

A Dukane Projector and a Mountain of Slides!

Let me tell you the story of the Dukane Projector! It is still sitting in the hall closet as I write this some 35 years later. Though for a time it was our main means of teaching the Bible Visually, it has since taken a back seat to Power Point on Computer. Although, some of the filmstrips we used would make great DVD's or power points.

Back in 1981 we had just landed from 10 years overseas and were getting our bearings at the Davis house on Friant Rd at the end of the cul-de-sac on the right. They had a large RV parked out front and we were camping out in it until we could get our own vehicle. They were hospitable to us and we had a mutual relationship where we helped teach their kids from time to time and also brought home extra cheese and dairy products given to us from the local Safeway. They were also happy to have our German co-worker, Amos, helping with the housework and eventually staying with their family when we left on Memorial Day 1981. We had stayed with them about 2 months until we bought a 1969 LTD Ford Station Wagon for \$250.00. Adria fixed up the back real nice with lace curtains and cushions. It became our bedroom for a few weeks on our first solo adventure in the USA. We also had a tent trailer which JT, our friend, loaned us that our co-worker couple, Maryanne (English) and Hosea (Danish) used for a bedroom at night. We eventually left Simi Valley with 10 people, 4 adults and 6 kids, and said good-bye to Amos who became a part of the Davis household for many years! This is a whole other story, but now you have some background to the Dukane story.

One day while in Simi Valley, we were invited to go to a "Swap Meet." We had no idea what that was. We also were very unfamiliar with all of the jargon in America as being overseas we just used "plain English!" "Swap Meet"—It was on Sunday at an abandoned or unused Drive In Theater. Perhaps during the daylight hours they rent it out to these people who bring various things to sell. It's a real potpourri of used merchandise at bargain prices! We never saw one of these in Europe or North Africa. It was a real experience!

As we strolled through the little individual stands offering all kinds of ware from lawnmowers to clothing, we spotted an interesting looking piece of equipment. Upon inquiry we found it was a filmstrip projector—a Dukane; one of the best with a cassette player in it. The lady said it was for sale for \$50! She was surprised it had not sold as they usually go for \$250-\$300 and this one was like new. We told her if it is there next week we will buy it! Having our guitar with us we then shared a song with her and her daughter and told about our missionary work overseas and our reason for wanting the projector. She smiled and we moved on down the row! Adria and I were both amazed to find such a thing in the midst of these items. Right then and there we held hands and asked God to preserve that projector for us.

It wasn't 5 minutes later as we continued our stroll down the lane that someone was tugging on the back of my shirt. As we turned around we saw it was the daughter of the lady with the projector. She said, "Mister, my Mom wants to give you that projector!" We almost couldn't believe our ears as for years in Europe very little was ever given to you "as unto the Lord" for free. You had to sing or perform some service to get what you needed. This was foreign to us—just give it to us for free? With tears in our eyes we thanked the lady and held the projector tight as we headed home. As we were leaving she said, "God does answer prayer." We had this beautiful projector, but no filmstrips! We wondered, Why did you give us this fancy filmstrip projector which even has a cassette player which changes the slides on silent impulse? It was nice but not yet useful!

The Davis children were all attending a local Seventh Day Adventist School. One day we were invited to share testimony in their Chapel Service. We told stories of Europe and North Africa and the

children sang. It was our first ministry in America. They were very nice to us and even opened their clothing store for the children and Adria to get anything they needed—Free of Charge! They all gave us our first offering in the US—a \$50 check for doing their chapel. We felt so blessed and thankful to the Lord for this help. However, we had no bank account in which to deposit the check (and maybe not enough ID to cash it) so we held onto it!

A few days later someone told us about the Adventist Media Center in Thousand Oaks, California just over the hill from Simi Valley. We were able to visit it! It was like a dream come true! We felt we were in Artwork Heaven as far as the Bible is concerned. They had the most beautiful slides and filmstrips on Bible Prophecy we had ever seen. The entire books of Daniel and Revelation plus many Old and New Testament stories, so amazingly illustrated in color. It must have taken years to do all of this. And here they were at our fingertips! You see when we were in Europe all we had was one Hamlyn Children's Bible with illustrations!

It was difficult to decide which slides to buy. Alas, after an hour or so of discussion we decided to sign the entire check of \$50 over to them. We were so happy to have secured a little white box of slides I could hold in one hand. But there were so many more!

Then as we often did when "provisioning" food or other items we asked the man, "Do you have any slides that may be scratched or not up to par?" He said, "Oh, yeah, down at the warehouse there may be some." He directed us to a large building about ¼ mile from the center.

We met the gentleman, Mr Jay Dalton, who ran the warehouse and he asked us, "Are you looking for used or damaged slides?" We responded in the affirmative and he said, "Follow me." Within 20 minutes we had many large boxes of slides and filmstrips—so many it took the whole backseat of the car!

We thanked him as we drove home to peruse our catch. To our surprise and amazement there were several thousand slides... all of them in perfect condition. A local printer donated a light table so we could put the slides in order and even offered to print anything we needed for free! God is a God of miracles! Amongst the slides we found so many Bible Stories, prophecy of Revelation, Daniel and the life of Jesus! We were elated. We now had these beautiful materials to use to teach and train the children in God's Word and to share with others.

With the filmstrip projector we had been given the month before which also played the cassette to go with the film and advanced automatically—we were able to begin showing some of the many filmstrips complete with cassettes we had been given! Thank you Jesus for providing exceeding abundantly above all we could ask or think! Ephesians 3:20

(When we visited Simi Valley in 2016, we found the Seventh Day Adventists had relocated to Tennessee, I believe it was, and no one knew anything about their marvelous slides or filmstrips. They have 'em all stored away "somewhere" and have discontinued their use I was told on the phone! What!)

Now for Part II of the Dukane...."Stolen at Bible School"

Part II The Dukane...”Stolen at Bible School”

In November 1981 we took the motorhome we called “The Ark” and our team to a school in Lake Elsinore called “Bible Speaks”! We ministered all evening in Word and Song and closed with the Matthew 24 filmstrip and cassette using the Dukane projector. It was a live-in Bible School with dormitories, perhaps 75-100 students.

We left our projector on the table in the assembly room intending to take it down and put it away in the morning. Much to our surprise, the next morning we came to pack up our equipment and the projector, but it was not there—gone!

After inquiry we soon discovered it must have been stolen. The principal agreed we should report it stolen to the police, which we did. We had planned to leave the school and return to Anaheim where we were staying, but were delayed for a few days. We ate with the students and go to know a few of them.

Then on the last day, before leaving, we were surprised to find our Dukane projector returned by a police officer. Asked what had happened and how they found it, he related this story.

One of the students was walking down the breezeway to class when he happened to look into a dormitory room whose door was open. As he did a gentle breeze blew by parting a closet curtain and there he was the projector! Saying nothing to anyone, he told the Principal who notified the police who came and retrieved it for us.

We were so happy to have our projector with us as we left that Bible School. Sorry for the thief, he was suspended from the school.

Thank you Lord! “You are the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup and you maintain my lot.” You ever watch over us! Amen! Thank You for the gentle breeze and an alert student!

(I learned since from our trumpet player that it is better to put away all music and electric equipment after ministry even if it's late and you are tired.)

