



Pray BFF Letter #234

Thursday, October 24, 2013

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Home from India & Nepal

Dear Prayer Partners,

I arrived home last Saturday after a trip with back pain and a missed flight making it seem longer than normal. My first flight was more than an hour late in arriving, causing me to miss the second flight. I was at the international airport in Nepal and the agents told me I had to go into the city to get new tickets. With hardly being able to stand because of pain, and my flights to USA leaving without me, God opened the door to transfer to another airline that would get me to the next flight on time. Thank the Lord, God helped the agent to charge less than what it would normally cost for a last minute flight. Your prayers were greatly appreciated!

Living Under God's hand

We didn't experience any earthquakes, but the huge cyclone (hurricane) that targeted the area where I was going by train, dumped huge amounts of rain. Looking back, I am very touched by God's gracious hand of protection:

- The cyclone turned away from Calcutta and went inland early.
- I 'happened' to notice there was a cyclone in the area the night before I returned to Calcutta via train to fly to Nepal. I had internet access and discovered the storm.
- We heard that some trains were not getting through.
- I could book an inexpensive flight to Calcutta for the next day.
- The bands of rain were coming in spurts, but my flights, in and out, were fine.
- I found an inexpensive hotel close to the airport (so the coordinator's heart was at peace and I wouldn't hit flooding on the road back to the airport).



- The bands from the storm were hitting Nepal when I flew in, but the flight made it.
- Due to long visa lines, I missed my flight, but found a hotel room and the flight was rebooked (without charge) for the next day.



Christians worship during the flood.

Remembering

On the morning I was to return to the States, I bent over and extreme pain shot through my back. I applied what I had been teaching and trusted the Lord for how He would care for the whole situation.

Looking back, I remembered that I had left for this STM with back pain, but I had forgotten about it. Only when I was to return, did the back spasms again hit me (though worse). This reminded me that God had really watched over me during the three demanding seminars, 30 messages, 60-90 minutes for most of them. God was my strength. My feet were more sore than my back. The discomfort at the end reminded me of how much He, through your prayers, protected that important ministry for His glory. Thanks again for all your prayer and financial support.

After totaling up everything, including 4 extra bookings due to the many irregularities, the full costs were covered by what God provided. That great sum came in just within a week.

The Ministry

Each seminar was a moving experience as we saw the hearts of the leaders in attendance being shaped by the Spirit of God (Calcutta on left). From their many comments, testimonies, requests and comments from the coordinators, we could discern God doing some major work in His people. So although they came with difficulties and some hardness, they returned home with gladness and full of faith for God's work in the church and in their marriage.



Do pray. Though the seminars barely escaped all the interruptions of the cyclone's impact, the flooding will last up to another 2 weeks in places. Besides this, there is the ongoing oppression that the believers must face. The church is standing firm in her testimony, however. Both in India among the Bengalis and in Nepal, (Nepal photo

below) we saw clear evidence and heard testimony of how powerfully God was working in the midst of His people.

The challenges ahead are many, but what we saw true with this simple ministry, is also true for the way God will individually watch over His people there. Keep praying!



Praise!

- Praise God for full funding for this STM even with unexpected expenses!
- Thank the Lord that the back pain did not trouble me while teaching the seminars.
- Thank God for guiding the weather so that the seminars were not troubled by the cyclones.
- Most of all, thank the Lord for working in many marriages and church leaders' lives. We had 25 out of 35 churches represented at our training in Nepal. I think we could see how God 'rocked' the hearts of His leaders.
- We saw good and anticipated attendance despite interruptions with Hindu festivals and weather changes.
- God watched over my family and ministry while away.

Pray!

- Pray for Pastor J as he follows up caring for the pastors and congregations suffering from the floods in India. He wrote, "I really do not know what to do... but what we decided is at least to distribute some rice, dal, and other necessities to those houses as they won't have any job for next one month or so till the water level gets down."
- Pray for the coordinators as they consider how to follow up the seminars. Pastor J was planning to teach marriage seminars for the villages to help the local pastors, but the floods will interrupt that.
- Pray that the pastors in Nepal would work together to better equip their people. Like most place, they focus on evangelism and neglect discipleship.
- Do remember my back in your prayers and guidance on priorities on what projects to work on next.



Many visit the fake but elaborate Hindu buildings. Tear them down after several weeks.

- Pray for my mission talk this coming Sunday (Oct 27th) at our mother church.

Thanks again for your prayers and support! God is great.

Paul

Rev. Paul J. Bucknell, President and Instructor

3276 Bainton St, Pittsburgh, PA 15212 USA

Biblical Foundations for Freedom

Email: pb@foundationsforfreedom.net

Phone: (+1) 412-398-4559 (Mobile)

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