

CHAPTER 1

The Ox Race

Do you know any fun facts about your city? (*Allow response.*) I have some fun facts about different places in the world. Did you know that a city in the USA called Battle Creek, Michigan makes more breakfast cereal than any other city in the world? Australia is the country with the most poisonous animals known to man. People in England drink more tea than people in any other country. Do you know which country has the most children? (*Allow response.*) It's India. This week we will be learning a story about a boy in India named Ringu (RIN-goo).

Flashcard 1-1

Ringu attached the oxen to the cart as his father, mother and little brother, Battu (Bah-TOO), climbed in. They were going to the bazaar (marketplace). Many people would be there because it was the last market day in this Indian village before the big celebration to worship the oxen. Ringu and Battu were excited. Ringu had a little extra spring in his step, though, because he was going to drive the ox cart!

The oxen slowly walked along through the forest and Ringu looked around at the trees. He was watching for scary things that lurked in the woods. He knew there were tigers. And his people were even more afraid of evil spirits, who they worshipped and tried very hard to please. Ringu was glad it was daytime. The forest became even scarier at night.

They reached the main road and Ringu forgot his fears as he urged the oxen to go faster. "Get going!" he shouted. "Show us what you can do!" Deep down inside, Ringu really just wanted to show everyone that his oxen were very fast. He was confident that he would win the race during the Festival of the Oxen. The oxen broke into a run and the dust swirled. Battu enjoyed this fast-paced ride. Their parents on the other hand were not amused!

Ringu slowed the oxen to a walk at the edge of town. He wanted to see where the missionary from another land lived. Ringu had seen him once. He was very tall, with fair skin and light brown hair. His name was Grubbs Sahib. People said he taught about just one God and that people needed to know Him instead of always trying to please the evil spirits. *Is this true?* wondered Ringu as they passed the mission.

"Let's hurry," Battu begged as they got closer to the bazaar.

Everyone stand up and let's pretend to walk to the bazaar. Let's walk in place. Hold on to the oxen or they will get away! Do you see the bazaar there in the distance? I do. Let's run the rest of the way! (*Do with children.*) Great job, boys and girls! You may sit down.

Soon Ringu and his family were in town. They tied the oxen to one of the cart wheels and started toward the bazaar. Suddenly Battu heard someone cry out as if in pain!

Flashcard 1-2

It was Ringu! He jumped back and grabbed his foot. A long thorn was sticking out of his heel. He flinched as he yanked it out then hurried to catch up with the family.

Ringu and Battu followed close behind their father while he bought cords with pompoms and bells to put around the oxen's necks and chunks of brown sugar to feed them on the day of the festival. Then Father bought coconuts to offer to the evil spirits in case anyone got sick.

Flashcard 1-3

Battu walked and Ringu limped around the bazaar looking at the different things on sale and wishing they had money to buy them all. When no one was looking, Ringu quickly slipped a banana into his pocket. He knew it was wrong to steal but everyone steals sometimes, right? (*Allow response.*)

Suddenly beautiful music distracted the boys from their shopping. Ringu saw a crowd gathering so he grabbed Battu's arm and hurried toward the music, not caring how much his foot hurt. Battu hurried after him, dodging people who were in their way. Just then Ringu bumped into a man. The papers the man was carrying fell to the ground. Frightened, Ringu started to run. But the man gently grabbed his arm.

"Come, my friend."

Ringu stopped and stared. It was the tall missionary he had heard about, Grubbs Sahib!

Flashcard 1-4

The missionary scooped up the papers, giving one to Ringu. "We have come to tell you about the one true God, who made us," he said. "This paper has words from God, who sent His only Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for all our sins. Jesus sets us free from the power of evil spirits."

Ringu and Battu each grabbed a paper then remembered why they were there. The music! They turned to watch the man who was making the beautiful sound.

Flashcard 1-5

The man had a strange looking box. He pushed some buttons on one side of the box and pulled the other side, making beautiful music. Ringu had never heard anything so wonderful.

The man stopped playing and stood up. "My name is Pandu (pahn-DOO)," he said. "I used to make many offerings to the evil spirits and bow down to false gods just like you do. I used to celebrate the Festival of the Oxen and worship them. I made clay statues of the oxen to put in front of my house just like you will do in three days. Then I met the one true God, who has power over the evil spirits. He commands that we worship no other gods but Him."

Pandu kept talking but Battu tugged at Ringu's arm. "Let's go. This is bad to hear. The evil spirits will be angry," he whispered.

But what if it's true? When I learn to read, I will read these words from God and find out. Ringu was curious about this "one true God." He had never heard of such a thing before. He unwound his turban, carefully placed the paper in its folds and wrapped it around his head again.

Ringu's foot hurt more than ever as he and Battu went back to their father.

"You're limping," his father said. "Your foot is all right, isn't it, my son?"

"I'm fine," insisted Ringu. He was determined to run as quickly as he could because he wanted his father to be proud. *But will the evil spirits make my foot so bad that I can't run at all?* worried Ringu. He tried to think of other things as he drifted off to sleep that night.

Ringu woke up to the sound of beating drums on the day of the Festival of the Oxen. He looked at his aching foot. The heel was swollen, red and ugly. Ringu stepped on it carefully. His foot throbbed as he limped to the front porch.

Ringu sat down on the porch, thinking, *Why are the evil spirits so angry with me?* A sob caught in Ringu's throat. He so badly wanted to make his father proud.

His mother stood beside him. "What's the matter, my son?"

"My foot," Ringu said, holding back tears. "It hurts and I have to run the race. I just have to!"

She looked at his foot for a moment then called his father.

What does your family do when someone is sick or injured? (*Allow response.*)

Ringu's family did something very different.

His father took one look at the foot and hurried to get the witch doctor. The witch doctor was an important leader in their village. The people believed his magic could cure sickness.

Flashcard 1-6

Battu came out of the house and the two boys trembled in fear as they saw the witch doctor approach. He was bent over with wooden beads and knotted strings around his neck. One long lock of hair was loose from his tightly wound turban.

Ringu was afraid. The witch doctor chanted as he tied a piece of string around Ringu's ankle. It was like the string Ringu wore around his neck. All the people in his village believed that wearing one would keep evil spirits away.

Ringu's father dropped a few coins into the witch doctor's hand. Everyone knew it was important to pay the witch doctor. If you didn't pay, nothing good would happen!

"Ah, but you must offer a coconut too," the witch doctor said as he left.

Ringu was glad his father had bought coconuts at the bazaar the day before. After Father broke one open and offered it to the rock idol, Ringu's foot would *have* to get better!

"When the coconut milk spills over the rocks," Battu assured Ringu, "the village gods will be happy!"

Ringu thought of the words of the missionary and Pandu. He unwound his turban and took out the paper with God's words. Because he was learning the letters of the Hindi alphabet in school, he could recognize some of them on the paper. He couldn't read the sentences though. Ringu thought about what Pandu had said about the one true God: "He commands that we worship no other gods but Him."

Oh, how Ringu wanted to know what the paper said! But worried thoughts crowded his mind. *Terrible things will happen if we don't please the evil spirits by obeying the witch doctor. How else will my foot get well? And will the oxen do their work if no clay statues are made and no honor given to them?*

It was time for the oxen to get one last bath before the big race. Battu brought them over and Ringu got up off the porch. His foot hurt more than ever! How could he race? Tears stung his eyes but he forced himself to walk without limping.

He washed the oxen at the river and sharp jabs of pain shot up Ringu's leg. He let himself limp as they started back to the house.

"Is your foot worse?" Battu asked anxiously. "Will you be able to run in the race?"

"I'll be fine," Ringu answered as he clenched the ropes and walked as normally as he could.

At last it was time for the race. His foot hurt terribly but Ringu held his head high, gritted his teeth and smiled as he walked proudly beside the oxen to the starting place.

Flashcard 1-7

At the signal, the oxen were off! Everyone urged his team on. Ringu yelled, twisting his oxen's tails, and the animals broke into a gallop. He held onto the reins tightly and ran behind the oxen as they almost jerked his arms from their sockets.

Everyone stand up. Put your hands out in front of you and hold on tightly to the reins of the oxen. Now run in place as fast as you can. (*Do with children.*) You may sit down.

Ringu passed a few of the teams then stumbled and started to fall. But the speed of the oxen swept him to his feet again. He gripped the reins tighter and yelled, half with pain and half with excitement. Finally with a burst of speed he pulled ahead of all the others and won the race!

Battu jumped up and down and Ringu grinned widely as garlands of flowers were hung around the oxen's necks. Even though the spirits hadn't made Ringu's foot better, he had won! He looked toward his father and saw him smiling. Yes, his father was very proud of him!

Back at home Ringu sat weakly on the rope bed on the front porch with the family around him. He was tired and his foot was making him sick. His father patted his shoulder. "You ran well, my son. I am proud of you. But your foot is not better. We have done something to anger the spirits. We must send for the witch doctor again."

The witch doctor arrived quickly. He untied a small sack that had many strange things in it. The witch doctor used them to try to drive away the evil spirits. He tossed some dried red pepper into the air.

"Ah-choo! Ah-choo! Ah-choo!" Ringu sneezed. On the count of three, everyone pretend to sneeze. One, two, three! (*Do with children.*) Great job.

"Good!" the witch doctor exclaimed. "That will help drive out the evil spirits."

Flashcard 1-8

Then the witch doctor pulled Ringu toward him and blew forcefully into Ringu's ear several times. It hurt but Ringu knew it was supposed to make the evil spirits leave.

Next the witch doctor took out a peacock's feather and tied it around Ringu's ankle. Finally he opened a bottle and poured something from it on the sore foot. From a little bag he sprinkled some black powdery stuff over the liquid then rubbed it hard into the wound.

Ringu shrieked in pain.

"That's good!" the witch doctor said. "The yells will scare away the evil spirits." Then he chanted some strange words in a singsong voice.

Ringu sobbed quietly. *The spirits are never satisfied*, he thought. *I need to learn to read soon so I can find out about the sahib's God.*

Then a thought startled him. If the evil spirits made his foot worse, he couldn't go to school anymore. Then what would happen?

Cliffhanger

What will happen? Will Ringu's foot get worse? Will he ever learn about the words from God? Come back tomorrow to find out!

Review Questions

1. Where did Ringu live? (*India.*)
2. What was on the paper from the missionary? (*Words from God.*)
3. Why couldn't Ringu read the paper? (*He didn't know how to read.*)
4. What did Ringu and his family think caused the problems with his foot? (*Evil spirits.*)
5. Who did the family get to try to help Ringu's foot? (*A witch doctor.*)

A Day in School

Has there ever been something you really wanted to know about? How did you learn about it? (*Allow response.*) Do you remember what Ringu wanted to learn? (*Allow response.*)

Flashcard 2-1

When it was time for school the next morning, Ringu dragged himself to the front porch.

He dropped onto the rope bed. His foot and leg hurt terribly; he was feverish and his head ached. Nothing the witch doctor had done was helping—not the black powder, not the peacock feather—nothing. He was very disappointed. Can you make a disappointed face? (*Allow response.*) Great job!

Ringu saw a large group of people in the distance. First he saw Pandu, the man who had played the music box at the bazaar. Maybe he would play some music! And there was the missionary, Grubbs Sahib, with a black book in his hand. Ringu quickly unwound his turban and took out the paper with God's words.

When the men reached the front of the house, the missionary greeted Ringu's father. Ringu heard him say he would like to show pictures in the village.

"Yes, yes, sometime," Ringu's father said, "but my son's foot is hurt, Sahib. The witch doctor doesn't seem to have any power these days. Can you help?"

The tall man followed Ringu's father to the porch while the people from the village stood around to see what the sahib would do. As he came close to Ringu, a look of surprise flashed across his pale face.

"Aren't you the boy who ran into me at the bazaar? Ah! I see you have the paper I gave you. Have you been reading it?"

Ringu's father answered for his son. "Yes, yes, Sahib," he agreed, wanting to please. "My son goes to school. But now his foot is very bad."

The missionary sat down beside Ringu. He looked closely at the sore foot, touching it gently. "Yes, I think I can help. Bring a large pan of hot water."

Ringu's mother hurried to obey, her ankle bracelets clinking as she went.

Can you help Ringu's mother get water? (*Do these actions with the children.*) Let's stand up and pump the water from the well. Now put it over the hot fire but be careful not to get burned! Let's test it. Is it hot enough? (*Allow response.*) I think it is. Let's bring it over and set it down next to Ringu. You may sit down now. Thank you for helping!

Flashcard 2-2

The missionary poured some white powder into the water. After testing it with his hand, he said, "Here, Ringu, put your foot in this."

"You tell my son to put his sore foot all the way into water?" Ringu's father asked fearfully. "The evil spirits in the water will get into the sore and make it worse!"

"Oh no," the missionary said. "There is medicine in the water. It will draw the soreness out. Just let him put his foot in for half an hour."

"It is a strange thing," said Ringu's father. "But we will see what happens."

Ringu touched the water. He didn't dare put his foot in farther. Surely the spirits would make his heel worse! But the missionary pushed Ringu's foot into the water. *Ahh, it does feel good*, Ringu thought.

Flashcard 2-3

Then something happened that was completely new to Ringu. Mr. Grubbs said, "I am going to pray that Jesus will make your foot well." He bowed his head and said, "You can pray with me too. Bow your heads."

Ringu looked down at his lap then up again as the missionary began to pray. Grubbs Sahib asked God to watch over this family and to heal Ringu's foot. Ringu decided he would wait to see if this God heard and answered.

After he bandaged Ringu's foot, the missionary handed Ringu's father a bag of powder as he stepped off the porch. "Be sure to soak Ringu's foot or it will not get well," he said. Then he was gone.

Soon Ringu's foot felt better and his headache disappeared. Maybe what Grubbs Sahib said was true! Maybe Mr. Grubbs' God really would make Ringu's foot well so he could go to school. Ringu wanted more than ever to learn to read. He wanted to read the paper with God's words because the things Mr. Grubbs had said made him think. Could it be true that the God the missionary talked about was more powerful than evil spirits? Ringu knew he had to find out more.

That evening Ringu's foot was very sore again. The water must have hurt his foot. The evil spirits must have gone further into the sore!

"Don't soak it again," his father said. "After all, we have no goodness in our hands like the sahib. We may not do it right."

Ringu almost cried. *Why were the evil spirits so angry?* He thought. *Did they know about the paper with God's words? What if they make me even sicker so I can never go to school and learn to read?*

Flashcard 2-4

Several times during the night Ringu woke up because his foot hurt so badly. Finally he heard his father feeding the oxen in their stalls on the other side of the wall. Ringu knew it was almost time to get up. He moaned and tossed in his bed. When he saw his mother sweeping the porch Ringu hobbled out to sit on the rope bed.

"Mother, my foot is bad," he moaned. "It aches and hurts. The sahib told us to put it in water. If we don't do as he says maybe I'll be sick and...and not be able to go to school and learn to read. Maybe I'll die!"

"Don't say such a thing, Son!" his mother pleaded fearfully as his father joined them. "It is dangerous for the evil spirits to hear you talk that way."

"We will use the water as the sahib said," Father decided reluctantly.

Mother quietly brought the water from the fire and poured it into a pan. Carefully she added the medicine. Ringu lifted his foot hesitantly over it. Slowly he put his heel down in the water. He let out a sigh of relief as the pain started to go away.

That night and the next morning Ringu soaked his foot. Do you think he got better? If you think Ringu started to feel better, pat your head. (*Allow response.*) If you think that his foot got worse, touch your nose. (*Allow response.*) If you patted your head, you are correct! The aching pains began to leave. Ringu was relieved. His father said, "Good! I hope the sahib's medicine will make your foot well very soon, Ringu. It is almost time to guard the crops at night from the hyenas and jackals. My helpers will be gone for two days so you and Battu must do it."

A few days later Ringu was able to walk without flinching. "The sahib's God is very powerful. He made my foot well with only powder and water! Today I am going to school with you, Battu," he said joyfully. "I will take my paper with God's words with me. Maybe I will learn enough today to be able to read it."

"Do you really think you should take that to school?" Battu asked.

Flashcard 2-5

The boys sat cross-legged on the hard dirt floor of the schoolhouse. When the teacher came in, everyone stood and saluted.

Ringu felt in his turban for his paper. How he wanted to read it!

The teacher began drilling the class on numbers. "Ek (ache), do (doe), tiin (teen), chaar (char), paanch (pahnch)," he counted in Hindi.

"Ek (ache), do (doe), tiin (teen), chaar (char), paanch (pahnch)," the class repeated after him. It almost sounded like they were singing.

Ringu moved restlessly. He wanted to learn to read, not count!

The teacher wrote the numbers one through five on the small chalkboard. "Take your slates and copy these numbers," he commanded. "Practice so you are able to write them well."

Ringu frowned. His fingers were still a little clumsy and he would rather make words. But it wasn't long before his numbers looked as good as the ones the teacher wrote on the board.

As the boys worked, the teacher slowly walked between the rows.

Flashcard 2-6

He saw the corner of the piece of paper peeking out of Ringu's turban. "What is this?" he asked, snatching the paper from Ringu. Ringu gasped and ducked, expecting to get hit.

The teacher slipped the paper into his coat pocket and continued to walk up and down the rows of students. It was so hard for Ringu to concentrate on his school work. How could he get the paper back? It had the words from God on it! He just had to have it!

Looking up from his slate Ringu saw the teacher walk to the door, take the paper out of his pocket and read it carefully. Ringu's hands got sweaty and his heart beat faster. Suddenly the teacher crumpled the paper and threw it down.

"Ringu, come here!"

Ringu trembled as he got to his feet and forced himself to walk to the front of the room.

"This is about the Christians' God!" the teacher exclaimed. "Don't ever take a paper like this again!"

Flashcard 2-7

Ringu hesitated then anxiously crossed his arms and pulled his earlobes—his people's way of making a promise. He apologized then said, "I promise to never take such a paper again."

But in his heart Ringu desperately wanted to know what the paper said and was determined to get it back.

After school Battu urged his brother to hurry. He was excited for their job that night. "Come on, Ringu! Tonight we get to guard the fields. I can't wait to see those hyenas and jackals run! We will make more noise than anyone!"

Flashcard 2-8

"I'm coming, Battu. I'm coming!" Ringu stalled until the teacher and all the other boys left. Then he quickly scooped up the ball of paper from the corner of the schoolroom.

"Is that the paper the teacher told you not to read?" Battu asked. "What are you doing? Throw it away!" Do you think Ringu threw it away? If you think he kept it, wiggle your eyebrows. If you think he threw it away, touch your elbow. (*Allow response.*) If you wiggled your eyebrows, you are correct!

"I don't care what the teacher says," Ringu answered. "I am going to keep it. I want to find out more about God. I like to think about Him because Grubbs Sahib says the true God loves me. I never like to think about the evil spirits. They make me afraid. Someday soon I am going to read this paper and find out what it says."

"But, Ringu," Battu objected, "if you don't worship the evil spirits, they will eat you. They might hurt me too! Throw the paper away and forget about it!"

"I'm going to keep this paper and you can't change my mind," Ringu insisted as he smoothed it out and carefully returned it to his turban. "The evil spirits haven't eaten the sahib. They haven't eaten Pandu. Someday soon I'll learn more about God. Now come on, let's go home."

As they neared their home, Ringu shouted, "Listen! Look! There's Pandu playing the music box! And there's Grubbs Sahib!" Ringu started to run. He could not read the paper yet but the sahib could help him. Now he was surely going to hear more about the one true God!

Cliffhanger

What will Ringu learn? Will his teacher find out? What will his father and mother think? You'll have to come back tomorrow and find out!

Review Questions

1. What did the missionary do to help Ringu's foot? (*He soaked it in water with medicine and prayed.*)
2. Why didn't Ringu's father want Ringu to soak his foot? (*He was afraid there were evil spirits in the water.*)
3. What did Ringu learn about God when his foot healed? (*He is powerful.*)
4. Why was the teacher angry that Ringu had a paper with words from God? (*He thought it was wrong to learn about the Christians' God.*)
5. Why did Ringu get the paper back? (*He wanted to find out what it said about God.*)

CHAPTER 3

New Problems for Ringu

Ringu knew that he had to find out more about the missionaries' God, but what would his father and teacher think? Would he get in trouble? Would the evil spirits eat him? He was about to find out more about this unseen God.

Flashcard 3-1

Ringu ran the rest of the way home from school. He watched the missionary set up a white screen and sat down with Battu to listen to music from the harmonium. *How beautiful*, he thought. *It makes me feel happy.*

When it was dark, the missionary presented the slide show to the villagers who had gathered. Ringu had never seen such a thing.

Mr. Grubbs spoke as he showed a picture of a baby wrapped in cloths lying on some straw. "The Lord Jesus Christ was in Heaven but came down to Earth. He was born as a baby and grew up without doing anything wrong. He came to pay for all your sins, every bad thing you have thought and done like worshiping idols, stealing and lying."

The next picture was of a cross with a man nailed to it. "Jesus Christ took your place," Mr. Grubbs continued. "He took your punishment. He died for you. Then, on the third day He came back to life and is alive today!"

Ringu was thinking very hard. *Could this be true?* He wanted to believe but he was afraid of what the evil spirits would do.

"Jesus Christ died for you. He took the punishment for your sin," the missionary said. "If you believe this and receive Him as your Savior, He will forgive your sins. He will set you free from the power of evil spirits."

Ringu wanted to believe the sahib's words, but he would have to think some more. He couldn't wait until he learned to read. Then he could learn more all by himself.

Mr. Grubbs turned off the projector and suddenly it was very dark. A lantern was lit while the villagers questioned Mr. Grubbs and Pandu.

Father spoke to his sons. "You must go home and eat so you can watch the field."

Flashcard 3-2

By the time the boys finished eating, the people were gone and the missionary and Pandu were preparing to leave.

As Pandu started toward the jeep with the harmonium, the missionary said, "Pandur, be sure to put that in a safe place. Remember, it belongs to my wife. She would be heartbroken if it were bumped out on the road and lost."

Everyone stand up and help me put the harmonium into the jeep. (*Do with children.*) You may sit down.

How proud I would be if I could play a music box like that, Ringu thought as he and Battu watched Pandu put it carefully away.

"Sahib," said Ringu, "how long are you going to be here? I want to learn more."

"Just one more day," answered Mr. Grubbs. "Then we're going on to tell others about Jesus Christ. We must witness in other villages too."

Oh no! Grubbs Sahib is going away, thought Ringu, *and the music box will be gone too!*

"Come on!" whispered Ringu to Battu. He sneaked to the side of the jeep and quickly lifted out the harmonium. He could not make the sahib stay but he would keep the music box! With the instrument between them Ringu and Battu moved swiftly into the darkness.

Flashcard 3-3

When they arrived at the field, they hid the harmonium beneath the shelter, which was like a little house built on stilts. They covered the instrument carefully with leaves.

Then they were ready to defend the crops. Ringu and Battu found a kerosene lamp, lit it and carried rocks up into the shelter. If hyenas or jackals came to the crops, the boys would yell and throw the rocks to scare them away.

Ringu and Battu sat quietly watching until finally Ringu spoke. "Grubbs Sahib said the true God hates sin. I have stolen the music box. Do you think that was a sin?" He had a lot to think about.

Flashcard 3-4

All was quiet except for the sound of night birds calling in the forest. The two boys got really sleepy. Let's pretend we are very sleepy. Rub your eyes. Stretch. Yawn. (*Do with children.*) Soon Ringu and Battu fell asleep.

Suddenly Ringu woke up. He couldn't see very well because of the darkness but as he scanned the field, he thought he saw something move in the moonlight. Ringu's sleepy eyes were suddenly not so sleepy anymore. He studied the field carefully.

Yes, there was an animal there. He stared intently into the darkness, trying to see what it was. It was too big to be a jackal or hyena. It moved slowly. Ringu nudged his brother.

"What is it?" Battu mumbled, half asleep.

"I don't know," Ringu spoke softly. "There's a big animal on the other side of the field."

Just then the animal stepped out from the shadows of the forest. And in that instant Ringu thought he saw black stripes covering a large orange animal's body. What do you think it was? (*Allow response.*)

Flashcard 3-5

"A tiger! I think it's a tiger!" he whispered.

At that moment Battu sprang to a sitting position. "Are you sure?" He clutched his brother's arm. "Was it really a tiger?"

"I—I'm not sure." They saw the shadowy form turn slowly as if looking right at them. Ringu gasped. He saw the animal's big, bright, greyish-blue eyes shining in the moonlight. It seemed like the tiger was staring right at them!

Just then the animal disappeared into the darkness.

"That was a tiger!" Ringu shuddered.

How would you feel if you were Ringu or Battu? (*Allow response.*) They were terrified! Ringu and Battu huddled together, watching the forest, anxiously waiting for the night to pass.

With the first gray light of dawn the two boys ran toward the village.

Everyone stand up and pretend to run back to the village! (*Do with children.*) Thank you. You may sit down.

As they neared home, they saw a man running toward the village.

Flashcard 3-6

"News! I have news!" he was shouting.

Ringu's father quickly came out of his house. Others rushed from their homes to hear.

"During the night a man in the next village was taken by a tiger!"

"Who? When? How?" Questions flew from every direction.

"We saw the tiger!" gasped Ringu to his father.

An old man spoke. "An ox must be killed near the water hole so the tiger will smell the blood and come to eat the ox. The hunters must wait in a tree nearby and kill the tiger.... Tonight!"

Ringu's father ordered three men to go to the forest near the water hole where the animals drank. They would build a platform high in a tree where the hunters could wait. Other men would kill an old ox by the water hole as bait.

"I will take my gun and a flashlight. Two men will come with me and my son, Ringu. We will wait up in the tree until the tiger comes."

How do you think Ringu felt? If you think he was afraid, show me your afraid face. If you think he was proud, clap your hands three times. (*Allow response.*) If you looked afraid or clapped your hands, you are correct!

Ringu was proud that his father thought he was old enough to help hunt the tiger but he was frightened too. Many things could go wrong. What if something happened and the tiger killed him? He remembered the chills and sick feeling in his stomach when he saw the tiger the night before.

Then he saw Mr. Grubbs coming down the road.

Flashcard 3-7

"What's the excitement, my friend?" asked the missionary.

"We are getting ready for a tiger hunt." Ringu tried to sound brave but his voice was shaky.

"A tiger hunt!" exclaimed Mr. Grubbs. "And are you going to go with the men?"

Ringu nodded his head.

"You don't look very excited," commented the missionary. "But I would be afraid too. Tigers are dangerous."

"A tiger could eat me," Ringu gulped. "Just like the evil spirits."

A concerned look flashed across Mr. Grubbs' face. He spoke earnestly. "Ringu, I am going to tell you a story about something that happened when Jesus Christ, God's Son, lived on Earth. There was a man who had evil spirits living inside of him. The man ran away from home and went to live in the place where they buried dead people. The evil spirits made him do terrible things. The people fastened the man's hands and feet with iron chains because they were so afraid of him."

Ringu nodded his head. He would be afraid of such a man too.

Would you be afraid of a man like that? (*Allow response.*) I know I would!

Mr. Grubbs continued, "But the chains could not hold this man. The evil spirits gave him such strength that he broke the chains!"

Ringu shuddered. These were powerful evil spirits!

"Then Jesus came to the man. He commanded the evil spirits to leave and immediately the man was free. The evil spirits had to obey the command of the Son of God, Ringu!" Then Mr. Grubbs read to Ringu from the Bible. (*Read Psalm 124:8.*) "The Lord is another name for God, Ringu. Whenever you need help, call to Him, He is more powerful than anything—even the evil spirits!"

"Do you know you have sinned, Ringu? The paper I gave you explains that everyone in the whole world has sinned. That includes you. It includes me, Ringu. I have done bad things too.

Ringu didn't answer. He knew he had stolen the harmonium and other things. He lied and worshipped false gods, but the sahib? Ringu couldn't imagine this man doing anything wrong.

"Ringu, God hates sin but He loves you. If you don't ask forgiveness for your sins, you will be separated from God now and forever. Remember the pictures I showed you? God sent His own Son, the Lord Jesus, to Earth to take the punishment you deserve for your sins. The Lord Jesus died for you, Ringu. He didn't deserve any punishment but He took yours because He loves you. Then to prove He was the Son of God, Jesus rose again from the dead on the third day."

Ringu thought about all his fears. He knew he needed to have Jesus. He looked straight into Mr. Grubbs' eyes. "I know you are telling me the truth. What do I have to do?"

"You must receive Jesus as your Savior," answered Mr. Grubbs.

Ringu believed that Jesus died and rose again to save him from his sins. He received Him as his Savior! At that moment Ringu's sins were taken away! He was forgiven! Then Ringu and Mr. Grubbs bowed their heads and prayed. It gave Ringu a strange feeling to be talking to the unseen God. Yet he knew God heard him.

When they finished praying, Mr. Grubbs said, "Ringu, you can always talk with God and ask Him for help. You can even ask Him to help you with the tiger hunt tonight. Remember, our help is in the name of the Lord."

Ringu touched the twisted string he had worn around his neck his whole life. He had been taught that he must wear the string to be protected from the evil spirits. "So I don't need this anymore?"

"That's right, Ringu. The string that you wear has no power. Only God has power over the evil spirits."

Flashcard 3-8

Ringu knew what he must do. With a tug he snapped the string and threw it away.

Later in the day when Ringu was in the house, Battu looked at him and asked, "Ringu, where is your charm? You don't have it on!"

Ringu caught his breath. He didn't look up at his mother but he knew she had stopped her work by the fire. From the corner of his eye he saw his father stop in the doorway. Ringu looked around and saw them all looking at him, waiting for an answer.

The sahib told me of the true God, Ringu thought. My family needs to know about Him too. But what will they think?

Swallowing hard, Ringu answered, "The sahib's God loves me and sent His Son to die for my sins. From now on I am going to serve Him. He loves you too and..."

His father interrupted. "Stop right there! That is not the way of our people. When you are older, you will know better. We will *not* believe in this unseen God!" He frowned and turned away.

Ringu looked over as Battu moved away from him. "I don't want to be near you. The evil spirits will be angry at you. They could get me too!"

Ringu stood tall. "Sahib told me that Jesus is more powerful than the evil spirits. They can't hurt you if you trust Him as your Savior."

"No! Lies!" Battu snapped. "And just see if He helps you tonight!"

Tonight—the tiger hunt! Ringu unwrapped his turban, removing the paper with God's words. *I can't read the words for myself yet, he thought, but Sahib told me I can talk with God anytime. I will ask for help tonight on the tiger hunt! Our help is in the name of the Lord!*

Cliffhanger

What will happen during the tiger hunt? Will Ringu get hurt? Come back tomorrow to find out what happens!

Review Questions

1. What did Grubbs tell the villagers about Jesus Christ? (*He died to take their punishment for sin.*)
2. What happened to Grubbs' harmonium? (*Ringu and Battu stole it.*)
3. What did Ringu and Battu see while guarding the field? (*A tiger.*)
4. What did Ringu's father decide to do about the tiger? (*Take Ringu and two men on a tiger hunt.*)
5. Who did Grubbs say could help Ringu on the tiger hunt? (*God.*)

The Tiger Hunt

Who remembers what was happening at the end of the story yesterday? (*Allow children to briefly retell the story.*) Yes, Ringu and some other men were going on a tiger hunt. Listen closely today to find out what happens.

Flashcard 4-1

Quickly and quietly Ringu, his father and the other men climbed to a small platform in the branches of a tree.

Ringu prayed through the night as he watched. *Please God, don't let the evil spirits get me! And please help us kill the tiger tonight.* His heart pounded as he remembered that the tiger had killed a man just the night before. He repeated over and over in his mind, *our help is in the name of the Lord. Our help is in the name of the Lord.*

Then Ringu thought he saw something move. He watched closely. *Is something moving or are my eyes playing tricks on me?* Ringu wondered. *God, I need you to help me!* he prayed. *Is that really something moving?*

Something did move! Ringu clutched his father's arm and pointed.

Flashcard 4-2

Everyone on the platform watched, barely breathing. The tiger crept forward, one moment in the moonlight, the next in the shadows. The beast's body was close to the ground and its tail swung back and forth as it moved toward the ox they had killed as bait. Its head swayed from side to side, ready to fight off any enemies.

Satisfied that all was safe, the great striped beast crouched by the dead ox. Suddenly a shot shattered the still night air. The tiger sprang into the shadows.

"Oh no! I missed!" Ringu's father whispered.

Then Ringu heard a twig snap nearby. He looked down.

Flashcard 4-3

There was the tiger! *He's going to jump!* thought Ringu. He pushed the button on his flashlight and shined the light in the animal's face, trying to blind him. *It's not bright enough! What if he tries to get it?* Frantically Ringu threw the flashlight to the ground.

The tiger pounced after the light as another shot cracked through the air.

The tiger made one more leap—this time straight into the air—then, thud! The tiger hit the ground hard. It thrashed around in the tall grass, wounded.

Ringu's father loaded the gun and shot one last bullet. The beast finally lay still. It was dead.

Shouts of excitement erupted in the dark forest.

"Oh, thank you God, thank you, God, that you heard me!" Ringu prayed under his breath.

"Your shots were sure and straight," one hunter said to Ringu's father.

"I am proud of my Ringu," he said, turning to his son. "You were the first one to see the tiger and you kept him from jumping up to us. You saved our lives."

"God helped me see," Ringu replied. "And God helped you kill the tiger. Sahib said our help is in the name of the Lord. Now I understand what he meant."

The hunters looked at Ringu strangely. But no one said anything as they came down from the tree. Light was beginning to spill over the horizon. The sun was coming up.

"Ringu," his father ordered, "run to the village and bring the oxen and cart. We must carry the tiger out of the forest."

Flashcard 4-4

Ringu ran joyously to the village. "News! I have news! The tiger is dead! We have killed the tiger!"

Can you say that with me? "News! I have news! The tiger is dead!"

Ringu was happy with his part in the hunt. He was thankful that God had helped him.

From a distance Battu watched Ringu unharness the oxen from the cart. "Weren't you scared?" Battu asked.

"I was terrified! But the evil spirits didn't hurt me. Grubbs Sahib tells us that God will help us if we trust Him. So I asked Him to help." Ringu watched Battu. "My heart did not beat so fast then. And I saw better too. I was the first to see the tiger because God was helping me!"

"Oh no! This God is making you crazy!" Battu cried. "You are making the spirits angry! They are going to hurt you!"

Ringu watched Battu run into the house. *God, will you hear again please?* he prayed. *Will you help Battu trust you?*

Just then he heard the sound of a motor. *It must be the jeep. Is the sahib leaving the village? Or is he going to report the missing music box?* Ringu swallowed hard.

The motor roared again then stopped. Ringu shouted to his brother, "Come with me to see the sahib!"

Ringu heard a sharp "No!" from inside the house. It was Battu.

Ringu ran on without him but it was hard to be alone. Battu had gone everywhere with him before he'd received Jesus. Now Sahib was his only friend. *I hope he doesn't find out I took his wife's music box!* Ringu worried.

Flashcard 4-5

He rounded a bend in the road and there stood the sahib by the packed jeep. One wheel of the jeep was deep in the mud at the edge of the road.

"It won't make it," the missionary was saying to Pandu. "I tried to miss the mud but the wheel slipped into this deep rut. We'll have to get some rocks and small branches to pry the wheel out."

Ringu watched as the missionary dropped a large rock by the wheel. Mud splashed and Ringu jumped back. Mr. Grubbs was out of breath and his face was very red as he said, "Oh, Ringu, you're here. Would you help us please?"

Ringu smiled. "Yes, Sahib," he said but he didn't move. He studied the missionary's face. Didn't he know the harmonium was gone?

"We need help or we won't get very far tonight," said Mr. Grubbs. "What we need is a team of oxen to pull us out. How about it, Ringu? Are your oxen at the house?"

"I...I'm not sure," Ringu said, still smiling. "They might be in the field." Ringu bit his tongue. He knew they were still in their stalls. He had just lied to his only friend. *But it was just a little lie, he reasoned, and the jeep would probably be too heavy for the oxen anyway.*

"I'll find someone else to help us then," decided Mr. Grubbs. "Would your father know who could help us with..."

"No, I'll go get our oxen," interrupted Ringu. "I can take them out of the fields if I need to."

Ringu started back toward the village before the missionary could say anything. He'd take plenty of time so the sahib wouldn't know about his lie. Ringu used to lie all the time and never felt sorry. Now he had a sick feeling in his stomach. Why did he feel so guilty? (*Allow response.*)

Flashcard 4-6

He drove the oxen back toward the jeep. Quickly the missionary tied the ropes to the front bumper. Ringu twisted the oxen's tails and shouted to make them move. Can you help me get the oxen moving? Let's cheer on the oxen! (*Do with children.*) The jeep began to move! Everyone cheered as the wheels rolled up on solid ground.

The missionary took Ringu aside and put his hand gently on the boy's shoulder. "Ringu, you knew the oxen were not in the field, didn't you?" The sick feeling came back in Ringu's stomach. He nodded and stared down at the ground.

"The Lord Jesus loves you and doesn't want you to lie. He knows all you do, even when others don't. You need to have a talk with Jesus. He died for *all* your sins and promises to forgive you. My little friend, do you have your paper with God's words?"

Ringu took the paper from his turban. It was worn and ragged on the edges. He held it carefully as Mr. Grubbs pointed to some words and read very slowly for Ringu to understand. (*Read 1 John 1:9.*)

Ringu dug his toe in the dirt. He thought he understood but he wasn't sure.

"When you learn to read, then you can learn more about what God has said," the missionary continued. "I will be back again but until then talk often with the Lord. He will help you do what is right. Now before we leave let's have Pandu play for us on the harmonium. You'd like that, wouldn't you, Ringu?"

Without waiting for an answer Mr. Grubbs went to the back of the jeep for the harmonium. Ringu froze in his tracks and started to sweat. Would Grubbs Sahib find out he had taken it?

Flashcard 4-7

Mr. Grubbs motioned to Pandu as he was digging around in the back of the jeep. "I saw you put it in the vehicle. Could it have fallen out on a bumpy road?"

Ringu trembled as he listened to the missionary and Pandu discuss what to do. They called to Ringu.

"The harmonium is not here and we don't know where it is. There is not time for us to look for it or to report it missing. Will you look for it, Ringu? If you find it, take it to Miss Merry. She is the missionary working to get the Bible written in your language. She will know where I am and will see that I get it."

Ringu nodded as he slowly crossed his arms and pulled at his ear lobes. It was a promise.

Flashcard 4-8

After supper that evening Ringu rolled up in his blanket near the fire. He started to think about the events of the day and suddenly the sick feeling in his stomach returned.

Stealing and lying aren't so bad, he reasoned. Everybody steals and lies. But Grubbs Sahib did say stealing and lying are wrong and the one true God hates sin.

Finally Ringu whispered under the blanket. "Do you hear me, Jesus? Do you hear me? I have sinned. I lied! I stole! But I want to please you. Please help me not disobey you anymore."

Suddenly the sick feeling left! Ringu knew Jesus had forgiven him. He stretched out and finally started to relax. Then he remembered. He still had the harmonium!

He was sorry he'd stolen the harmonium and would try not to steal again. But did he really have to return it? That would be crazy!

Cliffhanger

Ringu thought a lot that night. What should he do? You'll have to come back tomorrow to find out the last part of Ringu's story.

Review Questions

1. Who did Ringu ask to help on the tiger hunt? (*God.*)
2. Why didn't Battu want to go with Ringu to see Grubbs? (*He was afraid it would make the evil spirits angry.*)
3. Why did Ringu feel bad after he lied to Grubbs about the oxen? (*With Jesus as his Savior, he now knew it was wrong to lie.*)
4. What did Grubbs say Ringu should do after he sinned? (*Confess it to God.*)
5. After Ringu asked Jesus to forgive him and help him obey, how did he feel? (*He felt better knowing he was forgiven but wondered what to do with the harmonium.*)

Chapter 5

Ringu Returns the Harmonium

Has there ever been a time where you had to choose between doing what you wanted to do or doing the right thing? (*Allow response.*) In our missionary story, Ringu has to do that. Listen closely to see what he chooses.

Flashcard 5-1

Early the next day Ringu couldn't stand it anymore. He had to try the music box! He hurried to the shelter and removed all the leaves that hid it. He opened the lid of the harmonium and looked down at the shiny black and white keys. He peered around to see if anyone was looking. *The coast is clear!* Ringu thought.

Ringu squeezed the back of the harmonium several times with his left hand as Pandu had done. At the same time he fingered the keys with his right hand. The mixed-up sounds frustrated him. Why couldn't he make the music he loved? Pandu made it look easy.

I will play the song about Jesus that Sahib taught me to sing, he thought. When he thought of Jesus, that sick feeling came back to his stomach again. Ringu knew he was sad because he had stolen the instrument. But he put the thought aside. Maybe if he played the song, Jesus would be glad and wouldn't care about the stealing.

Ringu hummed the first line and tried to play it. None of the notes were right. They didn't go up or down like they were supposed to. Maybe if he got the first note right, the others would follow. He sang the first note, pressed a white key and squeezed the box. It sounded terrible! He tried a black key. That sounded worse!

He closed the harmonium and covered it carefully. He looked at it longingly but decided to do the right thing. *When Father goes to get wood, I will go to Miss Merry and find out where Grubbs Sahib is. I must take the music box to him myself.* He knew that was what God wanted him to do.

Flashcard 5-2

Suddenly Battu peered around a corner of the shelter. "I thought you'd be here," he said with disgust. "Father wanted you to go get wood but—"

"In the village? Then I can go to Miss Merry's and see where Grubbs Sahib is," Ringu interrupted, "I am going to return the music box."

"Return the music box? Are you crazy? The sahib is gone and will not be back for a long time—maybe never!"

"We should never have taken it," Ringu said.

"I don't care. You're the one who wanted it."

"Yes, and now I must take it back."

"Well, it is too late," Battu replied. "Father couldn't find you and had to go for wood without you."

Ringu was disappointed but determined. He would find a way somehow.

Several days later at the bazaar Ringu looked for Miss Merry but he couldn't find her. Ringu overheard someone say, "All the Christians are gone! And I hear they are never coming back!"

Ringu's heart sank. *Grubbs Sahib, Pandu, Miss Merry—never coming back?*

Flashcard 5-3

"Now you don't have to return the music box!" Battu whispered. "But I wish the sahib was still here," he added.

Ringu looked at his brother. He'd never said anything like that before.

Battu shrugged his shoulders. "I think his words might be good. They made you want to do good things. Before, you never would have wanted to return the music box."

Ringu was glad Battu was beginning to think differently. But he was worried about the harmonium. If the Christians were gone, how could he return it?

God, are you there? I really want to obey you. I want to return the music box but the Christians are gone. I don't know what to do. Please help me.

Many days passed. One morning Ringu's father said, "We need wood for the cooking fire. Ringu, drive the cart to the village and get some for us."

This was the answer to his prayer! Ringu eagerly brought out the oxen and hitched them to the cart. As he headed toward the field to get the harmonium, Battu ran after him and jumped into the cart. "I want to go with you!"

Flashcard 5-4

Ringu smiled. He was glad his brother had decided to come. They drove to the shelter and put the harmonium in the cart.

"Hold onto it tightly," he told Battu. "Don't let it fall out."

Ringu twisted the oxen's tails. He was in a hurry. He had missed talking to the Christians and wanted to know if they were really gone.

As they approached the village, Ringu saw that the tents weren't there. The Christians hadn't come back. A feeling of hopelessness came over him. Suddenly Battu tugged at Ringu's sleeve and pointed. "Look, isn't that a tent?"

Ringu squinted to see through the sun in his eyes. Yes! Over the hill was a tent and in front of it stood a light-skinned woman. It must be Miss Merry! She hadn't gone away!

Flashcard 5-5

"Hello," she called as they approached. "I need some help. Maybe you're just the boys I'm looking for."

Ringu and Battu climbed out of the cart and walked slowly to her.

"I am Miss Merry and I am trying to learn your language. I want to help you know about Jesus, God's Son. May I tell you about Him now?"

The kind lady gently held a paper. "Here are words from God. They are important things God wants you to know."

Ringu gasped. Miss Merry held a paper with God's words—just like the one Sahib had given him. Ringu took the tattered one from his turban. "Grubbs Sahib gave me one of those!"

Flashcard 5-6

"I see you need a new one!" said Miss Merry, smiling as she handed her paper to Ringu. "Can you read it to me?" asked Miss Merry.

"I'll try," he agreed. He had been learning more and more at school but he still needed help with bigger words.

Slowly Ringu and Miss Merry read the paper all the way through. The words made him happy deep down inside. He was glad to know he would someday go to Heaven. "I trust Jesus as my Savior—Grubbs Sahib told me about him," Ringu blurted out. "I must see Mr. Grubbs. Even if he and Pandu are far away, I will go."

Miss Merry was silent a moment. She looked sad. "Mr. Grubbs has gone far away. He was very sick and had to go to a hospital in Bombay. Then he went with his family to America. There was nothing the doctors could do for his sickness." She paused. "He is in Heaven now."

"Grubbs Sahib is in Heaven?" Ringu asked. "That is good! That is where God is—and the Lord Jesus. Sahib will be very happy there." Ringu thought for a moment. "But—he is dead?"

"Yes, Ringu. Mr. Grubbs died."

Ringu slumped in his chair. He suddenly felt alone and very sad. A tear spilled from the corner of his eye and rolled down his cheek. He loved the sahib and wanted to see him again.

"I have a little picture of Mr. Grubbs," said Miss Merry. "Would you like to have it?"

Flashcard 5-7

Miss Merry gave the picture to Ringu. He looked at it earnestly through his tears.

"Thank you, thank you," he murmured. "This is my sahib who told me about Jesus. See, Battu?"

Battu looked without speaking.

"Ringu," Miss Merry said gently. "It is God's plan for Mr. Grubbs to be with Him in Heaven now and someday you will see him there! But God also has a special plan for you right here. I believe He wants you to serve Him by helping others hear the Word of God. I need to learn many words in your language, Ringu, so I can write God's message for the people of the villages to read. Each time you come here you can teach me some new words."

"Oh, Miss Merry, I want to serve the Lord Jesus! If I obey God and work hard to help you, maybe I can be a missionary like Grubbs Sahib!" Ringu said, wiping away his tears.

But suddenly Ringu remembered. What about the harmonium? "Miss Merry, I have a big problem. Sahib told me that if I found his harmonium I should bring it here."

"Did you find it?"

"Well, I have it. I stole it before I knew Jesus and now I want to return it. What should I do?"

"You could give it to Mr. Grubbs' wife. She is coming back to India soon."

Flashcard 5-8

Ringu's face broke into a grin. He ran to the ox cart, lifted out the harmonium and carried it to Miss Merry.

"Will you give it to Sahib's wife as soon as she comes? Will you?"

"Yes, indeed," smiled Miss Merry.

Ringu leaped into the ox cart. "The next time we visit we will teach you some new words. Now we must get wood for our father."

As they went down the road, Ringu took out the paper with God's words and looked up to Heaven. *Thank You, dear Lord Jesus, for sending the sahib. Be sure to tell him I returned the music box and I am very happy. Tell him I'm going to serve You!*

"Ringu," asked Battu, "I don't understand the paper. Will you help me?"

"Yes, little brother. I want to tell you all I know about the Lord Jesus."

All the way home Ringu and Battu talked about the Lord Jesus and what He had done for them. Ringu finally understood the paper with words from God. Soon Battu would understand as well.

Consecration Challenge

Just like Ringu wanted to serve God, God wants you to serve Him. If you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, are you willing to give yourself totally to Him? God has a perfect plan for you. He wants to use you—right now and as you grow up. Maybe someday He will want you to be a missionary in a faraway country. Maybe He will want you to stay in your own country and tell people in your neighborhood about Jesus.

(Read Romans 12:1.) The Bible says if you are God's child, you should give Him your body as a "living sacrifice." That means God wants you to serve Him by going wherever He wants you to go, doing whatever He wants you to do and acting however He wants you to act. You can give your whole self to God—your plans, dreams and everything you are. That means you are willing to serve God in any way He asks you, even if it means doing something hard or giving something away. That is the special way you say thank You to God every day for saving you from your sins.

Please bow your head and close your eyes—no one looking around. If you are a child of God and would like me to show you from God's Word, the Bible, how you can give your whole life to God to obey and serve Him, show me by raising your hand. *(Pause and acknowledge responses.)* You may put your hands down and look up at me. If you raised your hand just now, please meet me *(designate time and location)* and I will show you from the Bible how you can answer God's call to serve Him with your whole life.

Review Questions

1. Why was Ringu sad when he heard all the Christians were gone? *(He thought Grubbs, Pandu and Miss Merry would never come back.)*
2. Who went with Ringu to return the harmonium? *(Battu.)*
3. What did Miss Merry and Ringu read? *(The paper from God.)*
4. What happened to Grubbs? *(He got sick and died.)*
5. What did Miss Merry challenge Ringu to do? *(Serve the Lord by helping others hear the Word of God.)*