

PARTNERPLAN

Pat Jamison - Bangladesh March 2011

CBSDP
Jobarpar Mission House
Jobarpar
Agailjhara
Barisal
Bangladesh

Dear Friends



Ever since my arrival in Bangladesh and especially coming to Jobarpar area I have made contact with many interesting people and most of them women.

In recent weeks I have been reading a book which talks about women in the Bible. In this book there are some women who I remember from stories as children. Then there are those who are just a name and don't mean a lot to me.



This is the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Shiekh Hasina. Her name is very familiar to everyone here. Whether or not people agree with her political views she is a household name. I have never and probably never will meet her. She is a woman with great power and someone who will never have to struggle to survive financially.

I want to talk and share about another woman. Just as I have got to know many of the Bible characters I am beginning to get to know this young woman.



This is Sopa my house-help with her youngest son Leon. Unlike Shiekh Hasina she is not a household name and again unlike her she does struggle financially. Sopa was educated to class nine which is almost the end of secondary school education. She is married with three sons.

This young woman has been a pleasure to have in my home. I hope I have become more than someone who is trying to assist her by giving employment. I want to show God's love to her in a way that is relevant.

Her husband has no steady income. He carries out labouring jobs when he gets employment. Her oldest son lives with an uncle and works as a van-garry driver (that's a bicycle adapted to carry loads), her middle son is at a boys hostel quite a distance away and the younger one is at home and attends a local school.

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This is a woman who unlike the Prime Minister is not known to everyone in Bangladesh. She is certainly becoming well known to me. Sopa is a Christian. I believe she was chosen for this job. Like Esther the orphan, Abigail the prophetess and Mary the earthly Mother of Jesus all chosen by God. I believe God chose Sopa to be in my home.

I also believe she has been chosen to teach me many things. As an only daughter with three brothers I was the 'apple of my late Father's eye.' He would have done and gave me anything. Where material possessions were concerned I wanted for nothing.



Sopa has taught me about being humble, about not always seeking to get what I want, to humble myself before God and allow God to take over total control, not just of part of my life.

I asked her one day if she was happy. Her answer was 'Sister if you are happy I am happy.' Well of course I was and still am so

this brought such a smile to her face. She never asks for anything for herself. She never complains. Even recently when she was unwell she would not stay at home and insisted on coming to work.



How many times do I as a woman, say I need to treat myself to new clothes or a nice meal, the hairdressers or coffee with friends? I am not suggesting that I shouldn't do any of these things, as I enjoy all of them. However, I need to realise that they are not all that important in my life.

Above there is a group of women who meet each week. They are from different faiths however they have needs in common. They are meeting to try to help each other. They have a savings group and from this they can obtain small loans to enable them to start a business or buy some animals to have on a small holding.



I am here to serve God to people in a strange land. This is a land where women are not seen as important in the family yet without them the family would never function.

I was reminded by someone recently as I have been searching to see what God's plan is for my life that I am actually carrying out God's plan in what I am doing!

So what is the future for these young girls?

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Or these little girls so full of life dancing for me and bringing me flowers to say thank you for coming to their village.

How can I help? Well I have been placed in this country as a Community Health Advisor. I ask God each day to go with me, to help me to do what He wants and to enable me to meet the people He needs me to see.

Most days I visit a village area and then in the afternoon I see patients in a clinic setting.

Please pray that God will guide me in all I do and for the people I come in contact with in the villages and clinics. It is mostly women who attend the clinics. Pray that I can help these women in even a small way.

Please pray for Sopa and the many other poor families who have no land, little income and a very uncertain future.

Pray also for the families of these women, especially the children as very often they attend schools where the education is quite poor.

Lastly I give thanks that God chooses women to do tasks. That throughout the Old and New Testament and today God has used and is still using women for so many tasks.

Maybe today as you read this God may be speaking to you. Don't ignore Him. If He is asking you to do something, do it.

God does not call everyone to work overseas or even become preachers. He does however use us all to extend His kingdom. That may be in your own home, community, college or church. Just listen to His voice and answer with a 'yes Lord!!!'

Thank you for all your prayers for the past year. It has been a challenging time however God has always been in control. The last ten months in Bangladesh have been so rewarding so until next time.

May God Bless you all.

Pat