

MAORI POSTAL AOTEAROA

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July-August 2012

Wellington Harbour

Dear Leaders and fellow workers,

Tena koutou katoa. I have just woken up to the fact that it is several months since I last wrote to you, the year is getting around so fast! They say the older you get the faster time goes and this is proving to be true in our case anyway.



One of the privileges that Evelyn and I have from time to time is to be able to travel and visit various Assemblies and Christian workers and leaders and see something of what is being achieved often “behind the scenes” and out of the public gaze. Many of you have served the Lord for many years without much “human” recognition. I am reminded of the words of the writer to the Hebrews who said, “*God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you have shown to Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them*” (Heb. 6:10). These Hebrew believers, often overlooked and persecuted by their fellow countrymen, did not go unrecognised by God. Others may not have recognised nor appreciated their ministry, but God saw and He would not forget them. Their faithful service was evidence of their love for Him. Accordingly His purposes would be achieved and they would be rewarded. We too can take heart from this truth and be encouraged.



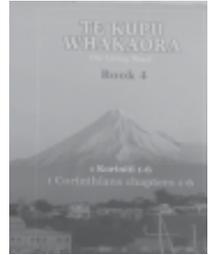
Last month we spent some time in Kawerau where we saw something of the work being done among the youth by the Assembly there. Ellen Adams has been working among the youth of the town for 16 years now and has a group of about 50 teenagers. (See the article in the current issue of TW). This is a work that we virtually knew nothing of but which has been going on faithfully for all those years. It was a real encouragement to see what is happening in the lives of many of the young people in that group. The sowing of the good seed of God’s Word is indeed paying off and Ellen’s faithfulness is an example to us all, especially in view of the fact that she is 75 years of age!

Earlier this month I had the opportunity to be involved in a meeting in Levin with Tariana Turia of the Maori Party. Barry and Sylvia Gamble were endeavouring to initiate an effort to have Christian content included in recent proposals to assist in Maori Mental Health. We were included to show what Maori Postal Aotearoa has available. Tariana, who was accompanied by her son and granddaughter, showed a very real interest in the work of MPA, having received the lessons many years ago in Whangaehu near Wanganui where her family lived in earlier days. She was not aware that the mission still existed and was glad to receive samples of our present material. Also at that same meeting was Neven McEwen of All Black fame. (His testimony appeared in the September issue of TW in 1985). He has been involved in prison chaplaincy for many years and was Executive Director of Prison Fellowship NZ for several years. It was through his efforts that the “Alpha Unit” came into being at the Manawatu Prison which was a special unit for inmates who became Christians. He was also acting chaplain at Kaitoke Prison near Wanganui for a number of years and I was involved in prison ministry on a weekly basis at the same time, so it was good to catch up with him again. *The photo shows (from left to right) me, Barry Gamble, Tariana Turia, Sylvia Gamble and (sitting) Neven McEwen.*



LATEST TE KUPU WHAKAORA STUDY BOOK

I have just completed Book 4 of the Te Kupu Whakaora series which comprises a series of studies on the first six chapters of 1 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians Paul answers various questions posed by the Corinthian Church. But before he answers those questions there were a number of internal issues the church had not asked him about and were not dealing with. Paul addresses these issues in these first six chapters. They include such matters as divisions in the church, spiritual immaturity, the correct purpose of church leaders, immorality in the church, law suits among believers, and materialism. They are relevant and timely subjects for modern-day Christians. These studies are suitable for all Christians and especially for those in leadership and can be used for individual or group studies. Samples gladly supplied.



Also we now have advanced senior lessons throughout the Book of Romans (44 lessons in all). There are also lessons on 1 Peter, James, and Jonah and, as with the Te Kupu Whakaora study books, samples are gladly supplied. These too are suitable for both individual and group studies. We print these lessons through a laser printer which means we only print as required without having to carry extras in stock.

A matter that gives us some concern at present is the lack of news and reports we are receiving at HQ from leaders. We really do look forward to hearing from you and to know how things are going in your area. We are interested in your encouragements and discouragements in order to be able to pray intelligently for the work. So please – your reports and photos would be much appreciated. There have been a few general letters come to hand over the last few weeks and the following are a sample: —

REPORTS FROM SOME RECENT LETTERS

Ken and Julia Brown (Raglan): “Kia ora ano. Very many thanks for the lovely magazines with their timely messages. Suicide is a real concern in Raglan with a number of men, especially in middle years taking their lives. There has been such an epidemic here that a working group has formed to consider how to help overcome this. We have now joined the Raglan Community Church and have been warmly welcomed there. To my joy, Deidre and her 4 little girls continued to go in our absence, and the Lord is doing a good work in their hearts. (Deidre is Tapiri’s real mother, though Tapiri lives with Deidre’s Mum. We’d love to see reconciliation there.) I’m writing because, while in Auckland visiting our Ghanaian friends, they told us that a number of Maori are going to their Lighthouse Fellowship, so I gave them a TupuWhakarangi”. (We have since sent other samples of our literature to this fellowship).

From Wairoa: “I am 29 years of age and live in the country in a place called Raupunga which is near Wairoa. I used to do Bible studies with the Maori Postal when I was a student at Raupunga School and so enjoyed it back in those days as well as reading the monthly magazine. However, over the years I lost touch with the Lord and am slowly finding my way back to Him and I’m in desperate need of some inspirational and encouraging stories to read. Therefore I am writing to ask if it is possible if I may be sent a monthly magazine for my mother and myself. I have only been able to read the odd one over the years from numerous places I may have found them from time to time. If this is possible I would be truly grateful”.

From Christchurch: “I was listening to Radio Rhema this morning and a Christian lady mentioned a Maori Postal CD of Ken Brown – Title “I Was Blind” that she gives to non-Christians and many have given their life to the Lord. Anyway I googled and found you again after 12 years as 2000 to 2004 I was in a bad place in my life and while I was at Christchurch Women’s Prison I did Maori Postal Bible lessons which helped me in my walk with the Lord. I’ve recently given my life back to Jesus Christ on 7/4/2012 so this time walking with the Lord is so much better and my life is great and I am blessed every day. I am so looking forward to starting the Bible lessons and receiving the posters, etc. that I’ve ordered. God bless you all at Maori Postal and thank you”.

Witness to murder: I am writing to you because I am very interested in receiving free Bible lessons. I do not wish to give you my real name because of the circumstances I am in which may jeopardise my life. . . . My life is filled with sadness and uncertainty. My life never used to be this bad until this time last year when something horrible and tragic occurred in my life involving a person losing his life. I am a key witness to a murder. I was in a short violent relationship to a person who committed the murder towards another person. My life hasn’t been

the same. I attend weekly professional counselling and I suffer "post trauma stress disorder" where I take medication to help me cope with daily life. I am seeking another way out to help me cope with my life. But it has been difficult for me to find that way out. I think I'm dealing with my life OK. But thoughts of the trauma, beatings, sneak up on me and I become sad and my frame of mind isn't concentrating on reality. I received one of Maori Postal magazines, issue 206, and I read through it. I felt compelled by other peoples' experiences with Jesus Christ. I am Catholic but I haven't been in touch with my Christianity for quite a long time. I thought what better time to be in touch with Jesus Christ by reading the Maori Postal magazine. I don't feel alone any more because there are other people out there who are unfortunate like me. Please help me Maori Postal by sending me your magazine and showing me a brighter, happier outlook to life through Jesus Christ. (*This lady has since completed Study Book 2, "Learning and Living the Christian Life" in which she says, "I have received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour"*).

PRISON INMATE BRANCH

The prison inmate branch that is run from HQ continues to grow with about 150 inmates receiving lessons or study books at present. Many are receiving the "Advanced Grade" lessons and most are doing well. Virtually every day there are a quantity of lessons returned in the post for marking. We receive some encouraging letters telling how studying God's Word is an inspiration and blessing in their lives. The following is from a recent letter: --

From a prison inmate: "My name is Kane M..... and I am thankful for the opportunity to participate in your Bible lessons. I have begun reading the Bible but I do not know how to get salvation. I have begun a Bible study class beginning in Genesis but I do not know how to understand because God is not living in me to counsel me. I would like to know how to get salvation please. I would like a free catalogue of bi-lingual karakia posters and a calendar and Te Kupu Whakaora (The Living Word) Book 1 study book please, and anything else you think would help me. I would be so thankful".

It is a privilege and a joy to be able to share the message of the Gospel of Christ with these people and to know the tremendous difference that can be made in their lives as a result. While this is indeed true and that God can save out of any situation no matter how bad, the value of the work of MPA is that it has the potential to reach young people and save them before they get themselves into destructive lifestyles that affect not only themselves but many others as well. Let us take heart that while much of what we do may be out of the public gaze, God is well aware of our efforts and is able to use us for His eternal gain and glory.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Graham and Evelyn". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.