

God has a plan for you, find out what it is and do it with all your heart, and let us all work together to hasten the return of the Lord Jesus Christ!



In His service and love,

Paul A. Norman

Brother Iso in Vanuatu. He, his wife and another brother prayed for years until God had nearly all the 'Resort' staff Christians. And the owner let them have a non-denominational meeting.

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Greetings in Christ!



Dion, Michael, Paul and Christopher in Auckland the day we left for Noumea.

Hi Again from Auckland New Zealand.

In our last newsletter we wrote: —

“We look forward to being able to share something of what the Lord does by His Spirit as time goes by.”

Here by God's grace is an attempt to do that.

‘ I Believe that the Word Peace is Going to be Important ’

“Her name is Salem.”

“She looks like a lovely baby,” I replied handing the photo back.

“Yes, she is staying with her grandmother, my mother-in-law,” said the Korean lady obviously already missing her daughter very much.

The plane was being readied for landing in New Caledonia, and this was almost the only conversation that we had had with Steve’s wife Kay (not real names) since leaving Auckland. Meeting these people who were sitting across the aisle from us was, both Michael and I believed, what might be called a God-incidence—something arranged by God’s Holy Spirit.

The retelling of this encounter and its significance however begins at a point some time prior to this.

Seeking God for His plans, a few of the brothers that the Lord had drawn together to do Holy Spirit led gospel work in New Zealand, had gathered on a hillside property outside Ruatoria on New Zealand’s isolated East Coast. Some of us had done this a few times before at different times and in different places. God had given strong direction, granting some amazing answers to such times of prayer and fasting.

At the end of this particular time, a brother approached us and explained that the Lord had shown him that he was to provide a base for Michael and I to operate out of. To make this possible, the Lord had told him, that He was going to provide the man with a very well paying contracting opening, and that there would be more than enough finance to cover all the costs.

Teams in the Spirit

I have observed that the Lord often draws together teams of people, sometimes long term or sometimes for a shorter season. Some called to be devoted to specifically doing gospel work, and other things as led by the Holy Spirit. While other people are more led by the same Spirit to helping provide the practical

In Vanuatu for Amon and Agnus who are looking at the commitment of marriage and a return to gospel work, Peter and Godwin in the Redcross.

New Zealanders Brent & Wanda Burge and family who have already been over and helped with skill training in Vanuatu, and Bruce and Sue who are currently working hard to see skill training go ahead in Vanuatu.

There will be a need for others to be prepared to go over as both sharers of the gospel, and for practical projects. In the Fiji Group there is an island with good water supply which has 10,000 acres to be developed. One thousand acres were in previous generations in cattle grazing. This area may need all kinds of assistance in the near future.

Not being quite sure yet of what God’s full purposes will be for ourselves (as said before we have a flexible ticket arrangement), we are looking to return to the islands possibly during the month ahead. Your prayers and support in the Lord Jesus would again—please be appreciated.

I hope that this brief account of some of the things that the Lord has been doing with us, and how He put it all together, may encourage you as you read to press in to what ever calling and purpose that the Lord has placed in your life; knowing that he is faithful and that as you trust Him, He will bring such purposes to pass no matter what is thrown up at you or what self doubts you may have had.

I know that it is both Michael and my hope that the Lord will continue to raise up many more workers for the gospel for both here in New Zealand and overseas. These are the last days and the needs of humanity are so profound. There are many who have yet to hear of the saving work of Jesus upon the cross and the power of his resurrection. Sin is abounding, truly the gospel needs to go out to lead men in repentance and bring them in the grace of God to faith in Him.

A friend in Wellington once put it this way, you are either called to go, or called to support. To which I would add that you may experience differing seasons of both. Ask God to show you which you are in.

It was a testimony of the Lord's love to them that even this gift, not great perhaps in some people's minds, had made it to them. It certainly spoke to my heart that Sam and Vicky who could ill afford to give anything, in their present financial circumstances, had wanted to give anything at all for this need.

New Zealand to Prepare

We returned to New Zealand to prepare various resources to help with the ministry and proposed training centres. A Christian cousin Matthew Rogers, lent us his van so that we could make several necessary visits in the North Island of New Zealand. For currently we are getting ready again to go up into the islands and are waiting for the Lord's guidance on exactly when (we have a flexible return ticket).

Thanks

We have been greatly assisted by many of the Lord's servants financially and in other ways in this current tour of service, many of whom wish to remain anonymous. We would however like in the Lord to thank Dion Kereopa, Christopher Waldvogel, Frans Talma, Matthew Rogers, Alistair and Pat Rogers, and Bill and Margaret Jamiesen for their generous assistance in one sort or another over recent times.



Fifita with a grandchild,
Eroni was in USA.

We are also aware that God has been raising up many to pray for us and to you also is our deep gratitude. Prayer is a major need in all of God's works amongst us human beings!

Friends in Fiji who would appreciate prayer are Eroni and Fifita Lala as they seek the Lord's direction, guidance, and provision for the steps ahead. Sekove and Rachelli as they look to the eventual development of land, family lands and the starting of a gospel and skills training centre in Vanua Levu.

necessities of the gospel work and related projects, making it possible for the whole thing to work.

In the same way that a well functioning local group of Christians will have those charged by God to the caring and teaching, preaching, and related things, while there are those in the circle given by the Lord to seeing to the practical necessities and overall well fare of the Lord's people. And making it possible for the first lot of people to function properly at every level.

I believe that often the things that God wants to do are not happening because people are not perceiving their God given roles. This is hampering many brothers and sisters right now.

If God has called someone to minister the gospel and other elements of the Kingdom of God, then they will never succeed at simply living what may look like a normal western lifestyle. Even if they tell themselves that they will use their gained wealth to help others do the gospel work, it will never work properly, for God is not in that for them. Nothing to do with natural abilities or anything else, just the call and will of God.

By the same token if someone else tries to aim at what they may think is more 'spiritual' types of activity, when God wants them to materially prosper so that they may be directed by the Holy Spirit in supporting God's other works, then they will never succeed either for the same reasons. Nothing to do with intelligence, or anything, just the call and will of God.

Waiting for the Ministry Base

While this ministry base came together Michael and I went up to stay with Christopher and Dion in Auckland. In God's amazing way it all started to happen. The brother got exactly the kind of employment he had described to us, with the high remuneration and the opening for almost immediate advancement. But as the weeks dragged out into months, the promised ministry base never materialised.

Eventually the Lord provided some answers. The money was going on group drinking sessions with other contractors in downtown city boutique pubs, and on other extravagances. It turned out that thousands in all had gone this way when everything was worked out later on. Not surprisingly God

closed this employment up on the brother and he went through a time of re-education by God on the proper use of finances in God's calling. He was financially very stressed out for a very long time, and then God amazingly opened the door again by the leading of his Spirit and took the man into a new start in a field of work that he really wanted to be involved with. However by now we had believed to entirely forgive the man for what had happened and to release him from the promise.

We were grateful to be able to stay at Christopher's as we believed we were to prepare to be going on a ministry trip through the Southwest Pacific. In part that was what the base was to have helped us towards. This trip had been identified by the Lord many years before, and while we had been seeking him in the Ruatoria area, the Lord had indicated that this was our next main objective.

The Lord showed me that we were to wait for a letter with finance, and possibly a scripture in it as well.

However this also just never turned up, and after many weeks I started to despair that I had even heard from the Lord.

This Was Like a Bombshell

Then a brother shared that he had had a dream. In it the Lord showed to him that we were waiting for a letter with funds and possibly a Scripture in it. This was like a bombshell.

So we kept waiting, but now under much financial stress as well. Someone or some people were not doing their part(s) in the Lord Jesus' will! A very serious matter in God's sight. Months were to go by, with no mail with any finance or spiritual content in it finding us at all.

While we waited it seemed that the Lord was encouraging us to make a trip down to visit Sam and Vicky Penaia in Wanganui. It was my intention now to try to find out more about one way fares to Fiji using Freedom Air's direct flight from Palmerston North to Nadi. As we hitchhiked down to Wanganui, this plan became stronger and stronger in my mind. The need to travel in the South West Pacific was becoming almost a worry to me now.

Of the two hundred or so people present, only twelve were confident that they had a gift of the Spirit.

So after praying with the rest of the leadership team, we enlisted their help in praying for the others. There were some extraordinary results. Jesus showed his power and authority in some very strong ways that evening, confirming the message of his kingdom to any one willing to accept the consequences of what the Holy Spirit was doing.

A Job to do

We went down from Tavua to the Lautoka/Nadi district. There was a small job to do before we left Fiji on this leg of the journey. A friend in New Zealand had believed that the Lord had shown him to make a trip down to Christchurch, and there had met a Fijian Indian Christian lady who has recently emigrated from Fiji. She told our friend, Sam Penaia, about the plight of her son and his family. He is not a Christian, and had recently failed to have his lease renewed on the land he was using to grow sugar cane. (There is a campaign amongst some Fijian landowners to not renew land leases for Fijian Indians — a very complicated and multi faceted issue).

So now he was living with his wife and children on a relative's place.

Sam (who is himself with his family on a benefit at the moment) forwarded some money for us to take to him. By God's grace we found the man, after quite a walk in the country. Their



Leaving Nadi for New Zealand, Nadi River Mouth and break through coral reef.

circumstances were indeed very difficult. He could only get occasional work labouring on a building site in the City of Lautoka, and then only for a couple of hours when they gave it to him.

Sekove our friend and brother there believes to start a training centre. He has bought ten acres of freehold (a very rare commodity in Fiji) hill side land. We are intending the Lord willing to explore more of this with him when we return to the islands, with a view for what can be done to support such ventures, with groups working together across the Pacific and particularly between the neighbouring island states.

Tavua Where God Had Brought a Man Back

We left Savusavu in the North to return to Viti Levu (the main southern island). The intention was to go to Tavua and catch up with a family there that were deeply committed to the Lord and his gospel work. I had first met them in 1985 and the Lord had opened our hearts to each other. Many times we had seen the Lord do some amazing things together. Not the least being when the husband suffering from divicalitus had practically poured all but a small quantity of his blood out on the toilet seat, and when he was discovered later that morning, in answer to prayer, the Lord had brought him back.

The doctor who sorted things out was said to have later come to the Lord due to the episode. I naturally went back there with a high expectation of God moving by His Spirit.

We were asked to take the morning and evening services in Tavua. When we got there, it was kindly arranged for us to be able to stay in the local hotel in an air-conditioned room. Even the locals thought that it was very hot at the time!

Renewal of Pentecost Needed in Each Generation

The evening service was amazing with God's Holy Spirit being poured out upon many of the two or so hundred people who were present and seeking the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We found that of the ten man leadership team only two said that they had been baptised in the Holy Spirit. The Lord had given Michael a confirming scripture for me just before I ministered on this topic. I was grateful for the confirmation and the encouragement.

In the past I have arrived in situations overseas well after the time that I had believed that the Lord has wanted me to make the trip, having been detained by a lack of finance. Once there the locals have said things like, 'If only you had come six months before ...' and so on. On another occasion a family which had even taken our bank account number to fund a ministry trip for three of us out of the sale of their house (which they were blessed to do with a very considerable profit left over after all their own needs were met), never sent the funds through. The wife unrepentedly told us later that she and the children had used the money to go on a slap up holiday to Australia, which she said they had not even enjoyed (hardly surprising).

Short Cut God's Plans?

I was determined in it all that I could not let down the people who we were meant by God to meet in these other countries, even if other Christians were letting God down.

However all we had in the financial department, were bills and overdrafts from our on going operating costs. By using Freedom Air from Palmerston North however, I could see a way of getting to Fiji using a one way ticket, leaving to God the immigration consequences of arriving in Nadi without a return fare.

The Lord granted us an amazing trip south to Wanganui from Auckland. We were given many witnessing openings and God even had us taken in by a Christian couple who met us on the road. This man was from Southland in New Zealand and the Lord had healed his grandfather from an incurable disease, turning him from being the local publican and brothel keeper, to a servant of God and local butcher. The family had loved the Lord since then. The funny thing was that the man who we were staying with, his wife came from a family who did not believe that God still did these things today. When the story of her husband's family's conversion came up she would say that the greatest miracle was repentance, in a belittling way.

In Wanganui, we were planning to go across to Palmerston North, and I was ready to even go standby then directly to Fiji if the opening was there.

A Perceived Pattern in God's Dealings

Sometimes God lets us view something of a pattern in His dealings.

It was in Ruatoria that we had last taken time out to really solidly seek the Lord for his overall direction and plans. And it was from Ruatoria that we now would get a cell-phone call.

Phil Keelan rang to tell us that a brother there had received a prophecy for us. Luke Kenworthy believed that the Lord had shown him some details in picture form regarding our upcoming trip into the Pacific.

Luke believed that the Lord had shown him that we were not to go on a one-way ticket (no one but God knew we were even thinking of it), that the timing was not right and that in essence if we went out of God's timing, there would be major problems for other people. One of the pictures that Luke believed God had given to him was of one sheep getting out of sync while sheep were running together, and there being a big pile up where other sheep died. Another was of logs coming down from a log dam, and one log blocking the rest from flowing properly.

Luke believed that the Lord was saying that we were to go when God had brought all the funds more fully together (we were pretty skint with bills to pay). God would provide.

The sheep and the logs? This was to represent getting out of God's timings. Others would be hurt.

Seeking the Lord, he confirmed that he had spoken to us in the prophecy. And that being so, the following Scripture became relevant:

2 Chronicles 20:20 .. Jehoshaphat stood and said,

“.. Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful.”

I believe now looking back that the tardiness of others in responding to what they said the Lord was showing them in the past, was leaving me anxious about God fulfilling what he says. The prophecy was a warning and rebuke to me. God is able and

we were just trusting in the Lord Jesus to help and or heal us as we continued on. We found the heat at that time made it very hard for us to do very much at all.

When asked by our friends, the owners of the shipping line we were to travel on gave a special discount for our passage as they had supported 'religious workers' in the past (the local Catholic priest). This was a great help from the Lord. The voyage took some eleven hours or so, and we ended up meeting a very fine Christian brother onboard.

In Savusavu we believed that the Holy Spirit showed us to limit ourselves to getting along side a Christian couple whose marriage was in disarray and to encourage the husband to stop ministering until he had ministered to his own marriage and family first. We believed that we could not accept any invitations from this brother to go about the area ministering with him, but were to focus on the main need that the Lord had identified, his marriage and family.

The Lord granted us some amazing times with members of the household where we were staying as well. We were blessed to pray with some of them for deliverance. All in all we spent most of the time in Savusavu counselling.



Looking towards Savusavu with the land Sekove has purchased for a possible Training Centre behind the camera.

guaranteed to arrange this for her. Then the Holy Spirit indicated to me that a person was suffering with problems with their right knee. It was one of the sons who had a soccer injury the family said. And he did NOT want Christians to pray for him!

His mother and sister made him stand up while he was still protesting that he had nothing wrong with him. He fell to his right! So I said you do need Jesus to help you, and he gave in to the Lord's desire to heal him, and let us pray for him. He later accompanied us back to the vehicle we had come in now able to walk happily up and down many steps to do so.

The Word 'Peace' Again

While in Suva we typed a very long letter for a man who was having major problems with a car dealer. He was set to lose \$14,000 or so, the dealer had been handling things in a less than honest way. Amazingly God touched this man's heart through the letter and the Lord salvaged a really good car (as payment in kind) from the situation for our friend just before a banking group bankrupted the car dealer. The dealer's name translated from his language into English as 'Peace,' so again we saw the Lord's hand in the word which we had been given before we left New Zealand through a brother in Auckland.

Vanua Levu

After some days we believed to next visit our brother Sekove in Savusavu in the northern main island of Fiji called Vanua Levu. Neither of our healths was yet the best, but



Sekove beside hot spring in Savusavu where people cook food.

will fulfil what he purposes. Paul in the New Testament had faced similar problems and attributed it all to Satan, where the blame belongs. My prayer has become that believers will recognise when Satan is getting a hold on their lives and sort themselves out with God.

1 Thessalonians 2:17-18

But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you.

For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us.

The following Scriptures were to bring great encouragement:

2 Corinthians 2:11 “.. to keep Satan from gaining the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his designs.”

And

Romans 16:19 - 20 “Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. “

So we cancelled the Palmerston to Fiji plan, and in prayer believed very strongly that God wanted us next to go up to Rotorua in the central North Island.

Rotorua

As we hitched to Rotorua, we believed that the Lord showed us that the friends we were believing to visit were somehow caught up in a difficult situation spiritually. We interceded a lot on this journey.

Arriving in Rotorua after 10pm, we arranged to put our tents up on the back lawn of the family we were visiting. It was the best

option as they were not set up to give good hospitality yet, being in the middle of alterations which would hopefully put them in that position for the future. (Something I believe that Christians need to bear in mind when God puts them into a position to make alterations to their homes and property, as this family were now including.)

Very late at night our host mentioned to me that their fellowship group had been somewhat infiltrated by a member of a group considered by many to be a cult type organisation known variously as the Witness Lee movement, styling itself as ‘**THE Local Church**’.

This group appears to hold to beliefs that basically boil down to the idea that if you are not part of one of their gatherings, you are not really saved. Much worse they play around with the God-head and the person of Jesus.

It was clear in my heart that there would be more than one member of that movement infiltrating my friend’s group. Much discussion and prayer went down over the issue. Eventually it was decided to cancel all meetings of the group, and encourage everyone to seek the Lord for his leading in providing meals and hospitality to each other. Asking the Holy Spirit to do the organising. It is not clear to us now whether the people there finally understood this aspect or thoroughly put their hearts into it. It takes some leadership and retraining for people to really grasp hold of letting Jesus really be Lord in this way. It also causes us to have to find places of deep fellowship with the Lord and each other, which is a really great thing too.

Through the time that we were in Rotorua it seemed to become clear who the other Witness Lee leaning person might be.

More importantly it also came out that that very weekend, the Witness Lee man who they had known about had invited some of the newer Christians to attend ‘THE Local Church,’ which would have been their first step into a lot of problems if the reported experiences of others who have later sought freedom from the movement are anything to go by.

We saw these people, who were freed from being caught up in the seemingly false movement, as the lambs or sheep that might have got trampled if we had got out of sequence, for there was no doubt in my mind that the Lord had used our arrival in

healed by the Lord Jesus while I was in Suva in 1989. We found during our whole stay that we were drawn into a lot of intercession each day. Sometimes I think that our hosts did not understand why we spent so much time praying.

The husband of this family had recently been out of the country and while overseas was asked to bring gifts back for a woman whose husband had died. She was a Moslem and both her and her husband’s relatives were neglecting her and her children. All of whom were old enough to work, but due to the present situation in Fiji only one of them was able to find work.

Christ Greater than Islam

After the normal Hindi pleasantries and customs of hospitality had been observed, the Moslem lady actually asked for prayer from us Christians — even though she knew we were gospel ministers. I closed the door and windows. For I was sure that after we left, that any other Moslem who heard what was to follow next would have given this dear lady a hard time. (This was confirmed by the man who took us there.)

As we went to pray for this lady and her family, the Holy Spirit showed me that someone present was suffering from a specific back pain. It turned out to be the daughter, the only one who was working. Apparently she was in such trouble that she was worried about not being able to work at some time in the near future. This would have represented financial devastation for them all.

Immediately the Lord healed her and she performed movements which her relatives knew she had not been capable of but a few moments before. As we continued to wait upon the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit showed me that there was a person present who was suffering from a specific kind of bad dream. Again the same daughter identified her self as the person. She said that no one else, not even her mother, knew of this problem, and this convinced her that we were talking to and hearing from the living God in our Lord Jesus Christ.

As she was prayed for in the name ‘of the Son of God the living Lord Jesus Christ’ (Islam says that God has no Son) she was delivered of a demon. She described even feeling it come out of her (something they had no background in whatsoever). Being so gloriously set free she wanted a New Testament and our host

God Rescued Us

Nonetheless God had gone before us and the Fijian man from the airport lounge in Vanuatu stood by his word and took us with him in his work taxi to Suva (3½— four hours away). The driver turned out to be Christian and our new Fijian friend, a backsliden man from a family which had been very strong believers before his parents had died in the early nineties. We all witnessed to him, and he thanked us all for our efforts later.

Arriving in Suva in the small hours (as our flight had been an evening one), we were taken home by our taxi driver. Now a growing relationship is still developing with this fine couple, Binay who is of Ghurkha /Indian descent, and his wife Theressa who is a titled Fijian lady, and both caring believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

What Satan may have intended for our misfortune, was turned around by God to introduce us to these two very fine people.

There were many great things that we saw the Holy Spirit do in Fiji, many of these were in counselling situations and are not at all appropriate to even loosely put down here on paper, as the population there is small enough for even a few details of any situation to be all too clear to any number of people, and we wish to respect their confidence.

Suva

After arriving in Fiji we spent the next few days making contact with some people I had known in Suva in the past, and waiting for our bodies to sort out various infections and things which happened in Vanuatu. We stayed with some old friends, whose son had been miraculously



Suva Point

Rotorua (instead of in Nadi), to catalyse the situation there and bring some degree of resolution.

As we came to the end of our stay in Rotorua, a Christian cousin of mine (Matthew Rogers) rang from further north and said that he was coming down to Tauranga to pick up some supplies for his business and would like to offer to pick us up from Rotorua if that was the Lord's leading for us.



Dion, Matthew, Michael, and Paul

We had believed to head in his direction next and so accepted the offer.

Waiting in Auckland

We later ended up back in Auckland waiting for God's promises to come to pass. Now better understanding the nature of what was happening, we set our selves to find useful things in the Lord to do as we waited, while realising that such things would not be the main thing that we should focus on, and that we should be careful to not let any activities get in the way when the time came to take off.

We may not have had much money at all. What we did have was time. So we spent it in Christian writing, skilling up on more computer publishing, programming, artwork and the necessary related computer skills. On the people front, we aimed to help recent immigrants with their English. There were some refugees Christians dear to our hearts living in the suburb but one over from where we were staying with Christopher and Dion (Rp). The Lord it had turned out had already spoken to some of them about us helping with their English, and Christian things. When we offered, the womenfolk were really encouraged and excited. However the main man there was reluctant and told us that although God also had spoken to him at one point that he should join in and

improve his English, he said that his heart was not in it. He never sorted that out and effectively (unconsciously) booby trapped the whole effort at a number of points. Correcting people on their English when they had actually got something right. Delaying the starting of the sessions for hours sometimes, and so on. Cross-cultural work is always difficult, but no more so when there are heart attitude issues involved as well.

Through what developed I learnt that it is not possible to work with someone who even says that their heart is not in what God has told them he wants to do. A lesson that I could have done with learning years ago, and so would have avoided much of the kind of strife that went down this time for us as well. However we were blessed to see some tremendous progress with some of the people, both spiritual and in their English.

Remaining Faithful

We had had an even stronger expectation for some months that we should be off overseas by now.

One of the few brothers who knew anything of this whole process, came to us unexpectedly and told us that since he had heard about the dream about us waiting for some mail with the funds and scripture, this brother had believed that the Lord had shown him that it was necessary for him to set aside funds to help enable the trip. (As whoever was meant to have been sending the funds were letting the Lord down.)

Remaining faithful to this he had waited for many months for everything to fall into place with his finances. Over two weeks this brother passed two cheques on to us that made it possible to start buying all the needed travel, and some accommodation for the portions of the trip that were into expensive territories. (It was cheaper to advance purchase in New Zealand before travel.)

Medical

We believed that we were to have some basic inoculations and boosters for things like tetanus. As we were going into some areas where there was a high incidence of malaria, we also believed to take precautions against that. The Holy Spirit indicated a certain day about a week out from our departure

the Prime Minister and his Government. All bloodlessly as far as we know, for which we praise God.

Fiji

While in the final departure lounge for leaving Vanuatu (past customs etc ..), I believed that the Lord showed me to pray very strongly concerning our arrival arrangements in Fiji. This seemed strange as we had received an email while in Vanuatu which confirmed that we were expected. Michael came near where I was and so we made the request to the Lord. Literally seconds later a Fijian man who had been in the airport earlier but then taken off to a town pub with his mates, came through to the lounge just in time for us all to be called onto our airliner.

This man immediately came over and asked me if we wanted a lift to Suva, then he asked if we were going to Suva! I believed that we had to show some positiveness on this due to the way that I had just been shown to pray.



When we arrived there was no message for us nor any one to meet us. (We were much later on to find out that apparently the Christian man arranging things for us had, since I first met him years ago, married a very controlling wife, and it was said to us that she appeared to have decided that he was not helping us(!)) We would have been badly stranded as we had no ready cash, and it was to turn out, the BNZ was misadvising travellers saying that our BNZ ATM/EFTPOS cards would work in certain Fijian money machines, which was not the case at all.

So we told the retired nurse that we had prayed with her friend and that we would have to trust the Lord Jesus to heal her.

The next day when it came time to change the bandage, everyone present was astounded when the wound was exposed to reveal that it had been diminished by the Lord to almost nothing in comparison. Another tourist commented that the lady's life had probably been saved.

This all made it much easier to convincingly share the saving news of God's grace with the other tourists!

Training Projects

While in Vanuatu we were led by the Lord to meet people who are wanting to see training projects and a centre established there for Christian work and practical life skills. This became a theme which also was relevant in Fiji.

Only a few days before we were due to leave, Michael and I believed that we were to make an appointment with the New Zealand Embassy.

We ended up being given a friend from 17 years ago to see! This brother, John Claassen had attended the same fellowship as I had been extensively involved with in the past for a short season. Foreign Affairs had appointed him temporarily to Vanuatu as the acting Deputy High-Commissioner.

It was a special time of catching up and we spent some hours with him in his home later that afternoon.

During the build up to the day we were to leave, we found ourselves very aware of many pressures in the country at that time. The police were off side with the army, and both were somewhat offside with the then Government.

One of our friends involved in a neutral national agency, escorted us to the airport. He asked us to pray with him for national peace and he then placed us in the hands of two 'safe' security guards who were to make sure that we got away on our flight unmolested. Later the Appeal Court ordered that the Speaker of the Vanuatu Parliament had wrongly dissolved Parliament, and recalled the House. Which then duly sacked

date from Auckland for us to go to a suburban doctor. We didn't believe that we could afford to use one of the 'travel' doctors that have practises in Auckland.

We asked the Lord for a doctor that understood the situation of going into a tropical area. I got a very strong sense that such a doctor was in the neighbouring suburb to where we were staying. Michael independently had been getting the same thing. So on the day that the Lord had indicated to us both, I looked through the telephone book and eventually found a surgery that seemed to stand out more than the others.

They were able to take us almost straight away. The doctor knew the areas that we were going into, having been to some of them, and had a very close relative from one of the places! The doctor had faith and recognised what we were doing and refused to take any money from us except for the Hepatitis shots. This was a great blessing from the Lord, for even the large amount of money that had been given to us was well diminished now with all the preparations.

The doctor gave us antibiotics to stave off malaria, it was necessary to start these at least one week before we went into any territory that had malaria in it, and according to God's planning this was the exact time frame that the Lord had had us visit the doctor in.

It was an unusual experience to pass through Auckland terminal seeing friends waving at us through the bullet-proof glass in the observation area. The whole thing had suddenly come together and Mike and I were both very tired after all the final preparations.

Rotorua Connection

Now after many years of waiting, the Lord Jesus had started us on the journey that he had spoken to us about.

So it was that we met the couple on the plane to New Caledonia that this newsletter started with. When the husband had introduced himself as a Christian, I believed that the Lord showed me that they were part of the Witness Lee movement. I leaned across to Michael and said so, and Michael indicated to me that he believed that something wasn't right as well. I believed that they were from the very same group the Lord had

diverted us from going to Fiji to help us see some of our friends kept free of in Rotorua.

By faith I started talking to this man about the Witness Lee movement pointing out what was incorrect in what they taught. I did it saying ‘there is a group that teaches such and such you know.’

He listened to me for about an hour, then acknowledged that he was actually part of that group but added that he did not believe everything that they taught. I said that that was just as well.

What was most amazing was that this couple came from the Rotorua branch of that movement. It was a great privilege and to us and an amazing thing for the Lord to have us minister to people from the group that we had been so drawn to pray about and for the year before.

We went and visited them in their hotel before we left Noumea.

Guidance and Confirmation

Before we had left Auckland, the Holy Spirit did some things that would provide confirmations for us on the journey.

We had a prayer with some of the brothers. One of them was given this word about coils of rope and the strong sense of God’s peace going before us, and the significance in some way of the word peace itself. So when the Korean lady had leaned across in the plane as we touched down and showed us a picture of her daughter called Salem (Peace) on our first flight out, we saw this as a sign of things coming to pass as the Lord wished them to be.

Christopher had found a book while checking out the flea markets the week before we left. It was on Polynesian mythology and legends. It had a picture of a rainbow on the front cover. I picked it up in the dining area and opened it on the legend about a man who had travelled on a rainbow through the Pacific area. I said jokingly to the Lord, ‘wouldn’t that be a nice (hassle free) way to travel’.

When we got off in Tontonto in New Caledonia we went to the area where we were advised that our travel and accommodation company would pick us up from. The company turned out in

some sort of Catholic type from the Middle East. When she discovered that we were non-denominational she opened up and started sharing some of her experiences of the Lord Jesus.

She certainly had met the Lord. As we explored her faith with her it became clear to me that just as her 40 year old born-again son had told her, she needed to be baptised. Slowly we took her through a few foundations of the gospel that it seemed right to check her out on, and pointed out that indeed it was time for her to be baptised.

Michael and I let the conversation wander on to all sorts of things for a while. Then she turned to me and asked to be baptised.

Coral Infections — Jesus Heals

We had an amazing time of prayer with her afterwards, and then went over to our cabin to get the coffee making things. After coffee together she asked us to pray for a nasty coral infection which she had on her leg from a fall. Amazingly the Lord all but cleared it up for her by the next day, and this had a big effect on many of the other tourists as the story went around.

We were very strongly marked from that time as the born-again! Any one who bothered to talk to us did so normally because they wanted to talk about the things of the Lord.

Another older lady (79) who was already a baptised believer, also asked for help with a very large and deep coral infection. We changed her dressing twice a day and put a very strong anti-bacterial cream on it, but it got worse and worse. The lady sharing the cabin with her was not a Christian and was continually making anti-God remarks and jokes in our presence.

She had been a nursing sister in a hospital in Sydney I think. She became very concerned for her cabinmate, and was keen that we would start her on the penicillin a doctor in New Zealand had given to us for such purposes. That was until we examined the medication that the older lady was already on, and could not work out whether it was safe to give her the antibiotics or not.

This lifted my expectations of the Lord moving while we were in that place. We had only booked for four days or so, and the plan had been to meet up with a local brother who I had met in Fiji in 1989 and who had invited me to come over to Vanuatu on a couple of occasions. When we contacted him however, everything fell thorough as his aunty had died overnight and he was obliged to house heaps of relatives, and help extensively with the funeral.

As we prayed the Lord made very plain to us that we were not finished at the 'Resort' yet, and that we were to ring and ask for money to be telexed through to us in Port Villa, so that we could stay on longer. Our brothers in Auckland took this in hand and contacted some other friends, and the Lord graciously brought all the needed funds together. For which we are very thankful.

Staying longer meant that the local Christians asked Michael and I to speak in their non-denominational service that Sunday. It was an amazing time and out of it we were asked to go to the local store keeper to pray for a bad stomach complaint he had. The Holy Spirit graciously moved there in meeting the man's needs as well.

Being a 'Resort' there were tourists, mostly Australian. The Lord set us to witnessing to them. But how to break through?

By the power of the Holy Spirit!

One day Michael and I did the only touristy type thing that we were to do our whole time there. We took our flippers and went for a swim in the artificial lagoon that was part of the 'Resort.' There was an older lady sitting on the edge of the water evidently too frightened to venture in. The Lord made plain that she and not the little coloured fish we were looking at was what we were there to 'fish.' So both Michael and I independently swam over to her from different areas at the same time.

I told her that the wee black fish she was afraid of were probably thinking she was a seal in her black bathing suit and that they wouldn't harm her. Slowly I coaxed her into the water, which she ended up enjoying.

Part French and Syrian, she had lived a lot of her life in Iran, before moving to Australia. She had faith, it appeared at first, of

part to be called Arc de Ciel, or in English, Rainbow Travel. It was a great encouragement that God had gone before us. Even through the bookings made through the unsaved travel agent.

The only Scripture which I had had before we went to New Caledonia had been one out of Ezekiel about how the Lord had shown Ezekiel to measure the precincts and temple of the new Jerusalem. A piece about the central court or something having emblems of palms, also stood out. It however made no sense to me. That was until Michael said that he believed that the Lord wanted us to travel on the local bus system, going from one end of the city area to another criss-crossing the place and praying for it.

This we did and met a student from Vanuatu (the next country we were going to).

In the central area there was a town centre called the court of coconuts emblazoned with motifs of palms everywhere.

Observations

The thing that stood out to us in doing this was the extreme difference between the poor and rich in that country.

In the main part of the city there were numerous mariners and berths for multi million dollar yachts. There was a full on Harley Davidson agency and many people riding them around. Yet the footpaths that the local Kanaki were left to walk on might only be barely 30-40 cm wide in some places. And they lived in high rise Government built blocks of concrete sometimes with very large steel gates on the entrance road, and with bombproof, gun slitted, police stations standing guard over them. While the European Franchophones lived in comparative luxury in the city centre (half of New Caledonia seems to live in the main city). The Kanaki rightly or wrongly feel that it is unfair that the vast mineral wealth of their country should be being stripped out of their land to support the lifestyle of the Franchophones while they themselves are left in much poorer circumstances.

I mention it for prayer, for the gospel needs to go forward in peace, and there would appear to be many grounds for much discontent in that country. While personally liking much of French culture and finding the people to be very fine, I could

still nonetheless understand how some of the local Kanaki find it strange that the French flag still flies over their land. It is of course now a very complicated issue as many of the Franchophones are fourth or more generation 'locals' now.

I believe that neither politics nor arms will solve that land's problems, but that a concerted gospel effort (particularly amongst the white people there) is urgently needed. Internationally there are fewer than 1% born-again people amongst the French.

New Caledonia is an expensive place to travel and minister in though. We were blessed to have taken breakfast cereal and hot drink stuff with us. We could easily have paid the equivalent of \$6 NZ for a cup of coffee in a simple café near our supermarket. Imagine what food costs!

We were very greatly helped by the Lord having funds put into our account in New Zealand which we were able to access while in Noumea, and thank who ever did this, may the Lord bless you.

Preparing to Leave

When it came time to leave Noumea (we were only there for three nights) the Lord made us aware that we were going to have problems at the airport with our baggage. Also that we should not convert such French Pacific Francs as we had into the next country's currency (the Vatu) before leaving Noumea.

When we got to the airport we were told that the plane we were to travel on was very small, and that a lot of our baggage could not come with us. We were shocked in one sense but had been prepared by the Lord. And just kept praying while officials ran around us talking in French. I kept showing them what weight we were checked in for at Auckland and pointing out that the aircraft they were describing was smaller than the one on our itinerary so the problem was not ours.

Eventually the Lord touched one of the Frenchmen and he suggested a reduced price to us that took all of our available Francs off us. We were now effectively going to arrive in Vanuatu penniless. Eventually the airliner arrived at the airport, and it was much larger than the one they had expected, so all of our stuff made it without any further complications.

Even with the assurance that the Lord was working it through, the stress had been pretty high though.

Vanuatu

When we arrived in Vanuatu, it seemed that the local travel company had not been informed that we were arriving, or staying!

However as our accommodation vouchers were in order, we were finally taken to the glorified motor camp styled as a 'Resort.' It turned out to be 45 minutes out of the city centre, but we were assured there was a free bus in a few times a day. The heat was absolutely energy sapping. Even the locals were to be heard commenting on it while we were in Vanuatu.

We had no money to speak of, and the Resorts' restaurant was presided over by one of the Asian owner's relatives (call him Jin) who made sure that not one opening for profit would be lost. Things looked dim. He also appeared to be cheating a number of the patrons on their exchange rates, and this was causing no small concern.



Pillars in the restaurant were covered with coiled rope

Especially for the rest of the staff who nearly all appeared to have a Christian faith or background in their lives, and found this pretty disturbing.

Part of our accommodation voucher entitled us to a 'free' breakfast in the restaurant (toast, coffee and fruit juice — although Jin stopped all the tourists having their fruit juice!), so we went through the next day for a feed. (This was to be our main meal most days.) We were very encouraged when we saw that the pillars in the restaurant were covered in rope, in coils just as one of the brothers had been shown by the Holy Spirit to describe to us in Auckland before we left.