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Supported by a diverse group of Christian Churches throughout New Zealand, who have come together to commemorate the 200-year anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in New Zealand and the beginning of a 'hope-filled' bicultural partnership with Māori. In this spirit, let's make New Zealand a more hope-filled place.


THE INVITATION

HOPE for all



See our nation's history through different eyes, and take a fresh look at the future.





A diverse group of churches throughout New Zealand have come together to gift these booklets to every home, to highlight some of the remarkable stories of our nation's early bicultural history, and the message that is still changing hearts and lives two centuries later... and it's a story with hope!

Two hundred years ago, a Ngāpuhi chief named Ruatara welcomed the Reverend Samuel Marsden to bring the Christian message to New Zealand.

What Ruatara had seen in Marsden and other sincere Christians he had become friends with, was a breed of men and women who were unlike most others. When the offer was made by them to share farming and building technologies with his people, along with their message of hope, Ruatara welcomed them.

Not all of our nation's history has been so positive, but this beginning was different. And 200 years later, the same message of hope is still changing hearts and lives.

Why? Because the idea that there might be a single, knowable Creator who loves us remains the greatest of all human hopes. Yet it's a possibility many seem to have given up on.

But what if such a God did exist? Maybe we are not alone, or merely accidents of chance in a random universe. Maybe there is a real hope that can bring meaning to our lives despite all of our challenges — and, just like Ruatara did, this could be something worth considering.



a welcoming
challenge

Whakarongo, whakarongo!

Whakarongo ki te karanga,
te whakahau a te Ariki, a
Īhu Karaiti, i mea "Kua tukua
katoatia ki ahau te mana o te
rangi o te whenua. Nā haere,
meinga hei akonga ngā iwi
katoa, iriiria i runga i te ingoa
o te Matua, o te Tama, o te
Wairua Tapu: ākona rātou
kia mau ki ngā mea katoa,
i whakahaua, e ahau ki a
koutou. Nā, ko ahau tēnā
hei hoa mō koutou i ngā rā
katoa, ā te mutunga rā
anō o te ao."

Christian humanitarian concern to see Māori protected from injustice led to the formalised involvement of the British Crown in New Zealand, through Māori chiefs signing the Treaty of Waitangi. Missionaries encouraged Māori to sign.

Unfortunately, as the number of European settlers steadily increased, the protections promised in the Treaty were only partially respected. Settlers were very eager to get their hands on Māori land. Ministers arrived with the settlers who did not have an empathy with the concerns of the Māori and early missionaries. Government policies became unjust. From 1859, this led to wars, especially in Taranaki and the Waikato.

While Māori and many of the missionaries protested, their protests were resented and ignored. Governor Grey even plotted against the much-respected missionary Henry Williams, and had him unjustly dismissed. As a result, after the 1860s the early missionary voice became largely silent.

The missionary and Christian humanitarian desire to protect Māori from exploitation, both through the Treaty and when it was later broken, is another little known part of our nation's history that should be remembered.

Inside front cover: 'Kennett Watkins. Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 7-A1818'. Used with permission.

Page 3: Jack Morgan, Marsden's first preaching at Oihi Bay, 1814. Auckland, Weekly News, 1964. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Used with permission.

Page 4: Clark, Russell Stuart 1905-1966: Samuel Marsden's service at Oihi Bay, 1814. Ref. B-077-006. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. Used with permission.

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STORIES FROM THEN AND NOW

Commemorating 200 years of the Christian message in Aotearoa.



When life isn't fair — Chief Ruatara's story

Ruatara and Marsden first met in 1806, but it was a trip back from England in 1809 that really cemented their friendship.

In 1809, Ruatara visited London to establish new relationships to serve his people. However, he was not even allowed off the ship in England! Having sailed halfway around the world with the hope of an audience with King George III, this young Māori chief was then laughed at by sailors, and locked in the bow of the ship. To add insult to injury, Ruatara was denied his wages for his service on the ship.

Sick and depressed, he was placed on a convict ship heading back to Australia. He was seriously ill, and it looked like he would soon die. This is when Samuel Marsden came across him and nursed him back to health.

Ruatara was always very grateful to the man who had saved his life. In 1810, Ruatara stayed for eight months with Marsden and his family on their farm at Parramatta, and for many more months on subsequent occasions.

While many Europeans were cruel to Māori, Ruatara found Marsden to be different. Marsden certainly had his faults, but he was respected by Māori. They called him 'Te Matenga', which means 'the head'.

Like his uncle Te Pahi before him (who had since passed away under tragic circumstances), Ruatara invited Marsden to begin a Christian mission in New Zealand to teach skills and impart knowledge. A few years later, Ruatara heard that Marsden felt the time was right to come to New Zealand, as had been discussed. In 1814, along with chiefs Hongi Hika and Korokoro, Ruatara went to meet Marsden in Australia.

Marsden, the chiefs and three missionary families (the Kings, Kendalls and Halls) arrived back at Rangihoua (now

One last story to remember

Many of New Zealand's early missionaries came from the same evangelical (Christian) and humanitarian community in England as the great William Wilberforce who as an MP led the charge against slavery. After his success, those standing with him looked for a new good cause. Some turned to the protection of the rights of 'native' peoples in lands where Europeans were settling.

Although small in number, the 'Aborigines Protection Society' and our own Church Missionary Society missionaries achieved considerable influence. They actively opposed proposals in Britain to open up New Zealand for European colonisation. There is no question that the intent was to protect Māori against exploitation.

The battle for justice

The missionaries' first focus was the good news of God's love for all people. This included the need for justice for all. Missionaries knew about the devastating results of colonisation for native peoples in every other colonised nation, including Australia (where many Aborigines were dispossessed or murdered).

Living the Christian life

1. **Read the Bible...** to learn God's ways and hear his personal messages to you.
2. **Talk to God (pray)...** because he is there, and he hears.
3. **Go to church...** to learn about God, and find friends who can sincerely encourage and support you. Find a church near you at www.10DayChallenge.co.nz
4. **Love and serve others...** in both words and actions, because this is what truly following Jesus looks like!



known as Oihi), in the north-east corner of the Bay of Islands on 22 December 1814.

In preparation for what would be the first-ever church service in New Zealand, Ruatara built a makeshift pulpit and arranged some old waka as seating. Ruatara had become familiar with how church buildings were usually set up from his extensive travels.

On the first Sunday, which was also Christmas Day, a crowd of about 400 Māori gathered to listen. Marsden spoke about the good news of peace and hope, and Ruatara explained what was said. Māori then performed a mass haka to honour the occasion.



The three families stayed on, forming the first European settlement in this land of Aotearoa. They were hosted by Ruatara's people. Māori and Pākehā lived alongside each other as neighbours and friends. This came about because of the mutual trust and respect developed by Marsden and Ruatara over many years.

The missionaries wanted to bring to Māori the good news of Christian faith. Among other things, Māori were eager to have better access to useful new European goods, tools and trade skills, which the missionaries were eager to share. This was where lots of things began in New Zealand, such as the first school, farming with sheep and cattle, and new crops such as wheat. The missionaries and their children became bilingual, and worked out how to put the Māori language into writing.

While the story of what happened at Oihi is little known, it was a very good beginning and one worthy of reflecting on.



What next:

Explore and discuss what the Christian faith is all about at www.10DayChallenge.co.nz

If you do not have internet, please write to us and we will post you a Gospel of Luke that you could read (10 Day Challenge, PO Box 6078, Brookfield, Tauranga 3146).

At '10 Day Challenge' you can also find a church in your region, to speak with someone about the Christian faith in more detail. Or, ask a Christian friend to join you for a weekly coffee to discuss your way through the '10 Day Challenge'.



For a more general discussion in which you can share your greatest hopes, see stories and videos, and find more information go to www.HopeProject.co.nz

PRAYER

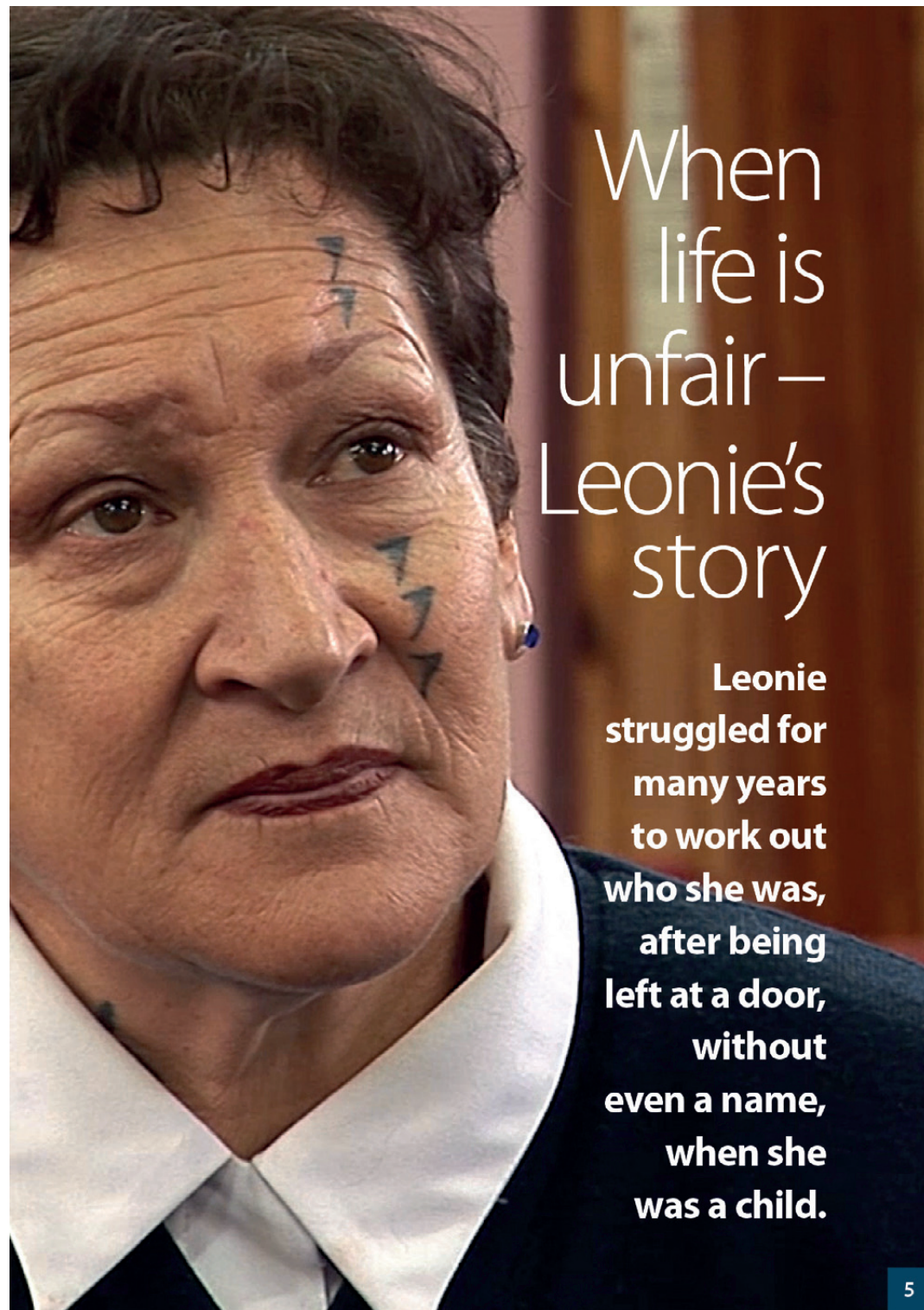
“ Heavenly Father, thank you for life, for this amazing planet I live on, and for this beautiful nation I live in. Thanks most of all for loving me, and sending your Son Jesus to take the consequences for the wrongs I have done. I admit I've done wrong and ask for your forgiveness. I choose to believe that Jesus died for me on the cross — and that you made me and love me.

I now commit to follow your ways in this life, and ask that you help me to understand them from the Bible. Help me to find a good church where I can learn more, and to find friends who will encourage me to live in a way that pleases you. Help me to love the people around me just as you have loved me — telling of your love, and showing it through the way I live.

Thank you again for what you have done for me, because you love me. Amen.

”

If you prayed this prayer, please go to
www.10DayChallenge.co.nz
or follow the suggestions on the next page.



When
life is
unfair –
Leonie's
story

**Leonie
struggled for
many years
to work out
who she was,
after being
left at a door,
without
even a name,
when she
was a child.**

She was given the name Leonie, and grew up in a foster home. She was both emotionally and sexually abused. But her pain was not just from the feeling of being unloved. Leonie, or Loll as she's now known, felt she had no identity and worth.

By 11, Loll was already playing with drugs. At 14 she ran away from home. By 16 she was not only addicted to a variety of drugs — she was a mother, and running away from her first abusive relationship. Her second marriage, which produced two more children, didn't turn out much better — and so her life continued.

Loll reached a point where she saw no path forward. Her only lifeline was a friend who encouraged her to not give up. Maybe her life could yet change for the better.

In 2007 Loll went on a drug rehab course with the Salvation Army. It was there that she encountered God's love in a way that she struggles to describe, except to say that God personally touched her heart. It left her with no doubt that there was a God, and that he loved her. It turned her life around!

Today, Loll serves with the Salvation Army, and says there is no comparison to how her life was before faith in Jesus. She knows who she is — a person who is created and loved by God, and her life has both meaning and hope.

However, not everything is easy. Because of her earlier life, her own children had upbringings not altogether different from her own. In 2011, one of her sons died from a drug overdose. She feels burdened by this, knowing that she is partly responsible for things that have happened in their lives. Yet even in this she

Sharing the message

By revisiting the story of hope that began here 200 years ago, it is our hope that we can reintroduce the authentic Christian message Marsden was welcomed to bring to New Zealand, in an equally open and respectful way.

Christians believe that God calls us to make a personal decision in response to this message.

What you decide to do is up to you.


There is an optional starting prayer on the next page.

Thanks for reading.

For reflection:

- Do you agree that a Creator God exists?
- What do you make of the evidence?





For these kinds of reasons
Christians believe that:

A good God exists!

He calls us to faith in Jesus.

He calls us to follow Jesus
and we each must choose.

What do you choose?

now looks to the future with hope. Because her own life has changed, she knows this could happen for any person who is willing to come to that place of humility, faith and surrender — to consider the possibility that a loving God might actually exist.

Through faith Loll discovered that there is a reason for having hope — and it's something that money, good looks, talent and success can't buy!



We don't all have experiences as dramatic as Leonie's — but we all have times when we ask, "Who am I?" "Why am I here?" "Why have things gone wrong?" "What is the ultimate meaning of life?"

Where can a dependable basis for hope be found when we've lost sight of it?

200 years after Marsden's arrival, the Christian message is still focussed on making New Zealand a more hope-filled place.

You can watch Leonie's story, in a compelling video online, along with many other stories of hope from around New Zealand. The following previews should help as a guide... go to: www.HopeProject.co.nz (see 'Real Video Stories').



As a Tauranga born Māori, Shadrach grew up experiencing racist attitudes towards his culture. But having wrestled with feelings of hurt and challenge, he found a remarkable reconciliation of faith, culture and community. See Shadrach's 'Real Video Story' at www.HopeProject.co.nz

The great hope

God did what we could not do for ourselves. In Jesus, God came to Earth and lived a perfect life — but he was mistreated and rejected by the religious leaders of that time. He was killed on a cross, but God's plan was that his death as an innocent man would pay for the wrongs of ALL who had ever lived. He then rose from death, just as he had said he would, as evidence that his words had been true. Justice had been served *and restored friendship with God was now possible*. We could be forgiven — but this forgiveness would only be ours if we chose friendship with God — because that is its purpose.

The a, b, c of forgiveness and friendship:

- a. **Humility** is needed to **admit** our need of God (which our pride does not want to do) and to ask for his help.
- b. **Faith** is needed to **believe** that God did reveal himself to us through Jesus, who died in our place, and then came back to life, taking the punishment we rightly deserved for our selfishness and sin.
- c. **Courage** is needed to **commit** to follow his ways for the rest of our lives.



Through these the key is turned and the door opened to restored friendship with God; our purpose in this broken world is redefined; and our eternal hope secured.

Because God is just
(which is a good thing)
he must see that every wrong
has its just consequence.
Because heaven is perfect,
imperfect people cannot go there —
otherwise it becomes just like Earth.
**And, as much as we might try,
no amount of good activity will
ever make us perfect either.**
We are stuck!
**BUT, because our Creator
loves us, he has a plan:**
he has provided the solution
to our problem.



Born with spina bifida, Rebekah has grown up with physical pain and disability. She has endured rejection and misunderstanding. Yet her story is a powerful testament to how strength and beauty can be found in spite of adversity. See Rebekah's 'Real Video Story' at www.HopeProject.co.nz



One of the greatest tragedies in life for a parent, is to lose a child to cancer. Jamie reflects on the life of his daughter, Carrie... the turmoil her sickness brought, but also the astonishing hope that it ignited. See Jamie's 'Real Video Story' at www.HopeProject.co.nz

**People throughout history have asked...
are we just accidents of chance on an
overpopulated planet — or were we
created with purpose? These are powerful
questions. What can give us hope?**



The background

While we all like to consider ourselves good people, none of us can deny that we can also be selfish, unkind and even unforgiving. Christianity makes sense of all this.

It explains that the human heart has become corrupted — as if infected with a disease. The Bible calls this 'sin'. It explains that we are also now *trapped* in this way of living. Even if we try, we *cannot* be perfect.

The problem is that our selfishness and sin (which we may think is a minor detail) is a big thing to our Creator, because he is *perfect*. Our selfishness, bitterness and greed separate us from him — and this consequence is eternal because we are spiritual beings. But there is hope!



A closer look at the message that changed the world

What Christians believe

The Christian message of hope has often been described as the message that has changed the world. It is a message of incomparable hope — but this hope only makes sense because of the faith's honest explanation of human nature.





A poll in NZ revealed that 46% of us believe in a God, 31% in a Higher Power, and 19% of us in neither of the above. The majority of New Zealanders consider themselves to be spiritual people.

Māori respond to the Christian message

Māori were already a spiritual people, who believed in many atua (gods). They did not embrace Christianity quickly, but from the 1830s, large numbers of Māori became Christian, and by the 1850s that had spread to the whole of New Zealand.

Māori were fascinated by the Bible (parts of the Bible were available in Te Reo from the late 1820s, and the whole New Testament by 1837).

Let's be encouraged.

We can't know everything that the future holds, but by appreciating all that was right and hopeful about our past, we can face the future with greater enthusiasm, excitement and, above all, hope.

For more, visit: www.HopeProject.co.nz



They also became attracted to the Christian message of peace. Dr Rangī Nicholson Te Raukawa explains how the Christian teaching on love for all your neighbours was a revolutionary concept for Māori, and offered an honourable 'out' from utu (revenge). When Māori embraced faith in Jesus, they accepted the principles of love and forgiveness, and put such practices as slavery, warfare, and cannibalism aside. The changes were dramatic, and the benefits clear. This explains why the Christian message was spread throughout New Zealand primarily by Māori (not Europeans), and in a very short space of time.

Many early missionaries were good examples of Christian living, and were respected by Māori. They cared for the sick and — at the risk of their lives — sometimes intervened in battles and called for peace. They travelled widely in dangerous conditions. They strongly opposed injustice toward Māori by Europeans, and continued to do the same after the Treaty signing in 1840 regarding the injustices by settlers and the Government.

By the 1850s, more than half of all Māori had embraced the Christian faith, all over New Zealand — a far higher percentage than among the Europeans at that time.



Why do so many people, from so many cultures, believe in a Creator God?

The main reason is because the world is so unbelievably amazing!



1. Scientists rejoice at the confirmation of an initial big bang — but every effect needs a cause.
2. The fine-tuning of the universe for carbon-based life (like us) reflects design.

An example of one who recognised this evidence

Professor Antony Flew was a highly respected philosopher and vocal atheist. He was a little like the 'Richard Dawkins' of the previous generation. He argued that one should assume atheism to be true until provable evidence of a God surfaces.

Then, in 2004 he unexpectedly stated that, in keeping with his lifelong commitment to go where the evidence leads, he now believed in a God. He said, *"I have been persuaded that it is simply out of the question that the first living matter evolved out of dead matter and then developed into an extraordinarily complicated creature."*^[1]



DNA had *"shown, by the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce life, that intelligence must have been involved."*^[2]

Flew received criticism for this, but was not alone in his conclusion. The great complexities that modern science is discovering are causing many to reconsider previous assumptions.

[1] An interview with Flew titled 'My Pilgrimage from Atheism to Theism' at <http://www.biola.edu/antonyflew/index.cfm> Gary R. Habermas, *Philosophia Christi* Vol. 6, No. 2 (Winter 2004).

[2] Flew passed away in April 2010. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/culture-obituaries/books-obituaries/7586929/Professor-Antony-Flew.html> He was not a Christian believer — but concluded as a scientist that a God of some kind must exist.



Did someone say encyclopedia?

Example 2: Encoded encyclopedias

Where does the information come from to build these machines? Our bodies have an 'assembly instruction manual'. It's called our DNA — and it would take 1000 books of 1000 pages each (with 3000 letters per page) just to write it out.

The challenge is, we all know that encyclopedias don't write themselves. It takes intelligence to create intelligence!



THE DISCOVERY THAT THE UNIVERSE HAS BEEN FINELY TUNED

Our planet is just the right distance from the sun for water to exist as a liquid — and us as flesh and blood. A bit closer and we'd burn. A bit farther away, and we'd freeze. Furthermore, if our orbit wasn't a near-perfect circle — the temperature of the whole planet would be going up and down so much we couldn't live here! By the beginning of the year 2000, scientists already had a list of over 120 specifically 'tuned' things like this needed for any life to exist.

Even Physicist Paul Davies, who is committed to a belief that there is no God, says, "...the impression of design is overwhelming".

3. Science cannot explain how life first began. Too many 'miracles of chance' would be needed at exactly the same place and point in time.
4. As if our biology wasn't already complex enough, scientists have now discovered 'machinery' inside cells, more complicated than could have been imagined.
5. The complex nature of our thinking, rationality, emotions, appreciation of beauty, the existence of morality etc... all suggest design.

Tell me more!

What was that about 'machinery' inside our bodies and cells?

Just as a house must have had a builder, and a meal a cook, to many people the complexity of the world around us demands the existence of a super-intelligent creator. This world, and everything in it, is simply amazing!

Example 1: Tiny machines

Cells were once thought to be quite simple, but high-powered microscopes changed this thinking.

For example, the Kinesin is a two-legged, two-armed, transporter machine (a 'courier') that transports spare parts inside the cell to wherever they are needed. It pulls its cargo by the shortest path from point A to point B — and if the shortest path is somehow blocked it knows the next shortest path and takes it. No one knows how it knows where to go — or even how it gets the message to pick up the spare part in the first place. It collects these spare parts from other machines that have just as miraculously made them.

When not working, the Kinesin goes into 'sleep mode' so as to conserve energy in our bodies.

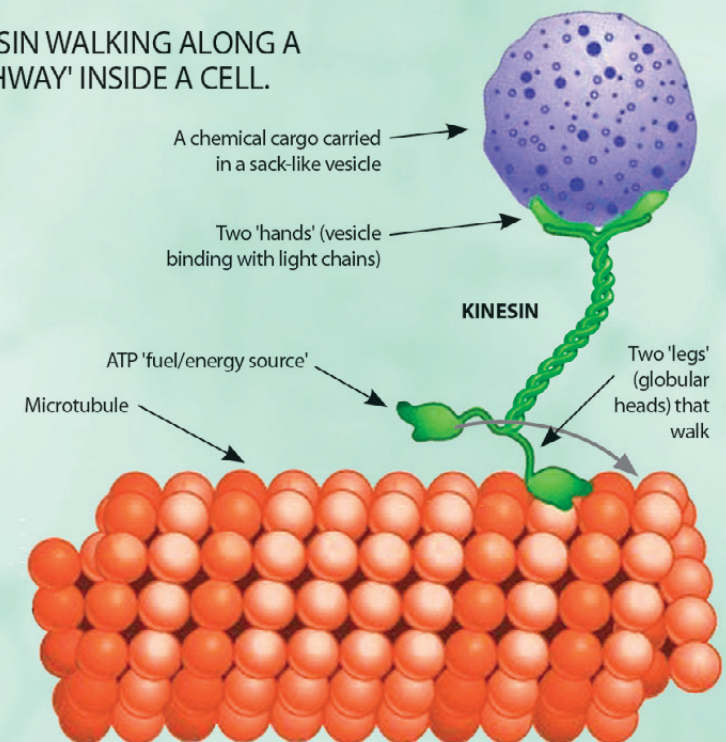
Let's imagine that 10 Kinesins are needed to collect and deliver replacement parts to a particular part of a cell, 9 will

climb on top of 1 and then go back into sleep mode, so it is only the 1 headless Kinesin that uses energy to do the walking to the starting point.

By the way, the Kinesin can take 100 steps per second, and is so small that it needs to take 125,000 steps to cover 1 millimetre!

It's mind-blowing technology!

KINESIN WALKING ALONG A 'PATHWAY' INSIDE A CELL.



It turns out that our bodies are run by a network of thousands of miniature machines like this. Can chance events produce such complex machines?