



Piripi Taiata Hamiora

PHILIP SAMUEL was born in the Morrinsville district, Waikato, in the year of 1898. His father was Taiata Hamiora of the Ngati Haua tribe. His mother, Rititia Irihei, was of the Tuwharetoa tribe of the Taupo district.

Trained as a jockey, Philip, did a lot of horse riding in his early days and became well known at race meetings in Waikato and Auckland districts.

In the year 1929 he was living with his wife and family at Kereone near Morrinsville. His home was well known to the Morrinsville police because of the drinking parties at weekends.

New Zealand law at that time did not allow Maori people to take liquor away from hotel premises – but Philip found a way to get large quantities to his home and also became quite clever at making home-brew. He himself had become a drunk.

Around this time two Christian ladies from the Morrinsville Gospel Hall decided to try and start a Sunday School for the Maori children of the Kereone Pa. They met with a lot of opposition from Philip Samuel and other Maori men of the Pa. This surprised the two Christian ladies because they knew that Philip was an assistant to the local Maori minister. When the opposition became too strong for the two ladies, they took a Christian man along to help. His name was Jim Forlong.



Phil did his best to oppose Jim and yet he realised that Jim had something he would like to have.

Once Philip and his friends made as much noise as they could during a service. They wanted to see if they could

Philip became quite clever at making home-brew...

stop Jim from praying – but he went on with the prayer. Philip knew in Maori custom that if a prayer or a song can be stopped it is a bad omen.

The Maori proverb says, “Ki te whati te waiata he aitua.” “If the flow of the chant is broken it is an evil sign,” but the prayer went on like flowing water.

Philip knew he was beaten and he began to be troubled in his heart. In his own words he said, “For three months I was really troubled. I could not work properly and could not sleep, but I was too proud to ask Jim for help.”

Philip began to improve his life. He tried several times to stop drinking but usually ended up worse. He realised he had no power to change himself.

Walking along the main street of Morrinsville one evening he heard singing. It came from a large tent. He went to have a look. Standing outside he listened to the words that were being sung:



Philip Samuel with family

*"Have you any room for Jesus,
He who bore your load of sin,
As He knocks and asks admission,
Sinner will you let Him in?
Have you any time for Jesus as in
grace He calls again?
Oh today is time accepted,
tomorrow you may call in vain."*

Philip went inside. He sat down and listened to the preacher. The sermon was about two ways – the way to Heaven and the way to Hell – the narrow way that leads to eternal life and the broad way that leads to destruction. Philip realised that he was on the broad way, and he also knew where it would end.

As he sat that night in the tent, he realised he was hopelessly lost – without Christ and without hope. He knew Maori geneology and culture, he

He went through a hard time from his old drinking mates...

had church and religion and had been christened and confirmed and took communion in the church, but he now knew that he was lost because he had never accepted Christ as Saviour.

He was in the church and in the tribe, but out of Christ. When the service was over and everyone gone, there was Philip Samuel still sitting on the seat. The preacher, the late Charlie Gedge, asked him if anything was wrong.

Philip replied, "Everything is wrong, nothing is right."

The preacher asked a second question: "Are you saved?"

Philip replied. "No, I'm lost."

The preacher then read John 1:12 from the Bible: "As many as receive Him to them gave He the power to become children of God."

Philip remembered that these were the words he had heard from Jim Forlong.

After a few minutes the pakeha preacher and Philip knelt together side by side and the preacher said, "Will you now come to Christ – will you confess your sin and accept Him right now as your Saviour?"

Philip said, "I will" and he then asked the Lord Jesus to come into his heart and save him.

At that moment Philip Samuel passed from death to life and was born into God's family. (See John 3:3). He was now a member of the true church, to which every true believer belongs.

His life was completely changed. He no longer wanted to drink, and his home was changed. His wife and family soon realised he was a new man. Instead of drink, he began to bring home furniture and food. He went through a hard time from many of his old drinking mates and his family and relatives also turned against him. But in the years that followed many of those same people turned to Christ themselves.

For more than 30 years he preached the Gospel up and down New Zealand. Once when he was asked by a clever pakeha if he believed that Jesus turned water into wine, he said, "Yes, I believe that, and in my home he turned beer into furniture."

Philip was a loyal supporter of the Maori King and became well known as a preacher on the courtyard at Ngaruawahia. Often at large gatherings he would be seen standing up to proclaim the Gospel in Maori. At the Centennial celebrations of the Maori King movement he was chosen to preach at the official service. There he stood with his Bible in his hand, dressed in a traditional feather cloak, and he preached from two verses from the Bible, John 14:6, where Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life", and Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." He pleaded with chiefs, elders, parsons and others to come to Christ for forgiveness, peace and salvation.

The late Dr Maharaia Winiata, who was among those listening, said afterwards, "That man's message is the answer to every problem we have in Maoriland today."

This is the A.B.C. of the Gospel, the heart of the message that Philip Samuel preached:-

A is for ALL. Romans 3:23 says, "ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God." That ALL includes you.

B is for BUT. Romans 5:8 says, "BUT God commends His love to us in that although we are sinners Christ died for us." Can you say as you read this, "Yes I believe He died for me?"

C is for COME. Matthew 11:28 says, "COME unto me ALL ye that are weak and heavy laden and I will give you rest."



Philip Samuel (centre)-with Scotty Wheki (right) and Ware Ward (left) taken at Mar-ton Children's Home around 1940.

Have you come to Christ yet for peace and salvation?

Will you accept this challenge from the story of a Waikato - Tuwharetoa Maori Christian? Will you, as you read these words, COME to Christ as Philip Samuel came? Philip found that for more than 30 years the Lord Jesus was not only his Saviour, but also his helper and friend. He passed away in September, 1962.

During the days of mourning while his body laid in state on the Rukumoana Marae near Morrinsville, hundreds of people came from all parts of New Zealand to pay their last respects to the memory of Philip Samuel.

Continued over...

Maori men from the East Coast and other areas said, "We first heard the way of salvation from our brother Samuel and we are glad we accepted his Saviour as our Saviour too."

When a memorial stone was later erected in the Rukumoana cemetery by his sons and daughters, it was unveiled by a leading representative of the Maori King and the words on the stone were read to the people. The words are:

**PHILIP TAIATA SAMUEL – BORN 1898
BORN AGAIN 1931
HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH**

If you died today, could there be written on your memorial stone the date on which you were born again? If you are not born again, you are outside of God's family. If you need any further help, please write to: *The Editor, PO Box 10, Wanganui.*

An early photo of the meeting house at Rukumoana where Philip's tangi was held.

