

PATRICK CREWDSON

The Life of Brian (Tamaki)

4 At this time Brian was marshalling his apostles for a journey to Wellington — the seat of the Governor.

5 So Brian commanded his flock: "Get thee down to Hallensteins. They've a sale of black Haines Beefy-Ts. Could come in useful." And when they returned, he did teach them how to goosetep and salute.

6 They gathered under a banner upon which was written "Enough is Enough", by which they meant to condemn sin.

7 The townsfolk pleaded with Jesus to help, so he sought out Brian to counsel him. Although his security guards were belligerent, Jesus would not be denied.

8 Jesus was already of some renown throughout the region, because he wore sandals and flowing robes and was generally a bit of a hippy despite coming from working class roots. And Brian consented to sit with him for a simple meal of fishes and loaves.

9 "Now Brian, you know me," said Jesus, who is called the Lamb of God. "I like to think of myself as a bit of a rebel. I'm always hitting the Pharisees and the Sadducees with some wisdom, talking about giving some respect to the meek and the peacemakers for a change. Now I've got this new thing. I'm calling it 'love thy neighbour'. 'It's all about tolerance

and not throwing stones at other people because, you know, you've probably done some bad stuff yourself. What do you think?"

10 But Brian was not persuaded and his laughter was scornful.

11 And Jesus did counsel him further: "You talk in riddles, Brian. Homosexuality occurs in nature, yet you call it unnatural." But Brian was unrepentant.

12 Taking to his feet, he quoted aloud from the ancient scripture: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination."

13 And Jesus said unto Brian: "Quit being such a bigot. You take all the fun out of fundamentalism."

14 But it was as though Jesus was sowing a seed on stony ground. "The men of Sodom and Gomorrah are wicked and sinners without exception," said Brian.

15 And Jesus asked: "Dude, have you ever even met a gay person?"

16 "So it is written and so is the Word of the Lord."

17 And Jesus said: "Word of the Lord? When was the last time you slaughtered a bullock for the Lord? Or used the blood of a bird to cure your pimples like it says in Leviticus?"

18 And from Brian there was much wailing and gnashing of pearly white teeth.

19 Jesus said unto him: "Look, all this about the 'decline of society' basically stems from competing moral paradigms. On one hand, you have tolerance, science, reason and the values of the Enlightenment. On the other hand you have a conservative theology based on a literal interpretation of the Bible and supported by your personal charisma."

20 So Jesus commanded Brian: "Repent, and cleanse your heart. You're not the Messiah. You're a very naughty boy!"

21 Then Jesus cast the demons out and Brian was exiled to the desert wilderness, to wander where he could cause no harm.

22 Alone and bereft of Brylcreem, Brian threw his hands skyward and lamented: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

23 And there came a voice from Heaven, saying: "Thou art my beloved son, but it's like I always say. Love the sinner, hate the sin."

Patrick Crewdson is an AUT Graduate Diploma in Journalism student and former editor of Critic.

And so it was that Jesus of Nazareth was called to a town where a man was said to be possessed by a demon.

2 The man with the unclean spirit was given to loud proclamations and was exceedingly fierce. He was called Brian Tamaki of Destiny and he commanded a flock of followers. His disciples harkened to him for he was good-looking and rich and spoke with authority, and they did tithes to him 10% of their income. Their name was Legion, for they were many.

3 When Jesus saw their faith he was disturbed, for Brian was a false prophet preaching an unforgiving doctrine.

Brash is missing the boat with his Pacific region jibe

Recently Don Brash told the world how he sees the Pacific — a problem-riddled region. He warned New Zealand would end up as just another Pacific Island state if the brain drain to Australia was not contained. Brash has some work to do before he can topple Helen Clark as the next Prime Minister. The polls show this.

One thing Brash needs to do is to change his view of New Zealand and its place in the Pacific region. Yes, there is poverty in the region. Yes, unemployment is rife in most states and political instability ebbs and flows like the tides surrounding the island nations.

Life is not a bed of roses for Pacific Islanders. But warning that New Zealand may turn into another Pacific island suggests two things — New Zealanders are not improving their living standards, and Pacific Islands states will always remain in doldrums.

New Zealand does not need poverty and high unemployment to become another Pacific Island state. Aotearoa is

already an integral part of the Pacific.

Associate Pacific Affairs Minister Philip Taito Field correctly stated Aotearoa was not a satellite of Europe. It is part of the Pacific.

Pacific Islanders are proud to bring their unique Polynesian, Melanesian and Micronesian culture and skills into this country. You don't have to look far.

Around the time Dr Brash delivered his sermon in the *Financial Review* in Australia, Kiwi discus queen Beatrice Faumuina created history by becoming the first Pacific Islander to carry New Zealand's flag at the Olympics.

This year Tana Umaga became the first Pacific Islander to captain the mighty All Blacks.

New Zealand's connection to the Pacific is unquestionable. The Pacific region provided a workforce when this country was in dire need of labourers.

Today, billions of dollars worth of infrastructure projects are still on hold because of a lack of labourers. Where will New Zealand turn to ease the shortage?

To the Pacific Islands of course.

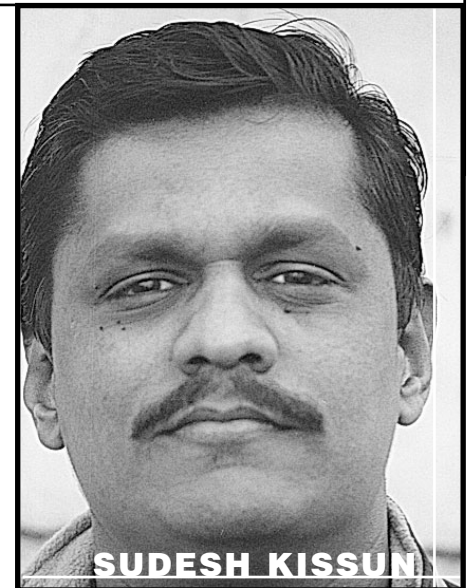
On August 16, the Government announced new measures to help fill the Pacific Island quota. Each year there are 1100 places under the Samoan quota and 650 places under the Pacific access category for Tonga, Fiji, Tuvalu and Kiribati.

Therefore being closely identified as a Pacific Island state is natural for New Zealand and its people. We are part of the region and Pacific culture and traditions are found everywhere.

Many success stories in New Zealand music can be traced to Pacific roots. In 2001, four young men — Awa, Dave, Donald and Junior — made a strong impression at the audition for the Pasifika Festival. They are now known as Nesian Mystik.

New Zealand is a melting pot of races and cultures.

The fear of New Zealand slipping into a Third World Pacific state is far-fetched. Some New Zealanders are moving to Australia to live. While some may be leaving for greener pastures, some of these



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New Zealanders are immigrants who have used this country as a stepping stone to Australia and beyond.

The New Zealand Immigration Service has more than 13,000 applications on hand from people interested in living in New Zealand. This speaks volumes about the future of this country.

Brash may have not noticed but New Zealand is already a Pacific nation and not "just another Pacific nation".

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Fiona Webster's Monterrey diary

Rachel and I now live in a five bedroom palace in the suburb of La Primavera, ten minutes walk from Tec, five minutes taxi ride to the going out part of town. It is a pleasant residential area of families, tree-lined streets, saloon cars and wrought iron security gates.

Our house is a typical contemporary Mexican design — pretty ugly but there is

The Mexican flat warming party

a walled patio/barbeque area, which just cries out for parties. We pay US \$250 a month each, which is a little cheaper than Auckland rent prices but more expensive than the rest of Mexico.

Rachel and I had the house to ourselves for only a few days before Sari, our wonderful landlady (more like our mum), showed Tabea round. Tabea, an intelligent young woman from Germany recognised a bargain and moved in. Within a week Cajsja and Frida from Sweden had completed our family.

We had a flat meeting. The first item on the agenda was the essential flat warming party. International students were arriving by the bus load — 500 altogether. The following week would be ori-

entation week, so we decided to act quickly and host an unofficial welcome barbeque that Saturday night.

When I arrived home after daytime seminars and lectures I was feeling wrung out by the heat and information overload.

The thought of mingling with people I didn't know made me tired. But my wonderful flatmates had decided that party preparations were more important than sitting through hours of official introductions. They had organised everything from a bucket of guacamole, a gallon of salsa and a mountain of corn chips to stocking the fridge with beer and chicken ready for cooking on the barbeque. Suddenly I wasn't tired anymore.

We, the flatmates, gathered together

for a solemn moment in the dining room to toast our new home, a successful semester and girl power. We clinked our bottles of Sol with wedges of limes in the spout.

Our gathering set a standard for future parties of international students on the Tec de Monterrey exchange programme — an absolute triumph darling!

The next day, the floor took three goes with the mop to get marginally clean. We collected eight rubbish bags full of empty bottles. Hasta luego.

Fiona Webster is an AUT Bachelor of Communication Studies student on an exchange programme between AUT and Tecnológico de Monterrey.