

Miracle at Sea

BY ANDREW MCCHESENEY



A jukung is a traditional Indonesian boat. It looks like an ordinary canoe — it is long and narrow and often made of wood. On each side of the boat are long floats called outriggers. The outriggers help the boat keep its balance on the water and not tip over. In the back of the jukung is a powerful outboard engine that propels the boat forward.

The jukung in this story looked like any regular jukung. It wasn't a special color. It wasn't a special length. It didn't have a special outboard engine.

But it had a special passenger.

Pastor Eduard saw the jukung arrive at the island where he lived. He saw government medical workers get off the boat and visit his village. Then he saw the medical workers preparing to leave on the jukung. He asked where they were going and learned that they were traveling to an island

where he wanted to go. On the island lived three Seventh-day Adventist families who didn't have their own church. They also didn't have their own boats to travel to an island with a church. They met in one of their homes to worship on Sabbath. But now it was the end of the quarter when they would wash each other's feet, drink grape juice, and eat unleavened bread to remember Jesus' death as part of the communion service. They wanted Pastor Eduard to come and worship with them.

Pastor Eduard didn't have a boat of his own, so he asked the medical workers if he could travel with them on their jukung to the island.

They agreed, and the jukung set off on Friday afternoon.

Rooooooooooooooooooooarrrrrr! The jukung sped across the surface of the water. The wind felt good on Pastor Eduard's face. He looked forward to worshipping with the villagers.

But then a storm struck. The rain fell in torrents. The wind blew fiercely. But the boat kept speeding through the rough waters.

Rooooooooooooooooooooarrrrrr!

Suddenly the Roooooooooooooooooooooaaaaarrrrrr! stopped. The engine fell silent. Pastor Eduard and the medical workers and the boat captain looked at one another. All they could hear was the pounding of the rain and the howling of the wind.

The boat captain yanked on a cord to try to restart the engine. Nothing happened. He tried again. Yank! Yank! Nothing happened.

The jukung stopped speeding across the water. Now it was at the mercy of the wind and the waves. It tossed back and forth like a cork on the water. An hour passed. Then two hours. Three hours. Four hours.

The medical workers were very scared. All were crying. They had heard stories about boats sinking in storms, and they were afraid that they were going to die. One woman abruptly cried out, "The blood of Jesus! The blood of Jesus!"

Pastor Eduard turned to see who was calling on Jesus for help. He was astonished to see that it was a woman who wasn't even a Christian. She didn't believe in Jesus. But in her fear, she was calling on Jesus.

The woman saw Pastor Eduard looking at her. She remembered that he was a Christian who believed in Jesus, and she begged him to pray for the jukung.

"I have done my part to call upon the name of Jesus," she said. "Now you, as a pastor, call on Jesus so we can be saved."

At that moment, Pastor Eduard heard another voice. The voice was soft and gentle. Yet he could hear it above the roar of the rain and wind. It said, "Tell the boat captain to connect the fuel hose to the other fuel tank."

On the jukung were two fuel tanks, a regular fuel tank and a back-up fuel tank for emergencies. The tanks provided fuel for the boat engine to run.

Pastor Eduard was surprised to hear the voice, but he didn't argue. He felt like he had to obey. Even though he didn't know anything about boats, he went to the captain and told him to remove the fuel hose from the regular fuel tank and connect it to the back-up fuel tank.

The captain had already tried connecting the hose to the back-up fuel tank. But he didn't argue. He also felt like he had to obey. He immediately pulled the hose out of the regular fuel tank and connected it to the back-up tank.

Then Pastor Eduard called the captain and medical workers to join him in praying to Jesus. The medical workers stopped crying as they strained their ears to listen to the prayer. "Lord Jesus, our lives really are in Your hands of mercy," the pastor prayed. "Your will be done."

Then he turned to the captain. "Start the engine," he said.

The captain pulled the cord to restart the outboard engine. Yank!

A split second passed, and the engine sprang to life. Chuff-chuff-chuff-rrrOOOAAARRR!

All the medical workers, including the woman who did not believe in Jesus, exclaimed at the same time, "Praise the Lord!"

The rain didn't stop, and the wind didn't die down. But the engine kept roaring, and the jukung reached the island safely.

The medical workers immediately told everyone on the island that Jesus had saved their lives.

"It's because of the name of Jesus," said the woman who didn't believe in Jesus. "When we called upon the name of Jesus, God helped us to get through this."

She told Pastor Eduard that now she believes in Jesus. "Now I know that Jesus is not only a teacher and a prophet but that He is God and has control of nature. Jesus is the One who brought us safely home."

That Sabbath was an extra-special day for Pastor Eduard. Not only did he celebrate communion on the island, but he also had his own special mission story to tell.

Andrew McChesney is the editor for Adventist Mission. This story has been shared with permission of Adventist Mission.

World Church Prayer Requests

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- Pray that a mighty revival of primitive godliness will sweep God's church in the final days. May we stand for truth though the heavens fall.
- Pray for the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Pray that God will bring peace, courage, and protection to His people caught in the turmoil.
- Pray that God will raise up modern Waldensian-type students willing to serve Him in difficult places.
- Pray for the 69 percent of the world population who have not received an unclouded presentation of Jesus.
- Pray that God will inspire Seventh-day Adventists worldwide to pray as never before. Pray that He will teach us to claim His promises and expect Him to move mountains when we pray.
- Pray that God shows us how to meet the practical and spiritual needs of refugees. May His church be known for our love of all people, no matter who they are or where they come from.