

Spy out the land...

Prayer Update, September 2011

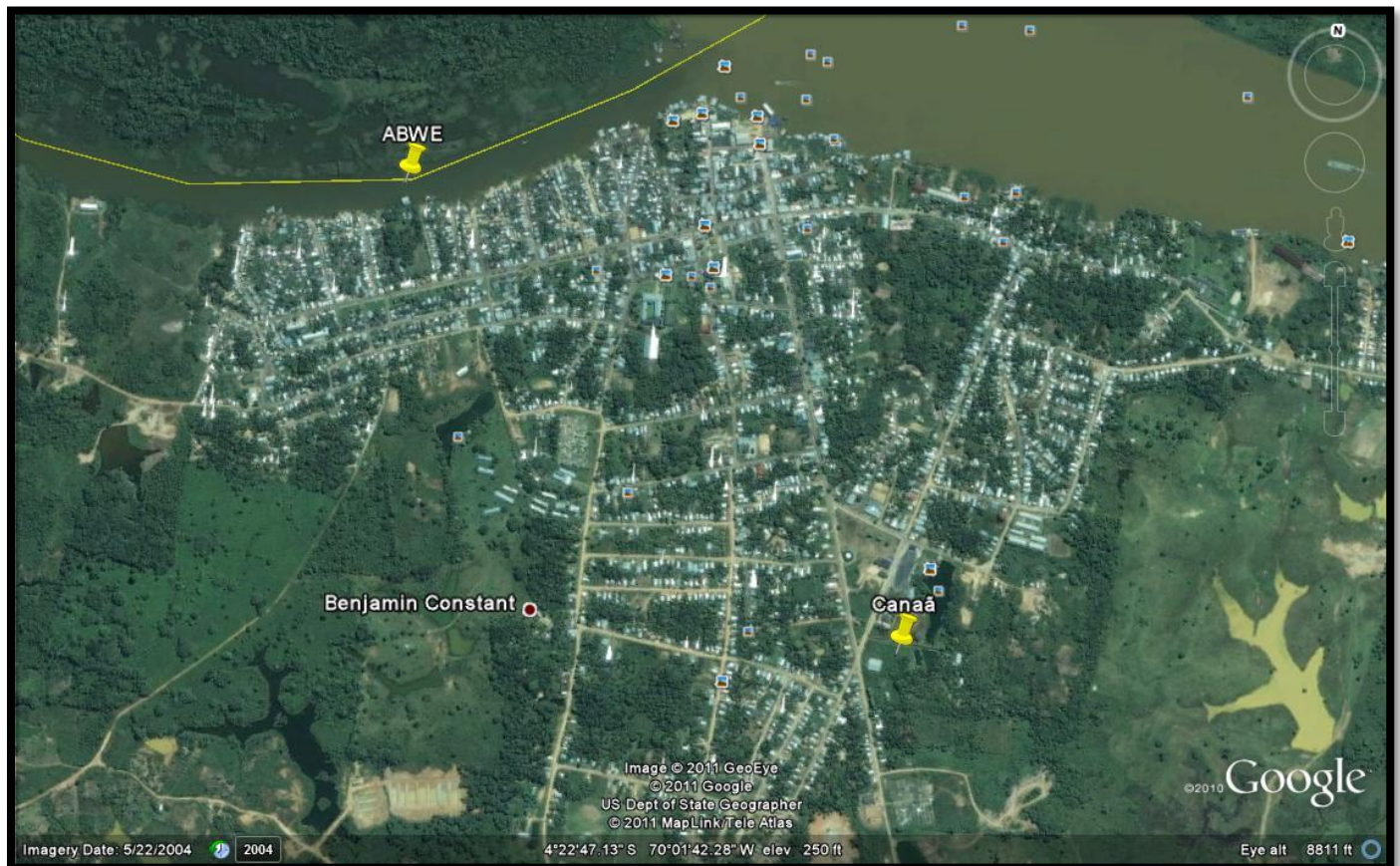
The Lord said to Moses, "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan which I am giving to the Israelites."... Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go ... and see what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, and whether the land they live in is good or bad, and whether the towns that they live in are unwallled or fortified, and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be bold, and bring some of the fruit of the land." Numbers 13:1, 17-20



Wilson and I have a little notion of how Joshua and Caleb must have felt when they were sent to scout out the promised land and give report to the nation of Israel. After five days "spying out the land" in Benjamin Constante we want to give report to you...

Benjamin Constante is where we would like to implant a new mission base for Asas de Socorro ministries. We have shared with you the desire God has placed in our hearts to minister in this area and many of you have encouraged and supported us in this effort trusting God to reveal His will for this possible move.

The City: Benjamin Constante has approximately 20,000 inhabitants. It is a very small river city, with a small downtown area, a few stores, one hospital (9 doctors), a few schools and a Federal University that offers 6 majors.



Location: West of Manaus on the borders of Brazil, Peru and Columbia. It is a 2 1/2 hour flight by airline from Manaus to Tabatinga and another 30 minute ride by speed boat on the Amazon River to the mouth of the Javari River.



Means of Transportation: *There are few cars. Motorcycles and motor taxis are everywhere. There is no gas station. Everyone buys two liter soda bottles of gas at make shift stands along the streets.*



Motorcycles and Motor Taxis Everywhere!



Gas anyone? Just buy a bottle and fuel up.

Activities: *What can you do in Benjamin Constant? Shop at the few stores in the center of town, eat out (there are a few simple sidewalk type mini restaurants), go for walks, visit friends and participate in church activities. There is one smaller town you can visit by car (40 min. drive) called Atalaia do Norte where there is also a small hospital.*

Churches: *There are several different church denominations including a big Catholic church in the center of town, a couple of small Baptist churches, five Assembly of God churches and a couple of others.*

Population: *148 Indian tribes containing 10 different ethnic group, languages and cultures are spread throughout the Upper Amazon and Javari River Valley. There are a lot of river villages as well and 3 small towns.*

Needs: *God opened many doors for us to meet with church and village leadership among the Ticuna, Marubu, Matís and Maioruna Indians, city leaders and missionaries There is a great need among church leadership and missionaries to have use of an airplane to multiply their ministries, shorten distances and length of travel time and also to reduce expenses. It costs more to go anywhere using a 25 horse power boat than it does to use a plane! Many of the Indian tribes and villages are distant. Missionaries and pastors need to travel from 1 day up to 20 days by boat.*

Ticuna Indian Church leadership



Challenges: *After scouting out the area, we have come to the conclusion that the best place for a hangar/flight base would be Benjamin Constante. Here are the challenges we face...*



1. *The Javari River that surrounding the city is wide and muddy. During flood season the current is strong and river banks are constantly being carved away by the water making it difficult to find a good location for a floating hangar and/or make a ramp and a hangar on land. Most of the river bank is very steep or under water in flood season.*

2. A large part of the city floods a few months each year and the city is hilly making it harder to find an appropriate place to build an airstrip. (This would also mean that we would need an amphibious plane.)
3. Funding is scarce. We would need to find ways to help subsidize flights. (There is still an option of doing some commercial flights asking for "donations" to help subsidize flights.)
4. Housing is scarce. Most of the houses are wood and built on poles since the terrain is so hilly. They are what we term as "favela"- slum areas. During flood season the river flows underneath many of these homes. Building a simple house may be the only option if there are no houses to rent or purchase.
5. The Indian areas are at present closed to the Gospel and presence of missionaries which means we would need to partner with missions (something we do already) to enter these areas with social work (water filters and medical/dental clinics) and work some with government organizations. There are several missionaries already living in the towns ministering to Indians who come to town and making occasional trips into a few tribes.



In order for us to minister to the Javari River Valley area Wilson and I have made a few specific decisions based on much prayer and after reviewing the facts. **We are trusting God for three specific areas to consider this move:**

1. To provide one to two families minimum to go with us and help establish this new mission base. One of them would need to be a pilot/mechanic to alternate flights with Wilson and carry on when we are away.
2. For an airplane. There is a strong possibility that the Assembly of God's Cessna 206 (six seater) plane will be available for us to use in this area. If not, we would need to look into purchasing another plane.
3. For God to show us a good location to "house" the airplane and build a hangar.

If God answers YES to all of the above, we will trust Him to provide housing for the three mission families and funding for the initial expenses of establishing a flight base (land, hangar, etc.) Our desire above all is to obey God's calling where ever that may be doing whatever He directs. We recognize that God never asks us to sacrifice but to obey. We are so thankful for your prayers for us and the ministries here throughout the years. There is no way we could even consider going to a new frontier without God's direction and without YOU! We count on your prayers and participation in all we do here and are ready to go if God so leads. If and when we do go we will be taking you with us. How we praise God for that!! We should know more specifics in the next couple of months and will keep you informed. This move would be no sooner than September of 2012 because of all the logistics, time needed for preparation and funds needed. God knows our hearts and how He wants to use us. Continue to pray that God will show us His perfect will!

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God Bless,
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