

February 2004

LINKing's and Hands

HEAVEN

Looking for a city...



"Heaven is called a kingdom for its immense greatness and a city because of its great beauty and population. It is full of inhabitants of all nations, many angels and an infinite number of the just. How happy it will be to live with such persons!" - **Jeremy Taylor**

This world is not our home, we're just passing through, the song says. We, like men of old are looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. *Hebrews 11:10*

Heaven is a city that is prepared, planned and built by God. It is measured with appointed boundaries. Jesus declares it has many mansions or 'abiding places'.

Abraham left his city of idols, at the Lord's request and began journeying to a destination towards somewhere that was promised to him. He regarded himself as a temporary resident, living in tents and in strange countries. Read about it in *Hebrews 11:8-10*. He saw a city afar off, in a country that was to be called theirs. The city was New Jerusalem and the country was Heaven. The word 'country' is better translated 'fatherland' or their own country. It was by **faith** that Abraham and others named in chapter eleven of Hebrews, saw this city.

These believers of old discovered they were pilgrims, foreigners, strangers on the earth, with a longing for heaven. We too, in the New Testament are named as such. *'For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come'* *Hebrews 13:14* We have no permanent place to abide for we are on a journey, just traveling through!

We must guard ourselves against an earthly attachment. If our hearts indulge in great earthly loves, we are cheating our chances of heaven. God's work is often to unfasten our hearts from earth and fasten them to heaven. Jesus tells us to store up treasures in heaven where they will not be destroyed. *Matthew 6:20*.

Remember we are simply passing through this world. *Psalms 39:12 'I am your passing guest, a temporary resident, as all my fathers were'*. (Amplified version).

At one time we were all outsiders, living apart from Christ with no hope and no promises. But we have been bought close by the blood of Jesus, so that

WELCOME

This first newsletter is a beginning of something I have had in my heart for a few years. I have spent the last 30 years away from my home country with a longing to stay in touch with people I know and love. Now that I am residing in Australia I think of my many friends in places far away. Time prevents us from keeping in touch regularly but this is one way to LINK together in Heart as well as Hand.

I have recently met so many women who long for some regular spiritual input as well as friendship. I do want this small effort on my part to fulfill this need. As the Lord lays on my heart I will endeavour to write and send this away to you with my Christian greetings and prayers for your safe keeping, encouragement and daily victories in the Lord Jesus. He truly cares for us as a Father and meets our needs each day.

- **Margaret Carver**

we are no longer strangers and foreigners but we share the citizenship with the saints, God's own people. We belong to God's household. Read *Ephesians 2:12,13,19*.

The Christian has his citizenship in heaven. His allegiance is to God and his loyalty to heaven. Heaven ought to fill our hearts so we feel like temporary guests here. Duty holds us but as Paul felt - he was torn between duty and desire. *Philippians 1:23*.

2 Corinthians 5:1 says 'We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens'. The Lord refers to heaven in terms we can understand. 'Home' means to us, comfort and security, a permanency. All houses on this earth are built by men and machines, but this house of ours in heaven is not made with hands.

What comforts will be there for us? God shall be with us. There will be no more tears, no more death, sorrow, crying or pain. *Revelation 21:2-5*. All things are to be made new. Isaiah gives us a very nice picture of how new it is all going to be. The picture the prophet paints is every man and woman's dream and we see humanity working to fulfill this here on earth. Read *Isaiah 65:17-22*. Solomon thought this all out himself and he even tried to fulfill it. He concluded that this life and its work is only temporary and in vain. *Ecclesiastes 2:1-12,18*. What we all dream about is yet to come, awaiting us in this country we are looking for by faith. How wonderful it will be to meet you there!



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My Recent Visit to Papua New Guinea

In early February we flew to PNG going via Cairns. It is always nice to stop over in Cairns and see the church folk and help in whatever way we can. The church there is doing so well with new faces, Bible studies and a general enthusiasm.

Our flight to Port Moresby was early Monday, so by 9:00 am we were sitting on the open verandah of the restaurant in Port Moresby, having breakfast and waiting for our room to be ready. The view from the verandah is refreshingly beautiful. Beyond the airport are mountains, blue sky and sea. I thought about the Australian Patrol officers I have recently read about, who, in the 1930's made their way over those mountains to discover a people and landscape hidden from the world. If I looked to the far left of the airport I could see the road leading into the hills and then onto the Kokoda Trail.

We spent two nights in Moresby and each night I spoke to the ladies who gathered at Nine Mile church. Sister Rose Gende hosted this time where about 200 both men and women gathered to hear the word of God. I spoke on 'Honour, the foundation of all relationships'. The next evening I spoke on 'The God that sees'. This subject was really on my heart and I knew the Lord had a work to do in people's lives. The settlement around the large church building reflects the struggles of humanity; the poor and needy fighting the daily routines of finding food and work, money for school fees, clothing, even a Bible! Many ladies there that evening did not have a Bible to open when I read the verses. I really felt their struggles - some whose husbands work overseas to earn a living, some who are part of a multiple wife society, being the second or maybe third wife. But inside that church there was hope and peace and a heaven to gain!

We flew onto the coastal city of Lae, where the Ladies Retreat was to be held. There is no road from Port Moresby to Lae, only air or a long boat ride. That was the reason I stopped over for a couple of nights in Moresby as I knew only one or two ladies would attend the Retreat.

The Gration family were there to meet us and it was so good to fellowship with them in the pleasant guest house. We enjoyed tea and coffee on the small front porch, with lots of good stories and plans for the future.

The Ladies President Sister Sinakadi and the pastors wife from Lae, Sister Ana Mattam did such a good job of organizing the meeting. We were welcomed by a group of ladies in white who preceded us, singing and dancing. Onlookers threw flowers as we walked through the line to the open air setting near the water, with a large roof covering the area. About 700-800 ladies gathered from various places, many travelling for hours on rough roads in crowded trucks. Life's hardships were washed away as the



The Ladies who greeted us at our arrival in Lae, PNG

meetings began and we sang and danced and rejoiced over the light of the Word of God. I spoke on "Challenged to give our best" the first evening. Saturday morning was a teaching time on "What sort of person should we be?" Sister Gration preceded my session with a lovely challenge to be filled with the spirit. Saturday night I used my message

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from Moresby on 'The God that sees' as I felt it was so applicable. Sunday morning Brother Carver completed the Retreat with his message on 'The price of the call'.

The special items were enjoyed by all especially the item accompanied by the ladies Bamboo band! The hot steamy weather of Lae turned cool and breezy as a tropical monsoon moved into the area. Along with hungry hearts and the power of the Gospel, we had such an enjoyable time.

I wish I could take you there in person but in some small way I may have taken you on this journey with me through this newsletter.



Many years ago I did a series of studies on 'Heaven'. When thinking of an article to write in this newsletter, I thought of this small study, which although it is basic, it is also a reminder of something we so easily forget.

Recently when in Port Moresby I met a sister in the church who was our house help when we first lived in Gogil village (1973). At that time she was in her early teens, dressed in native clothing and living a promiscuous life. In those early years she was among the first to be baptized and Holy Ghost filled. When we moved to Goroka (1978) I lost contact with her until very recently. She told us how she has had a renewed experience with God this past year due to some crisis in her life. Excitedly she told of a dream where she went to heaven. She described its beauty and held my hands and said "My beautiful room was next door to yours and I am so happy".

It brought tears to my eyes because the reality of all we live and work for culminates in this place called heaven. The hardships of life, the poor living standard of the settlement, the pain of being put aside for another wife, were all washed away in her dream which will one day become reality!