

# Ministry Update from the Fiji Islands

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Dear Friends,

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Warm greetings to you from the beautiful Fiji Islands! Hope that this letter finds you well and that you are encouraged in your walk with the Lord. I do thank my God in all my remembrance of you (Philippians 1:3).

My heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your prayers and support during the last two and a half months I was in States. During this time I made good progress on my thesis research and writing. There was also the opportunity to see my close relatives again and re-connect with churches in the area.

Here back in Buabua, family was eagerly waiting for my return. Sharmila, Charlene and Abby are glad to have me back. I am also happy to report that ministry is going well at the College and Bible Churches.

- Last month, eight students participated in the 2 weeks Master of Arts in Biblical Studies course.
- The 24 students on campus will soon complete this semester's studies. Graduation is on Nov. 16.
- A Children's Fun Day drew several kids. Most of these children are Hindus but they attend our Kid's Club.
- In these next few weeks, an Australian Missions Work Team led by Neil and Annette from Brisbane will be doing the much needed maintenance and renovation work on the campus. They will be repairing the student's kitchen, visitor's cottages, and whatever damages were caused by Cyclone Evan.

**ENCLOSED ARE SOME PICTURES FOR YOUR INTEREST:**

## Master or Arts in Biblical Studies



Dr. Michael Kerns (left) with Dr. Steve Ethridge. Dr. Kerns is the Dean of the College's graduate program



Dr. Kerns taught Eschatology, whereas Dr. Bob Kerr from Athens, TN taught Biblical Counseling. Students are from Fiji and other Pacific countries.



## On-Campus Student Ministry and Needs



The College Students gave up their two weeks school break to build a house for Eva. The family lost everything to Cyclone Evan last year.



The head student, Eremasi handing the house keys to Eva. Eva, a member of our church has three young boys. The family was very grateful for this compassionate act.



This sink bench and the cupboards in student kitchen needed urgent work. An Australian Mission's Work Team is here to help tidy up.

On a personal note, I am still working my way through the dissertation. Some of you may or may not be aware that the topic I have chosen for my thesis is “**THE USE OF PSALM 110 IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.**” This study has been very enriching. Noted below are few introductory matters for your interest:

- ◆ Epistle to the Hebrews is said to be a *magnificent* New Testament document that is both carefully constructed and beautifully written and theologically profound and powerfully argued.
- ◆ It contains the only *full* discussion in the New Testament of Christ as the believer’s high priest. John Calvin regarded this book “unlike any other in Holy Scripture that spoke so *clearly* of the priesthood of Christ.”
- ◆ Melchizedek is mentioned in only two exceedingly brief passages in the Old Testament, but is made a *key point* in Hebrews, forming the basis for a discussion extending over three chapters.
- ◆ Hebrews reaches back to *use* the Old Testament in an extensive manner after Romans and Matthew.
- ◆ Finally, of all the New Testament books, the Book of Psalms is the *most quoted* in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Next, rightly so, Christians over millennia have believed that Scripture is inspired equally in all parts. Yet, it’s a sad fact that some Christians believe that the Old Testament is no longer relevant for today’s believers. Did you know that the NT contains an extraordinarily large number of OT quotations? It has been calculated that one verse in 22.5 of the NT is an OT quotation. Therefore, approximately 263 Old Testament quotes in the New Testament could be cited. For your record, New Testament writers cited Psalms and Isaiah the most.

Strikingly it is to be noted that the whole New Testament contains not even one explicit citation of any of the Old Testament Apocrypha, which are considered as canonical by the Roman Catholic Church. This omission can scarcely be viewed as accidental. I hope the next time you come across an OT quote in the NT, you would give your earnest attention to its use. Today, a good reference resource is available. You might want to consider, “*Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament.* Ed. by G. K. Beale & D. A. Carson.”

Interestingly, the writer to the Hebrews refers to Psalm 110:1 and 4 again and again. Some find in this balance between Ps 110:1 and Ps 110:4 (six references to each) a perfect match between the royal and priestly aspects of Christ’s offices and functions. Reventlow notes, “those who received the letter [i.e., Epistle to the Hebrews] would have given *indisputable authority* to the Old Testament.” May we also! *Next time I will make some comments on **Psalm 110.***



Lovu Bible Church is a Hindi speaking fellowship. Nearly everyone in this picture is a convert from Hinduism or Islam. Standing next to me is John Ravind, a fellow-elder and a very close friend of mine. Sharmila and the girls are on your far left.



Bible Churches organized a Fun Day that drew 70 children. Most were unbelievers.



Most Lovu church members have no transport. For almost 20 years we hired a bus. Recently the Bus Company started to charge a lot of money and did not pick members on time. The elders prayerfully resolved this matter by buying a used bus. Lord willing, in three years it will be paid off.

*Beloved, Sharmila and I am encouraged to see your participation in the Gospel Ministry going on in Fiji. Your prayers and giving makes tremendous difference. THANK YOU. All glory and praise be to God!*

**By God’s Grace,  
Premend & Sharmila**

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