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**LINKING GOD'S PEOPLE TO  
REACH THE UNREACHED**

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## FROM R.K.'S CORNER

Two of my favorite scriptures throughout my journey of faith are Ephesians 2:10 and Romans 8:28 — they always reassure me that God is always in control — even in life's most precarious situations!

These scripture verses often came to mind during my recent ministry travel to England, Kazakhstan and Russia. Invited by Agape Evangelical Center in Almaty, Kazakhstan to celebrate with them the 20th Anniversary since their inception, Steve was not able to go, but sent me to represent us both. All along, I encountered obstacles that should have prevented me from making this trip...but God's grace prevailed!

My time with the believers overseas was extraordinarily awesome — I feel I have brought back home suitcases full of treasures from their testimonies and lives I want to share with you, so I want to give this trip space. Therefore, I have made a travel log that will span several issues. Here you will find Part 1 which features God's faithfulness and divine appointments during my preparation and outbound travel. **STAY TUNED FOR MORE! Blessings!**

... Cont. exclaimed, "*I will continue to travel to my destination — God has a solution!*" The airline representative smiled and said she was a believer in Jesus and knew, without me saying so, that I also was, and that this trip was important to God's heart, so she would do anything to help me. After four hours of intensive research, she was able to put me on a later flight to London with ticket to Moscow with British Air, which, she informed, did have a luggage-transfer agreement with the Russian airline.

The next morning I found myself in **London**, but — alas, again — I learned that the luggage-transfer information was erroneous. I could not go any further, so the only solution was to bypass Russia and buy a separate one-way ticket London - Almaty with another airline to travel the following day.



Peter and Peggy Skinner with Manna

I then called our missionary friends **David and Rosemary Shaw** who live twenty minutes from **Heathrow Airport**. They had been out all morning, had just walked in and "happened" to walk by the phone when I called! Could I stay overnight with them? Of course — they would be delighted. They had guests visiting from out of town, **the Skinners**, who work with **Manna Publications** in printing excellent Bible studies with leadership manuals in various minority ethnic languages. I noticed in the lists of languages Albanian (for Kosova) and Dinka (the latter spoken by the Sudanese in Tonj and the group of Sudanese we serve in Israel. This connection fulfils a long-standing request from the Sudanese). "Divine appointment"! We all had a delicious meal, good fellowship, and after a good night's sleep, I was ready to embark on the next leg of my trip. **Part 2 of R.K.'s Travel Log will be featured in July's Bridge Report**

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LINKING GOD'S PEOPLE TO REACH THE UNREACHED

# The Bridge Report

## R.K.'S TRAVEL LOG PART 1: KAZAKHSTAN & RUSSIA

On May 23, I leaned back in my seat and drew a deep breath of relief as the airplane lifted into space from Miami airport bound for Almaty, Kazakhstan. Finally - I was indeed on board! There were major hindrances that had seemed to make this trip all but impossible. Only by God's grace did things fall into place!

The first problem was the 10 year renewal of my Norwegian passport, which in the past, had been completed in a few days at the Norwegian Consulate in Miami. I did not know that, due to new international regulations, the paperwork and issuance of the new passport would have to be done in Norway and then sent to the States, which would take several months. When finally it was ready and sent, it was lost in the mail, and the process had to start all over, again. By the time it finally arrived at my home in Fort Lauderdale, there was not really time enough before the date of travel to obtain the visas for Kazakhstan and Russia at their respective Consulates in Washington DC.

I searched the Internet for a visa service to help expedite things, and was quite surprised to find a man, a believer in Jesus, from Indonesia (the largest Muslim country in the world) who seemed to understand the significance of a Christians gathering in a Muslim country like Kazakhstan. He made it his personal challenge to succeed, and worked way beyond the call of duty to obtain the two visas. At 3:00 pm the day before my scheduled travel, the packet with all the necessary documents arrived in the mail from Washington D.C.! Thankful to the Lord, I packed my suitcase, ready to embrace the adventures ahead! **Cont. on p. 2**



R.K. at AGAPE with U.S. and Kazakh flags



## NEW YORK

I caught the 6:00am flight from **Miami** to have time enough on the stop-over in **New York City** to visit a friend who is battling a life-threatening disease. **Goldie Rotenberg**, whose parents were Holocaust survivors in Poland and later settled in the US where she was born, has taught me much during the 35 years we have been friends, about being Jewish and a believer in Jesus the Messiah from an insider's viewpoint. She has been a conduit in challenging some of my original views



Goldie (left) and Laura (right) in NYC

about Israel and the Jewish people, while solidifying others.

I had a lovely lunch with Goldie and her friend, **Laura Fels**. For more than two decades, Laura has served with the **Christian Embassy** in New York City, established by **Campus Crusade** to reach ambassadors and diplomats of foreign nations at the United Nations with the **Good News**. This is a different entity than the

Christian Embassy in Jerusalem. Laura's particular ministry is to work among the female UN ambassadors. Many of them, due to the demand of their jobs have left their families behind in their homelands to serve their nations in a far away country where they initially are alone in a new and unfamiliar environment. Laura befriends them and serves them in very practical ways while reflecting the love and care of Jesus. The Christian Embassy, among other activities, arranges luncheons, Bible study groups, prayer breakfasts and forums on pertinent issues for the foreign diplomatic core at the UN. A quote from one of her recent newsletters indicates the scope of Laura's ministry, **"Did you know...**

*... that I can go to Uganda, Bulgaria, New Zealand, and Jamaica in one afternoon?*

*... that, then the next morning, go to Bolivia, Slovenia, Nepal, Burkina Faso, and Tonga?*

*... that, actually, these trips are to the "embassies," properly known as **Permanent Missions to the United Nations**.*

*... that **192 countries** are represented at the UN?*

*... that these 192 countries send their countries' **best people** to represent them on the world stage at the UN?*

*... that over 2300 diplomats represent these 192 countries? **Where better to bring Jesus into the conversation?***

*... that God has given us **great favor** among them, even with those whose*

*faith and political backgrounds oppose ours?*

*... that, in essence, my Christian Embassy team of six staff are doing **Global Missions** without ever leaving New York?*

*... that internationals on our soil are more open to listening to what I have to say [about many things, and, not leastwise, about Jesus Christ] than they would be in their home countries?*

*... that **God has given us amazing opportunities for the Gospel.**"*

It was invigorating to hear testimonies of faith and hope expressed by world leaders who have come to faith. Laura has to raise her own support funds. Please pray for her and her team that, through their lives, there will continue to be much fruit in the nations for the Kingdom of God. **If you want to bless Laura financially, please mark your gift "Christian Embassy".**

Also — please pray for complete physical healing and encouragement for Goldie that she may **"not die, but live and declare the works of God"** (Psalm 118:17).

## KENNEDY AIRPORT

I left for **Kennedy Airport** in the afternoon to continue my travel to **St. Petersburg, Russia** with a stopover in **London**, and then on to **Kazakhstan**. At the check-in desk, the representative, a lovely young woman from Jamaica, suddenly stopped while examining my documents, and said, *"We cannot board you on this flight". "Why not?"* *"You do not have an entry visa to Russia on your way out"*. I insisted I did not need a visa going eastbound, as I was not stopping in Russia, but flying

across the country to Kazakhstan. Practically, this meant that I would remain in international transit at the Russian airports, thus, technically not enter the country. In the past, I have done this many times without any problems.

Alas — I had not been informed about the new rules: there no longer was luggage-transfer between the American and Russian airlines. My luggage would be delivered inside Russia, for which I had no visa to go in and retrieve it for the next flight. Due to heightened terrorism-prevention, international law states that passenger and



David Shaw in his rhododendron garden.

luggage must always travel together. *"Can't you have one of your representatives in St. Petersburg move my suitcase a few yards from yours to the other airline?"*, I begged. *"If we do that, our airline will be fined \$10,000 and you will be deported from Russia"*, was the answer. Ouch! My trip that I had worked so hard for, was in effect finished. I would have to return home, get the appropriate visa, then resume the trip — which would have taken a couple of weeks and defeated the purpose for my travel. Suddenly, my faith rising, I stomped my foot and **Cont. on back page**