

LATEST NEWS # 400, March 12, 2007

The following news concerns the South Pacific.

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Children's Bible an instant hit in Fiji and Vanuatu

SOUTH PACIFIC — “The response has been just overwhelming”. This is the feedback given by Seremaia, a member of the Bible Society in the South Pacific's Mission and Sales team, about a colourful new Bible designed to meet the specific needs of the region's children.

Since the first copies in English and Fijian of *My First Handy Bible*, produced by the Bible Society in collaboration with Denmark's Scandinavia Publishing House, arrived in Fiji and Vanuatu in January, they have been “selling like hot cakes,” according to Ledua Turaganivalu, Administration Assistant at the Bible Society. She explains how she bought a copy in Fijian for her five-year-old daughter.

“She was delighted with her Bible and kept asking me to read it to her. Last Sunday she couldn't wait to go to church to show it off to her friends. I took the English version to her kindergarten school yesterday and gave it to the teacher so that she could read it to all the children there. She was thrilled to receive this little Bible and couldn't stop thanking me.”



The instant success of this Children's Bible stems from the great shortage for the children of the region's 16 scattered island nations of Scriptures in words that they can understand and with full-colour illustrations. Through its *Kingdom Kidz* project, the Bible Society is working to address this need with several different products (see World Report 406/20).

My First Handy Bible, with its attractive illustrations, compact size, handle and easily understood language, appeals to both adults and children.

“It really suits the children's mindset,” reports Amelia, a member of staff in the Coronation Bookshop in Lautoka, Fiji's second-largest city. “As a Sunday School teacher, I'd really recommend this book because it will really help children to understand the story. I believe that it will be a big help in their education.”

And in the Bible Society's own bookshop, one man urged his wife to buy copies in both English and Fijian, reports Mrs Turaganivalu. "He said, 'A picture is worth 1,000 words! Parents should buy copies for their own children and encourage other parents to buy them for their children'. Their three-year-old daughter clutched her copy very tightly and it took them a while to persuade her to put it on the counter so that they could pay for it. When they had finally paid for it and given it back to her, she jumped with delight."

The next stage in this project will be to translate *My First Handy Bible* into more local languages: Samoan, Kiribati, Tuvaluan, Solomon Islands Pijin and Rotuman.

This report refers to project 86408.

Photo (Bible Society in the South Pacific):

SPA07DJ-1: Apakuki and Mere ready to go to church with their copies of 'My First Handy Bible', produced by the Bible Society in the South Pacific in collaboration with Denmark's Scandinavia Publishing House. Suva, Fiji.

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