

Hill Cumorah Expedition Team
Research Expedition 2008

By David B. Brown

In early January 2008 the Hill Cumorah Expedition Team sponsored a trip to the Yucatan of Mexico for the purpose of gathering specific information in the area that could affirm or deny current theories concerning Book of Mormon geography. This included such items as the Land of Antionum, the narrow pass from the east seashore into Bountiful, the location of King Benjamin's Temple and Tower at Yaxchilan, and other items of interest that are peripheral to these key locations. The group was comprised of Mike Brown, Don Beebe, Scott Norwood, Terry Scott, Chris Scott, and David Brown.

January 8

We spent the night in a hotel close to the airport because we had a 6 AM flight out of Kansas City International Airport on a snowy and blustery cold morning. Everything went fine with our early flight schedule, landing in Dallas and making our connecting flight, we landed in Cancun on time and made our way relatively quickly through customs and getting our money exchanged. At the car rental we were waiting for quite some time for a vehicle to be brought over and cleaned—we required a 15-passenger van for the seven of us and all the baggage. The delay gave us time to speak with one of the employees about the ruins at Tancah and the archway we were looking to find. He knew where it was and told us that the site was found many years ago, but that it just recently opened. His recollections fit the description we had been given

and we were on our way south out of Cancun by 1:30 PM. We ate at a McDonald's and put gas in the van, then made our way to Tanchah, no Tankah. There were so many; Maya Tankah, Blue Sky Tankah, Tres Tankah. There were signs for every form of Tankah, but the ruins we wanted to see.

We drove into Tulum, but being determined to find the archway we opted to ask the locals and find the Tanchah ruin site. Up and down the highway we went for about an hour trying to find it. We finally determined that it must have been one site that was closed and marked with a non-distinct icon of a pyramid on a blue sign that was maybe 2' by 2' with no arrows or any other hint of a clue as to what this sign was. That kind of signage is actually considered very adequate in Mexico. That road was gated shut and we then determined to catch the ruin site of Tulum before we lost the light. An hour later we were eight kilometers south of Tulum and making our way back up the coastal road that was lined with colorful cabanas. We keep pointing fingers at each other to get someone to take the blame for such a fiasco, but no one would accept it. We got to the gate too late; Tulum was closed for the day.

South it was to make Chetumal before it got any later. The three and a half hour drive south on a two-lane highway in the dark provided the opportunity for the seven of us to share in some very wonderful conversation. Testimonies of how God has worked in our lives, miracles

that we have witnessed, contemplations on why we are here and what has brought us to this place. All of the sharing had bonded us into a close group by the time we reached Chetumal at 8:45 PM. Thanks to Don Beebe we soon found our hotel, unloaded, parked the van, found our rooms and spent another hour in the restaurant galvanizing our close-ties and sharing in the gift of love, thought, and contemplation. Neil spent some time preparing us for tomorrow's visit to the museum here about a block away and the important exploration of Rio Bec that Neil feels was the stronghold for the Zoramites.

This afternoon started out frustrating, but by the time this evening was completed we sensed that God intended it to be this way—He always has a larger purpose in mind. We shared in a quick, but moving devotional and then everyone went to their rooms to get some well deserved rest.

January 9

The morning began with a note pushed under the door letting us know that Neil and Don were out and about looking for a protractor (the Spanish name for which no one could discover) and would meet us at breakfast at about 8:30. We had a good breakfast then walked up the street to the Museum. Neil and Don began speaking with an employee at the Museum who called a local INAH official to gather information about the arch and also about Rio Bec. The rest of us spent about 45

minutes walking through the museum. It is very well done with many replicas of important Maya carvings from Palenque, Tikal, Calakmul, and Yaxchilan. We took LOTS of photographs and then we went back to the hotel, loaded the van, and headed out of Chetumal, but not before Neil was able to buy a protractor; it is called a "transporter."

We were pulled over by *Federales* for a standard stop only to find that it was the very place where we were to turn south to Rio Bec. We turned south and made our way along the road until it turned into a rough gravel road and then it turned into a narrow very bumpy dirt road and then it got even more narrow. Finally, we decided that according to our map that we must be on the wrong road and made it to a place called Xpujil (sh-poo-heel) where there was supposed to be a road that went much closer to Rio Bec than the one we were on.

We followed that road until it was heading southwest toward Hormiguero, a site much further west than we needed to be. So, back to Xpujil and down the road to Rio Bec, this time finding a guide in the local village who could take us to the ruin site. We thought we would be finding a different route to the site, but he took us down the same narrow dirt/mud road until we came to point that we could absolutely go no farther by van because the ruts in the road were too deep and the makeshift stone bridge was too narrow. It was here that our guides offered the information that there was an easier way into Rio Bec, but the bridge had been washed out by a hurricane that went through

some time ago. They had a brother with a pick-up that could get us through tomorrow. We opted to do that.

We turned our van around (no easy feat), and headed back yet again. Our guides then told us that there was a ruin just off the road that they could show us. We stopped at the proper point and walked about half mile to find a set of three small temple ruins in typical Rio Bec architecture. It was very grown over, but there was enough of two walls left to see the basic structure and there were a couple of ends of corbelled arch rooms that were discernible. We took some photographs, and the guides said this site was called Ramonal (?) and there was one not too far away called Oxtajuit (?). We took the guides back to their home and made arrangements for an 8 AM meeting to have them take us back to Rio Bec.

We made our way back through Xpujil and to a very nice setting for overnight accommodations called EcoVillage. So we ate, spent the evening discussing tomorrow, had our devotions led by Don Beebe, and hit the sack early.

Again, we know that we are not completing the task WE defined on the schedule that WE set, but each of feels that God has something more important that needs to be done on His schedule; so we "shift on the fly" and do our best to discern what God has in store. Again, we seek His will and ask that you pray for us to have our eyes open, and our

hearts and minds tuned to His leading so that we can be instruments of His peace.

January 10

This morning began well with a good breakfast and we got out of our hotel by 8 AM, met our guide in 20 de Noviembre (that is the name of the town just outside of Rio Bec). Ezekial (our guide) and David (the driver of the truck) took us the long, long, long journey beyond the stone bridge river point and back to the ruins. It was an hour and a half ride by truck. Neil was in the cab and the rest of us were in the bed of the truck. It was a short-bed Nissan so there not being much room I stood up for most of the ride to the site. I did okay but there was one thieving tree branch that took the glasses right off of my face. The funny thing was that the glasses stayed on the tree branch and our guide went back to "pick" my glasses off the tree. Who knew you could pick your eye glasses right from the tree? They grow them right here in Mexico!

We got to the site and first visited the palace location with the tall "mock facade" temple. This has most of the steps in place and displayed classic Mulekite construction with rounded corners on the buildings. We took many photos and measured the angle of the facade and the 11" rise on the fake steps with the 4" tread width. We then moved to the site that is believed to be the hill Onida where Alma spoke to the poor of the Zoramites. The buildings at this site could very easily fit the structures

that would be used for an armory, since later in Alma we are told that Onida means the places of the arms. We then moved on to the site of the main temple and unbelievably, Neil was right. There is a staircase and there is a shouting place (The High Stand) from either a doorway halfway up the temple or again from on top. However, the very top of the temple is now gone and it appears that the stairway leads to the top of a building with no walls. Comparisons with older temple photographs will prove the point. We took many photographs and marked many things very well. Additionally, Neil discovered that there were three stela and one stone with carvings that were found on the site. The Mulekites (Zoramites) did not have a written language and there are no glyphs on these temples. There are iconic glyphs, but they appear to only be decoration because there is no uniformity to them. Therefore, the supposition is that the three stela could very possibly be placed by the Palenque Stela Cult during the Golden Age (100-200 AD).

We made our way back to town retracing our path only this time Scott Norwood and Don Beebe joined me standing up during the ride. However, one moment when I was trying to remove a low branch while moving along I suddenly found myself laying across the laps and legs of the rest of my *compadres* in the back of the truck—the limb bowled me over and thankfully several bodies were there to soften the blow (except for Terry Scott's knee). We had no other mishaps except for when Chris Scott ran her fingertip across one of the machetes and

proceeded to bleed all over the back of the truck. It was nothing more than a paper cut (merely a flesh wound, as Monty Python would say), but a little band-aid and some Neosporin and all was fine.

Once back in town we had a delicious dinner provided by the cousin of Ezekial. It was fresh pineapple juice, spinach tamales with chicken and cheese and topped with mild salsa (unlike the habinero Terry Scott bit into the night before). Neil made arrangements for Ezekial to photograph the stela that were in the area and then we headed for our hotel. The evening was spent with a lot of discussion about the Zoramite culture and tossing around theories on how it originated, developed and then fell away—extremely good stuff to begin making an impact on future concepts of the trade market in Central America.

Neil led our devotions and then we all retired for the evening. We are spending a second night here at EcoVillage and will head to visit Becan first thing in the morning, then Calakmul tomorrow midday and then on to spend tomorrow night (Friday night) in Palenque.

January 11

We got off to a good start this morning. Checked out of the hotel, had breakfast, packed the bags into the van and went 2 kilometers to the ruin site of Becan (photo attached). This site is completely renovated and is done in the Rio Bec architecture. It had a few stela that we investigated, we checked on the construction of the pyramids then

climbed a few and Neil began speaking with one of the workers at the site by the name of Miguel. He shared many interesting facts with us and he and Neil held a lively conversation (of course, what else transpires with Neil?). After getting the name of a contact for further information at Calakmul, we packed up about 10 AM and started heading for Calakmul.

At about 11:30 we reached the point in the road where the 60 Kilometer road heads south from the main highway. We paid access to the site and drove the distance on a road that got more and more narrow, and the pavement became more primitive as we traveled to the gravel parking area of the site. Again we paid to get into the site and spent three hours touring all the excellent ruin pyramids, stela, temples, ball courts, and such. There was much to discover and photograph. As we left, Neil did find the person named Rosea; she was the contact name we were given. She rode with us for the 45 minute drive from the site to the place where she lives in Conhuas. She and Neil spoke the entire way as Neil did his best to ask as many detailed questions as possible to more fully comprehend the particulars about the site of Calakmul—he is making every effort to confirm his suspicions that Calakmul was the Mulekite seat of power from 580 BC until about 200 BC when that seat of power apparently switched to Yaxchilan with the arrival of the Nephites from the Guatemala highland area. We purchased some goods from the family of Rosea and made our way to Palenque. It was a long drive, but we did

enjoy some American Burger King cuisine in Escarcero. We finally arrived in Palenque at about 8:45 PM. We got our rooms, met for some light dinner and coke/coffee, then had our devotions and went to bed.

Tomorrow (Saturday) we are leaving the hotel at 6 AM and heading for Yaxchilan. We originally planned to make Saturday our Palenque day, but the information we have to acquire at Yaxchilan is more important than what we have planned for Palenque. Therefore, we are arranging our schedule so that, if necessary, we can take two days at Yaxchilan and not totally butcher our schedule. We will hit the road at 6 AM and hope to be on the boats and floating down the Usumacinta River to Yaxchilan by 8:45. We plan to arrange for the boatman to make us the very last pick-up of the day. That should afford us enough time to photograph, measure, and document all the important aspects of the trip. If it is not enough time, then we have a second day on Sunday to come back and finish what we started. If it is enough time, then we have all day Sunday to visit the Palenque ruin.

God has been watching over us throughout our journey. We continually find ourselves meeting with people who are genuinely helpful, interested, and informative. They leave us with words such as "go with God." This aspect is a direct answer to prayer and we know that you are part of that. Thank you.

January 12

The morning began very early for us! We were up by 5:30 and on the road by 6:10. Heading out of the town there was a faint light where the sunrise should be, but we had a heavy fog overcast for most of the morning that helped to keep the temperature at a decent level. About 7 AM we hit a breakfast spot on the way that Don Beebe had told us about. Just a few grass roof huts with a professional serving set-up and marble-tiled bathrooms all set on a quaint hidden location next to a natural spring. It was an excellent buffet and in less than half-an-hour we were back on our way.

We got to Frontera about 10 AM and made arrangements for us to share a boat with a couple from Germany to take us down river to Yaxchilan. It was a 45 minute ride with the current—and there was a very strong current on this very wide river. It reminded me very much of the Missouri River; lots of whirlpools and dirty brown water.

We arrived in Yaxchilan about 11:10. We finished our devotions on the pathway to the entrance and asked for divine help in our efforts today. We entered the labyrinth and immediately began working on our projects for mapping the layout of the labyrinth. We then entered into the beautiful plaza of the bottom level of Yaxchilan. Everything is so green, rich, and fertile. Coming from a land in the Middle East where most everything is brown, no wonder the Maya considered green to be the color of sacred things; it was the color of the land that God gave to them.

We started across the grand plaza, taking photos of the stela, ruin buildings, staircases and so on. Then the level of buildings just above the plaza, then the hieroglyphic staircase, King Benjamin's tomb (no name, because he was humble), Lady Kuk's Temple (the wife of King Mosiah and the mother of King Benjamin), and at the quarry we stopped to partake of our box lunches that we purchased from the hotel. It was a pleasant place to eat our meal and rest from the very tiring climb during the heat of the day. Then we moved farther up the hill to the top where there are three temples of varying styles; one of which appears to be the oldest known structure at the site and has been refurbished during the Classical Maya period in an attempt to preserve it. It was here that Neil showed us the foundation for a wooden structure such as a tower. The dimensions of the foundation is 9' by 50'. But, Neil was also certain we would find King Benjamin's Temple. We looked on the two partially leveled flanks of the hill, but no foundation. Then one of the INAH employees met us and spoke at length with Neil. Neil described the structure as he recalled seeing it and the employee stated that it was Temple 6 on the main plaza. Neil made a bee-line for the structure out-doing the rest of us on the way down the hill.

We eventually caught up with Neil and measured the site that had ten years of growth over the top. It roughly measured 30' by 60' with an approach of four large steps that ran about forty feet in width. The Temple is situated between the river and the main plaza. With all the

trees cleared it would have been a hallmark building when seen from the river. Neil then moved two buildings down from the temple and found the building where Alma apparently stayed, and the throne room where archaeologists claim that the government of Yaxchilan changed from kings to judges because the throne seat clearly changed from one to five seats. Only a judgeship could explain this change.

By this time it was 3:15 and we needed to move to the exit to meet our boat by 4 PM. We ventured back down the main plaza taking the last few photos of the site as we walked into the labyrinth and then out the exit. At the entrance to the site I lit a smudge of sweet-grass and offered it to the seven directions in thanks for the blessings of the day. I turned and made my way back down the pathway to the boats and as I climbed over the last few rocks that put Yaxchilan out of site I felt a puff of wind with the strong odor of sweet-grass filling my nostrils and letting me know that our visit was well received and appreciated by our God and the ancients who walked these trails.

We got back on the boat with our German friends and took the hour-long ride back upstream. Our ride back to the hotel was long and we were very tired. We were mostly quiet as we rested and finally arrived at the hotel about 7:20. We all showered, met for dinner, spoke excitedly about the ventures of the day and the prospects for the future.

Scott Norwood led our devotions and we all gave thanks for answer to prayer, and we praised our God that we were able to

accomplish all that we had set out to complete and that for all the climbing, huffing and puffing, there were no mishaps; only tired and sore bodies.

We will be meeting about 7:30 in the morning and making efforts to leave around 8:30 for Villahermosa and the LaVenta stela. Picture taking and a light round of visiting is all we have on the agenda tomorrow. Monday will be Palenque. Thanks again for all your thoughts, concerns and prayers.

January 13

We got up a little later this morning, ate breakfast at 7:30, then loaded the van and made our way to Villahermosa. It was mostly overcast and we went through little patches of rain on the 2 hour drive. Neil provided the devotions on the way and it led to some interesting discussion concerning why our work is so important to be done at this time.

Once in Villahermosa we found the park, purchased our tickets and began the walk through this combination zoo and local history park. We made our way past the various exotic animals such as spider monkeys, jaguars, and crocodiles (which I forgot to mention that we saw in the wild along the banks of the Usumacinta River while we traveled by boat). We soon located several of the artifacts that are displayed along the pathway in the park. We found several Colossal Heads including the

one Neil climbed on to transfer the Ogam onto paper for his translation of the Jaredite King list. We saw the basalt pillars arranged for Lib's tomb. We saw several of the altars and monuments Neil refers to in his classes and finally we came upon the pillar that shows a man being attacked by a large snake (sea monster or shark depending on the archaeologists that is interpreting). On the back of that pillar are several Ogam markings and some additional carvings. We were able to photograph all of these things. In fact, the lighting today was just about perfect for getting definition on the carvings of the stones. Our testimony for the day is that God provided us with perfect filtered light that made the contrast of the etchings stand out at their best. He provided us with just the perfect amount of contrast as we needed it for capturing etchings on the side of stones by allowing the sun to barely peek through the cloud and make certain lighting change to increase the definition of markings. It seems too perfect to be true, but we all witnessed this gift that God gave us.

We left the park and ate at VIPs, then got back on the road to Palenque. Neil began narrating some of the text for our report on the trip and when that was done we arrived in Palenque about 4:15, took naps, met at 7:00 for dinner, celebrated Mike Brown's belated birthday (too busy up to this point as his birthday was on the 9th), had a good devotion this evening and got to bed about 9:30.

Again, God has blessed our efforts in remarkable ways. Neil has told us of the multiple times he has made attempts to photograph these items in the park and the lighting was wrong, the foliage was in the way, the presentations of the monuments on their pedestals made it too difficult to capture all the necessary images. He expressed over and over again how blessed we were to have the day, the lighting, and the newly rearranged presentations for these monuments. He stated that today was too easy for us to fully comprehend the blessing we have received. That, my friends, is a direct answer to your prayers and ours. The collective requests for blessings to further God's work for the Gentiles to bring the message of Christ to the House of Israel in the last days is being answered as so many of the items we are collecting on this trip is to refine the spiritual history of the Maya and capture key carvings, inscriptions, and monuments in photographs for documentation; all in an effort to allow God to "make bare his Holy arm." You are part of that work by praying for us. Thank you and may God bless you abundantly for your prayers on our behalf.

January 14

We left the hotel at about 8:30 this morning and made our way on the short trip to Palenque. We purchased out tickets to enter the road to the site and the again we purchased tickets to enter the site. As many of you already know, Palenque is a marvelous place. The sun was brilliant,

the grass was green, the rivers flowing through Palenque were crisp, cool, and clean, and the day was wonderful.

Neil began immediately explaining so many intricate bits of information about the site. We were not allowed to climb on or enter the Temple of the Inscriptions, but Neil did provide us with a lot of information. We then entered the Palace Complex and I was amazed by all of the different shapes in the corbelled arches, the many different walkways, rooms, courtyards, stairways and the like. We were able to find a stairway that led to an underground labyrinth in the south end of the Palace where we found several long rooms. In one of the rooms was a throne that Neil suspects may have been used by Christ when he visited. It is simple and plain, yet a little larger than a typical throne. We took many photographs to capture the details of the glyphs on the three exposed edges.

We then moved on to the Cross Complex where Neil provided us with the main concepts of the inscriptions at the Temple of the Sun, the Temple of the Cross, and the Temple of the Foliated Cross. Several of us climbed each temple and did our best to experience what a citizen of the period would have experienced as they attempted to learn all they could from the inscriptions and the experience of the architecture. Neil and Don then investigated the position of Temples XVIII, XIX, XX, and XXI. Only Temple XVIII was open for the public. We then began making our way to the van and taking our time to purchase items at the

market. We tried to visit the Palenque Museum, but it was closed (as all INAH Museums are on Mondays).

With this task of photography completed we hit the road and made our way to Compeche. We arrived just after sunset, got our rooms, and had dinner. We listened with fascination as Neil recounted his '72 experience at the Hill and then his experience with his fall and some of the many testimonies since. We were then primed to share in a good devotion that Chris Scott brought to us this evening.

I hope this report doesn't sound mundane. While there was not much to report in the way of activity today, there is no way to describe the amazing conversations we are having and the way in which God is opening our minds with new understandings and remarkable possibilities. This experience will be bearing fruit in the immediate future, but also for many years to come.

Tomorrow we will be visiting the Museum here in Compeche to gather some very important details about the Puuk-type ruins, especially information about Rio Bec. Then we are on the road to Merida to visit a local museum there and finish our day with the drive to the city outside of Chechen Itza. We plan to spend the night there and hit the Chechen Itza site first thing on Wednesday morning.

January 15

We left the hotel this morning and went right to the museum. We got photographs of the mummy and a few other items from Calakmul. Neil learned that there were items that we could further learn by going to the local INAH office in Compeche. We did. Neil learned that the director would be in later and the lady in the office said she would do some research for us and if we got back in a couple of hours she would have some things for.

We went to VIPs for some more coffee, Mike and Don walked to Sam's Club, Chris walked along the beach and we effectively passed a couple of hours. We returned to the office to discover that the lady was asking us to wait for the director to return. We waited for half an hour and he still didn't make it. Neil left information of what we wanted to get as information for Rio Bec and we then headed for Merida. We found the "rolling pin" stone that the Maya's used to press down the rock rubble to create the sacbes. We took the photos and then headed on to Chichen Itza to find a hotel for the night.

There was little that happened today, but we did listen to an Arthur Oakman sermon. It spurred a lot of conversation we spent our time thinking about our responsibility to serve our God through spiritual means, and we got to contemplate various aspects of the tithing law.

Tomorrow we will be going to Chichen Itza first thing in the morning, then getting on the road and making our way to Tulum and one last effort to find the arch at Tankah. Please pray for us to be able to

locate this and finalize all that we set out to complete for this trip. We are winding things down and looking forward to our return so that we can start sifting through all the information we have gathered. It has been a very productive trip.

January 16

Well, our last full day in Mexico began with an early breakfast at the hotel just outside of Chichen Itza. We made it to the gates by 8:20 AM. We began by visiting the large Temple of Kukulcan (the serpent shadow temple), then the Temple of the Warriors, a couple of small altars that are being restored, up the sacbe to the north cenote, then back to the Wall of Skulls, and the Ball Court. It was here that we photographed the frieze of "the bearded white god" on the back of the temple at the end of the ball court.

We then moved on to the temples on the central plaza area. This included the observatory and the citadel, among others. The building next to the observatory had a frieze on each side; one displayed a man on a horse (something that the Maya were not supposed to have until the Spaniards brought horses), and the other displayed a cart with a wheel (an invention that the Maya were not supposed to have either). We then wrapped up our tour of the site, bought a few trinkets from the vast selections of vendors and then started down the road toward Cancun.

Chris Scott brought our devotions on the road and it was a good spirit of unity and appreciation for the work that is being done; an effort to find the evidences to help shore up the faith of believers that Christ is not just for the Jews, but he is for all humanity—visiting the Americas and other peoples of the world. The evidence is there; someone has to search it out and document it as such.

We arrived in Cancun about 1:30 and headed back south to Tulum. Terry and Chris Scott and Scott Norwood exited the van to tour Tulum while Mike, Don, Neil and I headed up the road a few kilometers to find that elusive sacbe arch. We searched every road we could find along the ocean front for 10 kilometers north of Tulum and found nothing. Finally, we went to a road that was locked with a gate and padlock. Neil, Don, and I walked around the padlock and down the road that went all the way to the ocean. No sacbe arch. We then headed back on the same freshly cut gravel road and we investigated a small road to the north to find that it went to a site that is in the middle of being excavated. We were ecstatic. One building was almost completely excavated with three others in various stages. In addition, there were probably seven or eight other mounds of rock that strewn around the site waiting for someone to rearrange the stones and piece the puzzle back together.

Neil and Don went up the tallest and finished pyramid while I walked all around the perimeter of the grounds still looking for the elusive sacbe arch. I still found none. I got back with Neil and Don to

find them enthralled with the small building on the top of the pyramid. Neil was inside the small copula that was slightly domed on the inside with a small elliptical hole that was open to the top of the roof. I got out my compass and noted that the door and hole in the back of the room were aligned about 10 degrees south of due east (100 degrees east/southeast). Neil quickly perceived that it was a small sun chart used to determine the winter solstice and both the spring and fall equinox. We took several photographs from various angles and then went on to check the design of the pyramids. The most complete one seemed to have Mulekite influence with the rounded corners on the edges, however, the pyramid built right next to it did not have those features and indicated that it was built at a different period under a different engineering influence. More needs to be discovered. I continued to look for the arch of the sacbe while Neil and Don finished surveying the site. I couldn't find anything (or anyone). Neil and Don, however, did run into the owner of the ranch who spent some time talking with Neil about the site, indicating that the site had not yet received a name. Neil told the man that it should be named "Sacbe Neil." The man agreed with a smile. We all met up with Mike and the folks getting back from the Tulum site and we were off to Cancun for the night.

We found a hotel, had a bite to eat at VIPs, had a good devotion and are now preparing to get a good night sleep with a late rise in the

morning since we won't fly out of Cancun until 4:45 this afternoon and we won't arrive in KCI until 11:15 Thursday night.

I again thank all of you for helping with your love, concern, interest, and prayerful support. God has blessed us in so many ways that we can already recount, and I know that over the next several months we will be discovering even more blessings that we have received because of the effort put forth during this last week. We have traveled all over the Yucatan without incident with vehicle, police, injury, or illness. We have ventured into remote areas and jungle without issue. We have only encountered rain on a few occasions, and when we did it was while we were traveling in the vehicle. We never had to do any of our work in inclement conditions. When we have needed to take pictures the necessary lighting and condition for such have been excellent—even to the point that the variation of natural light changed when we needed small amounts of direct sunlight for more definition. When we needed information and guidance, God provided us with people who knew the answers to our questions or gave us a contact for another town. These are just a few of the things of which we are aware. Our gracious and loving God and YOUR expressions of faith have made the difference. God Bless.