

# Testimony

## Out of Darkness into Light - Dikki Ekiai's Story

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My name is Dikki Ekiai. I was born and raised in the state of Sarawak on the island of Borneo. Sarawak's population is made up of many different tribal groups. Before the arrival of British rulers, these tribes would raid each other's territories and collect their enemies' heads as trophies. Towards the middle of the Second World War, the British government decided to recruit young men from dad's mountain tribe called the *Bidayuh* to serve both as trackers and radio operators and my father was one of the ones selected. At the same time the British government recruited young girls from the coastal tribe, namely the *Ibans*, to be trained as nurses and my mother was one of the ones chosen. My parents' love story was legendary as they were both the first to marry outside of their respective tribes.

### **Being a Half-Breed was Not Easy**

Growing up as what was considered a 'half-breed' amidst the old tribal hatred and vengeance was not easy. The difficulties became more apparent when I was later living in a boarding school because the school for secondary education was quite far from where my parents lived. Each different tribe in the school kept to themselves and there were frequent violent and bloody clashes.

### **A Creator, Taboos, Offerings and Spirits**

Despite the war-like nature of these tribes, they did believe in a Creator who made everything and who commands armies of angelic beings who are often sent to interfere in the affairs of men. Our lives were strictly governed by taboos and offerings to these beings. Any major decisions or undertakings would have to be preceded by searching one's dreams via solitary meditation or by the spreading of offerings to obtain guidance from the spiritual world. I used to complain to my mother that we had too many spirits to appease.

### **A Spider Weaving its Web**

Whenever I managed to get home for holidays, I would spend time wandering through the jungle observing nature's wonders and would sit every evening watching the sunset and contemplating the frailty and meaning of life. One day while walking through the jungle I came across a big spider weaving its web. Observing how this spider could weave a perfect symmetry and angle every time, I concluded that someone must have designed this creature with its unique ability. This Designer must be the same one whom I was told had hung the moon and the stars in their place (Romans 1:20).

### **Is there more than Witchcraft and Shamanism?**

I had a number of serious discussions with my father regarding my search for the meaning of life but obtained no satisfaction because, by this time, he had returned to the old tribal ways of practicing witchcraft and shamanism. I was told that as soon as my secondary education was finished, I was to spend time with families from both of my ancestral tribes to learn and combine the knowledge of shamanism from both tribes. This was somewhat unsettling for me and drove me to take every opportunity to travel with friends to the town of Kuching (now a city) to visit both a Catholic and an Anglican church.

### **The Ten Commandments and the Confession of Sins**

On the wall of the Anglican church hung a curtain containing the Ten Commandments. As I was reading through these, I heard the priest say that a person should spend time alone confessing their sins at the end of each day. When I went back to boarding school, I started spending time alone in a classroom when everyone else was having supper. There I would tell God, the Creator, all the thoughts of my hearts every evening. This went on for months. At this time one of my relatives handed me a prayer book which he had stolen from the Anglican church during one of our visits.

### **Facing the Guilt of My Sins and the Sins of My Ancestors**

As I continued to confess my sins each evening, I became burdened with the fact that my ancestors had committed murders through their headhunting practices. Because I had handled the old skulls, the swords, and

shields used in these tribal wars, as well as the fact that I was a descendent of these men, I saw myself as being as guilty as they were. I did not realize at the time that my sin nature originated all the way back to Adam in the Garden of Eden. The Lord made me to see that my hands were covered with the blood of the slain victims. This happened every evening for an entire week and each time, I broke down and sobbed because I knew I was guilty in thoughts, words and deeds.

### **The Stolen Prayer Book Brings Me Light**

One evening I decided to take one of the pages from the Anglican prayer book with me to the classroom. As I was confessing my sinful bloodline to God, God made me to see, in my own mind, myself falling into a big bonfire along with everyone else. I looked at the piece of paper I took with me and read where it says Christ Jesus died for sinners and rose again the third day. As I envisioned a multitude of people falling into the big bonfire, there was a group to the side, just as guilty as the others, but these were not falling into the bonfire because Christ Jesus had died for them! It was at that moment when I just grabbed on to the fact that I was one of them. I know now there is a verse in the Bible that says:

**“This is a faithful saying and worthy to be accepted by all, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” 1 Timothy 1:15**

### **Flooded by Serenity, the Search for Other Christians Began**

In that instant I experienced a sense of serenity that I did not understand. It was like watching a river flowing ever so slowly at sunset. This saving experience happened in late 1985. Within months of this experience, the Spirit of God began to impress upon me to look for a place where Christians are gathered only as Christians and nothing else. I did not know if such things existed on earth as I had had no teaching.

### **God Geographically Moving Me**

Meanwhile I finished secondary school, and after passing the final exam, I tried applying to local colleges not knowing how to pay for the education if I did get accepted. None of the colleges accepted me. Then one day I received a letter saying I was awarded a full scholarship to study in Melbourne, Australia. As The Lord would have it (Jeremiah 29:11), I ended up in none of the countries listed for the scholarship which included New Zealand, the UK, as well as the United States. I was sent to Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia in 1988.

### **Exploring Churches**

I was excited to see so many different churches. Each Sunday I would explore a new church but I sensed that something was missing. My Muslim friends used to tease me and ask if I had found my church yet. I had met other students who were also sent to Canada. In late 1989 I decided to visit a good friend who was studying at UNB in Fredericton, New Brunswick. There I met a couple of Christians who were reaching out to international students. They later introduced me to Christians who simply gathered to the Lord Jesus Christ in Avonport, Nova Scotia as well as in Nineveh, Nova Scotia.

### **Connection between My Peace and Being Born Again Becomes Clear**

My very first introduction to a local assembly of believers who gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ was a Sunday morning worship meeting. I was amazed at the simplicity of the gathering. One Sunday evening in January, as a couple of men were telling their testimonies, one of them said that when he trusted the Lord Jesus he experienced a sense of peace. For the first time, after searching for about four years, I realized that my experience in Borneo meant that I had been born again (John 3:3), and at the same time I also found the “nameless place” (Matthew 18:20). What an awesome God we have!

“But you are ... a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...” (1 Peter 2:9)

**“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,  
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”**  
(John 3:16)

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