use every opportunity to share the good news of Jesus with friends.
- Ask God to help us communicate well the joys and struggles and vital significance of our work in Bible translation in Nigeria.
- Ask God's help for Daniel, Othaniel, Tim (maybe Aku), Nim and Princeton teaching 'my' courses in my absence; that they would teach clearly and the students learn useful skills.

Thank you for your support for us and your involvement in what God's doing to build his church worldwide.

Love from David, Julie, Rebekah, Elizabeth, Abigail and Helen

Video bonus



It's always on Julie's heart to help other women enjoy getting deeper into the Bible. Julie and several ladies enjoyed a weekend away to study John's gospel intensively together and had a great time. Some of them made a quick video about what they appreciated.

Watch it on youtu.be/5Lp_PNAVqt8

Extra bonus section — Did you know?

It's rather easy for us to forget that some things very familiar and obvious to us are not so widely known. So we're going to start a regular 'did you know' section to our newsletter, so you can ~~show off to your friends~~ be well informed.



Did you know... Wycliffe Bible Translators is named after the Yorkshire-born Oxford scholar **John Wycliffe**. He was born about 700 years ago and has been considered a forerunner of the European reformation. He translated the Bible into English, but since the printing press hadn't been invented (in Europe) yet, every copy needed to be painstakingly hand-copied. And very few English-speaking people knew how to read or write any language at that time! So Bible translation, preaching and literacy needed to go hand in hand. It's still true today. But publishing is considerably easier!

[PD image from Wikipedia.]