

LESSONS FROM GENESIS 50:20

by Sandi Roach

*"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive."
(NASB)*

As a student of scripture, I love seeing how the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament. In the case of the verse above, I have seen God fulfill this in ways that really amaze me.

Any time a person steps on Satan's plans, there should be an expectation for spiritual warfare. Serving in the field of Bible Translation, this is particularly evident. A year ago, I was involved in several training events for new languages from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The first two events ran with minimal warfare, but when the third event arrived, we experienced attack after attack. The first happened when our local DRC person responsible for logistics did not present the proper paperwork to immigration. This became the catalyst for a chain of other attacks. The event was being held in southern Rwanda, for financial reasons as well as travel convenience for the foreigners (Americans). Because the paperwork had not been handled properly, the participants from DRC received a great deal of difficulty crossing the border. This created red flags for the entire event. Immigration wanted to know who sanctioned the event since the paperwork had not been completed. Then they wanted to know why we had all these people from DRC in Rwanda, rather than hosting the event there. The next attack came when they saw foreigners involved and wanted all of us to have different types of visas, even though none of us were the actual presenters for this workshop. We were only guest speakers and evaluators. Without those visas, immigration demanded that all the participants cross back into DRC until we obtained the proper visas and submitted the appropriate paperwork. Frustration, anger and fear were my immediate reactions.

Obtaining the new visas required a trip back to the capital. We had no idea how long it would take to get those visas. Our only solution was to pray. Our contacts were exhausted, and we could only trust the Lord.

Just prior to this event we had been informed that there would be no additional events through the end of the fiscal year due to front-loading too many events earlier. With future financial concerns in mind, our partner in Eastern DRC and I discussed a plan of taking the events to the villages and obtaining housing with church families to reduce transportation, housing and meal costs, which I was analyzing as this

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seemed excessive for the three events we had hosted. Some red flags started popping up during the second workshop and I had some concerns that there may be some other things that were not being handled properly by our logistician.

At the time, however, there were more pressing concerns – what was I going to do with all these translators? I had prepaid a portion of their housing and meals and had limited additional cash on hand. I couldn't request a specific refund amount from the guesthouse as we had no idea when they would be able to return. Housing in Bukavu (the border crossing point) was more expensive than what I was paying in Rwanda. Where were these people going to stay? I had responsibilities that I wasn't sure how I was going to meet... BUT GOD! God always has a plan. Satan had created turmoil and confusion, as is his way, but God's intentions were for good. Taking the plan that the pastor and I had discussed, we found a church for the event to take place, church families to house the translators, and I had enough cash on hand to supply meal allowances for each translator and facilitator. Could this really work?

God pushed ahead our proposed plan, which may have taken me and the partner months to seriously consider and attempt to execute, as a confirmation that it would work. It was not without fault, as my speculations about the issues with the logistician were proven true, and there were some major issues that had to be dealt with, but the concept worked, translation happened and is still ongoing for these languages and God proved Himself again. The new approach that was forced upon us at that event is now the model for all future events in Eastern DRC. In June we employed it with a group of three new languages in North Kivu and were able to reduce event costs by about 60% with strong affirmation by the participants. What Satan had planned for evil God used for good to bring about the present results that will save the lives of countless numbers by having scripture in their Mother Tongue. God made Genesis 50:20 come alive and to know that His plans never fail.