



CHRISTIAN PILOTS ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA

November—December 2007

David Salmon of Chalkyitsik, Alaska



David Salmon in His Favorite Chair with His Bible

By Tom Baird

As often stated by evangelist Colton Wickramaratne “God’s plan in not a program. God’s plan is a man.” Each generation is asked if someone will stand up to be that man of God to lead them in truth and righteousness. Will you be that man or woman to respond to God’s call on your life?

It is very obvious that a man of faith, who faithfully answered our Lord has most defiantly been David Salmon from Chalkyitsik, AK. And, in his passing he will be greatly missed!

David Salmon having lived to a full and wonderful age of 95 went to be with our Lord Jesus on October 11, 2007 at about 3:30 PM. What a giant of a man of God! When some one speaks the name David Salmon to me the first thing that comes to mind is “Praise the Lord”. Every phone call and conversation with him almost always contained a shout and a laugh for joy as he proclaimed “Praise the Lord” not just once but several times. When individuals and leaders had difficulty in relationships he would call for a revival and prayer to have more presence of the Lord. Most often our extra prayers, worshiping and waiting on the Lord was just what was needed. His heart’s desire was to see every soul come to the saving knowledge

of our Lord and Savior Jesus.

Chief David Salmon was a very unassuming man who carried much authority. In highest praise and honor it can be said he had a servant’s heart in all that he did. He never let age get in his way. At the age of 70 he went out by himself and cut 90 logs, brought them in to the village and built a chapel.

As a pilot, I often was privileged to stay with him in his home. These stays were a treasure of information. He was always teaching and training.

In our discussions he told many stories and traditions from ancient times to modern. He told about the flood story where eight people were saved while all other mankind were killed from a flood that covered all the earth. They escaped by riding many days on a giant raft with many animals. He told about certain valleys that they would not enter because monsters lived there i.e. dinosaurs. He told about his personal family history where about every 400 years one of his ancestors would grow to be a giant.

He related many stories and history of his people all from memory. He suffered much loss and hardship. His mother died in 1923 during the TB epidemic that hit the Yukon Flats during the 1920’s. This epidemic wiped out an entire generation. It was so severe that most of the social structure was destroyed. After being left at the mission school for two years where he received his only formal schooling, his father came back for him. David’s father then took him 80 miles up the Grayling River, beyond the Black River, to a camp in “No Man’s Land” as his father referred to it. He stayed there in the wilderness for the next 18 years. During the last 10 years of that wilderness time he married Sarah and they were married 59 years until Sarah’s death.

During these 10 years Sarah was instrumental in David becoming proficient in reading, writing and speaking English as well as his growth in the faith of our Lord

Jesus. She was known as a great woman of prayer. In 1955 he met the minister, Walter Hannon, at Fort Yukon while working construction. In 1956 he was sent to Michigan for training as a church deacon. In 1958 he was ordained and remained in Chalkyitsik as chief until 1962. He traveled extensively throughout interior Alaska preaching the Word of God in Christ Jesus. He believed in the further filling of the Holy Spirit insisting it was necessary for leaders in order to minister most effectively for the Lord.

As a further insight into his culture, Chief David Salmon continued to teach and instruct about the old ways, in spite of the fact that the TB epidemic disrupted the social structure. He often stated that the tribal laws and practices were all about survival. They often seem severe, but given the harsh living conditions and almost constant warfare of past centuries one comes to understand their great practicality.

I was fascinated by the history of how the Athabaskan people arrived and settled in Alaska. The first group arriving from Siberia was known as the “Best” Indian. A later migration also started to settle when the two groups met in conflict. They resolved the conflict by the second group agreeing to be subservient to the first. Again, even later, a third group arrived and also resolved their conflict by agreeing to be slaves to both other groups. The second group was then called the “Middle” Indians and the third was called the “Slave” Indians. Each group differed from the other with the “Best” Indian being the lightest complexioned and the most bossy and lazy. The “Middle” Indian was slightly darker and was known as good workers who did what they were told by the “Best” Indian. The “Slave” Indian was the darkest and also the hardest worker of all. These clan separations were kept in practice up till the 1920’s when so many died that the youth no longer remembered which clan they were born into. Geneal-

ogy had been kept through the mother's side of the family. So, the children of a "Slave" Indian man who married a "Best" Indian woman would be counted as "Best" Indians. Conversely, the children of a "Best" Indian man who married a "Slave" Indian woman would be counted as "Slave" Indians. This division of the three clans did not affect leadership positions or selection to a leadership post. The most recent Great Chief of the 1800's who united all the villages in peace thus stopping centuries of war among them was from the "Slave" Indian clan.

As you can see through these insights each of us comes from a strong and proud heritage. Yet, even that heritage cannot answer all our needs. If you are discouraged, if you are disheartened, if you have come to the end of life's journey and you don't know what to do, remember Jesus Christ is the answer to all of your problems.

In continuing on Pastor David Salmon's work in the Lord, Christian Pi-

lots is networking with several other Christian evangelistic and support ministries to be more effective in not only spreading the gospel but in making disciples of every nation here in Alaska. In the past two months we have had very productive meetings with InterAct Ministries, Send International, Hatcher Pass Baptist Association, various Covenant and Baptist Churches, Arctic Barnabus, Missionary Aviation Repair Center, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Alaska Christian College, Samaritan's Air, Alaska Bible Institute, Global Partnership Ministries, Baptist Collegiate Ministries, Abbott Loop Christian Center and several churches in Anchorage and Nome.

There is a need for churches here on the road system to adopt a remote Alaskan village to encourage the believers and workers in these villages. Christian Pilots also in need of support to fly all these missions.

Have a Merry Christmas and may the Lord richly bless you in the coming New Year.

MONTHLY STATE WIDE BOARD MEETING

Place: Mat Su Family Restaurant
Time: 8:00 AM
Date: First Saturday of every month

MONTHLY STATE WIDE BREAKFAST

Place: Mat Su Family Restaurant
Time: 9:00 AM
Date: Same as above monthly board meeting.

**OVERALL STATE ASSOCIATION:
CHRISTIAN PILOTS ASSOCIATION OF
ALASKA, INC.**

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The Local Chapters and Board Members of the Christian Pilots Association of Alaska in alphabetical order are:

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PO Box 140171
Anchorage, AK 99514
Phone: 907-2485577
E-mail: steelengineering@acsalaska.net
President: Danny Davidson
Vice President: Kevin Mc Cabe
Secretary: Linn Mc Cabe
Treasurer: James Lyman

The Anchorage chapter meets the first Saturday of every month at 8:00 AM for the business meeting and at 9:00 AM for food and fellowship upstairs at Peggy's Restaurant in Anchorage right across from Merrill Field Tower.

NOME Chapter

PO Box 1645
Nome, AK 99769
Phone: 907-443-3801
E-mail: frozensea@nome.net
Web Page: <http://www.home.gci.net/>

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President: Dave Bartlett
Vice-President:
Secretary:
Treasurer:.
Bd Member: Dennis Weidler
The Nome Chapter meets the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM at "Taste of 270" above Hageland Air's Hanger. Call 907-443-3801 for further details.

SOUTHCENTRAL Chapter

PO Box 23730
Ketchikan, AK 99901
Phone: 907-225-4988
E-mail: lithinos@yahoo.com
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