

Lifeline

...a prayer letter from John and Jackie

Dear Friends,

June, 1995

Greetings from Delhi, India!

We are writing from a fairly cool hotel room in the middle of 110 degree weather, recuperating from our bus ride from Menali in the Himalayan mountains.

When we wrote to you last, we had left the USA, overloaded with two heavy suitcases, two heavy carry-on bags, and two over-stuffed 70 pound duffel bags of baby clothes, fabric and sewing supplies that many of you gave for our friends in Ukraine. On arriving in Amsterdam, we squeezed us and all this baggage into a taxi and finally dragged, pushed and carried it and us up three flights of stairs to the free guest room at the YWAM center. We crashed onto our beds for an afternoon nap, grateful to have come that far. Following a short stroll on the waterfront and some Amsterdam pizza among the milling crowds of youth, we got a good night's rest and then we were off to India. We left the two duffels for Ukraine in the YWAM store room, in faith that we would take them into Ukraine upon our return to Amsterdam from India.

Remember, we unexpectedly left without visas for Ukraine.

There was only one remaining possibility - perhaps we could get these visas in India, since discovering at the last moment that there was a Ukrainian embassy in Delhi. We could only send a message to Steve Reuter in Moscow before we left. We knew God had to intervene on several levels: Miracle #1: Would telephones/faxes work between Russia, Ukraine and India? Miracle #2: Would the Ukrainian believers be able to quickly get the right signature and letter from government officials, who must fax them in time to the Ukrainian embassy in Delhi? Miracle #3: Would the Ukrainian embassy in Delhi accept these papers, and be willing to process these visas in our two available days in Delhi? We left with a very thin thread of hope that we would get into Ukraine. Sometimes God's will is like that - following a very thin thread.

Our arrival in India was without problem, though three hours late, and we found YWAM'ers waiting at the airport to take care of us. We fell into a bed at two or so in the morning. Our sleep was short. The electricity went out at 4 am. in our less than one-star hotel, leaving our room stifling in the heat of Delhi. Later in the morning, we went to a fancy air-conditioned hotel to eat a Sunday brunch and rest in its cool lobby. By evening we were bouncing up north India in an old government school-type bus, driven by a man with no fear. We held onto the seat rails for 16 hours as we flew through villages and around the mountain sides. God's grace was with us. Throughout the night we saw numerous accidents. All vehicles claimed the middle of the one lane road until the last moment, and all horns blared continuously. Sleep was not within easy reach. The narrow road got narrower, and as we careened around the edge of the of the rocky mountain falls, looking down a thousand feet at the roaring river, we were grateful to have been taught that the safest place to be is in the will of God. Thank you for praying for us!

Arriving in Menalli, looking up at the snow-capped mountains and tall stand of pine trees, it could have been Switzerland! Disembarking into a noisy, crowded bus station told us it was still India, but it proved to be a charming meeting place of international skiers, trekkers and hippies, plus well-to-do Indian tourists, amongst a Nepali and Tibetan native population.

It soon became apparent that our middle aged frames would be taxed to the max, as we ascended and descended from the YWAM center on the side of a mountain to the mission school in town where the conference was held. As we walked up and down the narrow dirt and rock trail from our living quarters, we were grateful that the center had moved from its first location - a house so far up the mountain that it could barely be seen!

But what a privilege it was to be there. . . to bring the refreshing of the Spirit to these 120 YWAM pioneers. Most were young Indians and Asians, with a couple dozen westerners among them. English was translated into Hindi during the conference. It was a gathering of evangelists, church planters, mercy ministry workers, mission leaders and support workers.

The Lord's presence during our week of ministry at the conference was wonderful! The power of God fell every meeting in which we ministered (six meetings). We taught simply on drinking the living water. Falling, weeping, laughter, deliverance, etc. took place as the Holy Spirit brought the same refreshing to these pioneer missionaries as we have seen Him do ever since Toronto! In one meeting the Spirit fell immediately when worship began, with eruption of laughter, etc., making nothing else possible except letting Him do it, and praying for the people. Some of the YWAM staff had experienced this refreshing before we came, so they were ...*(this line did not transmit over the fax)* ...prayer for all who wanted it in each meeting. Following the conference, we spent much of Saturday ministering to the base leaders and their wives about marriage and family at their request. By that evening we were on another exhausting trip careening down the mountains, in heat that intensified as we descended.

One hour after getting off the sleepless ride to Delhi, I was in a church preaching in a Sunday morning meeting. (Not my idea.) After an hour of preaching and some time of praying for these thirty-some saints to be freshly filled with the Spirit, I had to leave; exhaustion had caught up.

(The following two or three line also did not transmit over the fax) ... star seedy but comfortable Kanishka, from which we now write. (Roger, Pete and Ruth...remember when we were here together?) Of course, we tried three rooms in less than twenty-four hours before we found the comfort. We gave the first one away to a lizard that was too large and too black for us to share the space. We lasted the night in the second one, but it was very warm. The third one is OK.

Now, about that visa for Ukraine...

Today (Monday) we went into the Ukrainian Embassy. Our last word from Moscow was that the Ukraine was now wanting three months to process some visas. We thought we would have two days in Delhi to get this done, but it turned out to be only three hours - only Monday morning at 10 till 1 does the embassy do visas. We arrived at the iron gate outside the embassy at 9:45, not knowing this was our only opportunity! Three people were ahead of us, one a government official. Suddenly diarrhea was about to strike me, and I had to ask the guard to get into the embassy early to use the bathroom! Social kindness prevailed. After being escorted back outside the gate for the official opening of the embassy, we were the first ones escorted in, and had our visas in ten minutes. The correct letter of invitation had arrived from Ukraine, and with a sweep of a pen, it was done! So, God did it - in a few minutes. Did He even use impending diarrhea to speed up the process? Thank you for praying.

We believe we are to go ahead with the trip to Ukraine, though the funds to complete this part of the journey have not yet come. We believe they will. We have not yet had debt to a mission trip.

Tomorrow we must go to Indian Airlines and prove to them we have tickets to Trivandrum, and try to find a pair of shoes for Jackie (which were ruined en route). Wednesday we will fly to Trivandrum, near the southern tip of India, and by God's grace we will continue to Madras, then Amsterdam, Kiev, Krivog Rog, and home - according to our itinerary which we already sent you.

We want to say once again that your prayer for us is indispensable, and we thank you from the depth of our hearts. And how can we say a big enough thank you to the many of you that have given towards this mission journey and to our personal needs? You are partners with us. We know you have given as unto the Lord. May the Lord bless you all and keep you and may His grace and peace increase in your life!

With love,

John and Jackie

"Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your Inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your Possession."