



Magazine New Wine®

Help for reaching our destiny in God.

February 1981

Perspective for a Decade:
a Higher Vision



As you are aware, for the last two years we have been in the midst of a computer transition that has proved highly successful. We have made great gains from the time back in early 1979 when we reported having serious difficulties with our new computer. After having rectified these past problems, we

tem, we will be able to serve our readers more efficiently and faithfully.

Because these expenses are above our normal operating budget, we are asking you to help us with this additional obligation of \$36,600.00. Now to many, that may seem like an extraordinary

Administrator's Letter

Dear Reader,

Just the other day on the CBS Morning News, I heard the depressing report that only 19% of American families can afford an average priced home of \$61,000.00. Compared to a year ago when 29% of the American people could have afforded that same home, that is quite a drop.

At *New Wine Magazine*, we have also been facing the continual challenge of increasing cost. At the present time we are publishing *New Wine* with an editorial staff which is 15% smaller than last year. We are gratified to report, also, that our readers have been extremely faithful with their contributions and that their generosity, coupled with our efforts to cut expenses wherever possible, has allowed us to remain in the black this year.

But, although our finances have been adequate to cover our normal operating expenses, we have found it necessary to contact our readers concerning a substantial financial commitment we are about to undertake. At our most recent Board of Directors' meeting, we made a significant decision to upgrade our computer system. The directors have asked that I contact you for both prayer and financial support.

now find it necessary to streamline and expand our present system.

Although we did extensive research with a variety of computer suppliers back in 1978, we ended up purchasing a computer system that was too small for our purposes. For the past two years, we have been working diligently with it to squeeze out every available ounce of capacity. But today, because of our growth, we are at a place where we must add both additional equipment and programming. With these additional purchases, we will be better able to serve and stay in touch with the people who are now receiving *New Wine* and *Tape of the Month* and those who *will* be in the future.

The equipment we must purchase is a third "disc drive." This component, a major piece of computer hardware, stores the names, addresses and responses of our readers. When installed, it will enable us to maintain and service a mailing list of over 200,000 subscribers. The cost of the additional disc drive is \$17,500.00.

In addition, our plans call for contracting with our current computer supplier, Transaction Technology of Decatur, Georgia, for new and essential programming which will cost \$19,100.00. With the new disc drive and added programming of our computer sys-

tem, we will be able to serve our readers more efficiently and faithfully. But to those of us who have a working knowledge of this large and complex 240 million byte system, the cost is quite reasonable. The alternative is to not utilize the technology available to us and, as a result, incur significantly greater salary expenses that would be far in excess of our computer costs.

It is our hope that we will have sufficient funds to underwrite this commitment. We also hope that we will be successful in raising this amount so we can avoid the expense of installment purchasing with its high finance and interest charges.

Please help us, with both prayers and financial support, in this endeavor which will help us to serve you and all our readers better, enabling us to more effectively serve more and more people each month through *New Wine Magazine*.

Please note on your check "computer expansion" and include it in the postage-paid envelope in the center of this magazine.

We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

George P. Gundlach
Administrator
New Wine Magazine

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This Month

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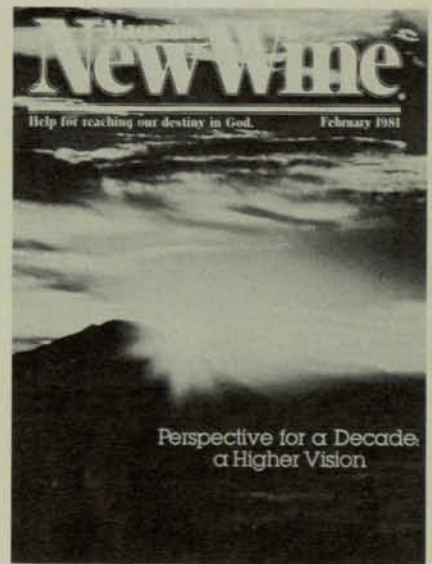
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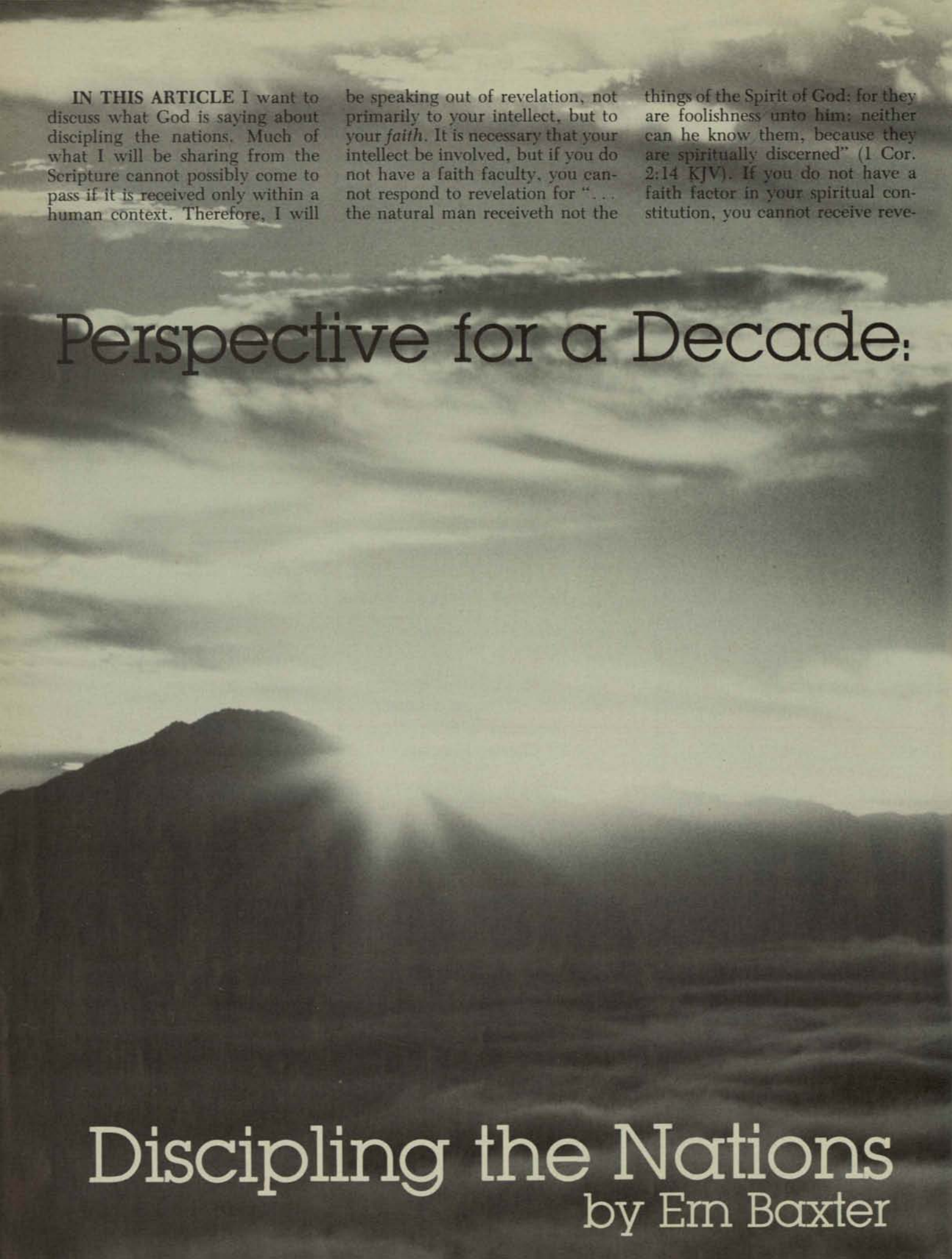


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IN THIS ARTICLE I want to discuss what God is saying about discipling the nations. Much of what I will be sharing from the Scripture cannot possibly come to pass if it is received only within a human context. Therefore, I will

be speaking out of revelation, not primarily to your intellect, but to your *faith*. It is necessary that your intellect be involved, but if you do not have a faith faculty, you cannot respond to revelation for "... the natural man receiveth not the

things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14 KJV). If you do not have a faith factor in your spiritual constitution, you cannot receive reve-

Perspective for a Decade:

Discipling the Nations

by Ern Baxter

lation.

The purpose of this article is to reveal the ultimate reality of what God is saying about the nations and how He intends to deal with them. But to understand God's dealings with nations, we first need to know something about prophets. Prophets are the divine voice of God's ultimate authority to the nations of the earth. One such voice was Jeremiah, and in his writings we find this passage which defines the prophetic role:

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."

"See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:4-5, 10 NAS).

Jeremiah had a commission from God, and this made the words the prophet spoke matters of ultimate importance. God said to Jeremiah, "I have chosen you to be an overseer of the nations. I am going to channel My word to you and through you, and what you say as My delegated voice in the earth will ultimately affect the destiny of nations."

The nations, then, are ultimately subject to the redemptive and judgmental word of God's delegated vice-regents, *the prophets*, of whom Jesus is chief. The final authority in the earth is not the United Nations, nor the Vati-

can, nor Washington, D.C., nor any other headquarter of earthly rule. The source of ultimate authority is the Word of God, which God channels through men of His choosing—and you and I have to receive that revelation by faith.

It is God's purpose, by His word transmitted through chosen men, to create a community of prophetic authority which will be

His sovereign right to govern all of His creation. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1 KJV). The world belongs to God. God creates nations; they don't just happen. Psalm 86:9 says, "*All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name*" (KJV).

The source of ultimate authority is the Word of God, which God channels through men of His choosing.

the delegated authority of God in the earth. This prophetic community must speak to the nations, ministering to them, healing them, and bringing them under the rule of Jesus Christ. We are a responsible part of that prophetic community which is informed by the Word, instructed by the Word and inspired by the Word.

The Word of God is ultimate. The Word is the final court of appeal in all matters pertaining to doctrine and conduct; it is the final authority in all matters of what God is like, what man is like, what nations are like, and where history is going. Therefore, in this article, I want to present from the Word biblical data on nations which will help us know how God regards the nations.

The Providential Work of God

First of all, I want to discuss the providential work of God, which is

God has creational and proprietary right to all nations because He made them. They didn't come about by some fortuitous concurrence of atoms—they are the product of God's creative, providential purpose.

Job 12:23 says, "He makes the nations great, then destroys them; He enlarges the nations, then leads them away." In other words, God is the God *who determines history*. History is not happenstance. To the Christian, history is tied in with the Alpha and the Omega. Behind all history is His unerring purpose.

The philosophy of history that we as Christians must embrace is one that sees God as the God of history, who works all things after the counsel of His own will. I don't believe in second causes. I believe that when history winds up, the entire universe will join in a paean of praise that will echo throughout the corridors of infinity and declare that God is God, that beside Him there is none other and that He has done all things according to His will. When history comes to the end of all of its elaborate perplexities, historians will look back with wonder as they see the pattern of infinite intricacy that God has woven through the centuries. As Psalm 22:28 says, "For the kingdom is the Lord's,



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and *He rules over the nations.*"

If you do not believe God rules the nations, you might as well not even try to respond to the great commission to disciple all nations. We must know beyond a doubt that we are part of the prophetic community, and that we share in the anointing of Jeremiah for the pastoral care of the nations. We are not a band of slaves and underlings wandering through life aimlessly; we have the dignity and poise of the sons of God and we are the delegates of high heaven. We are the people of God destined to be co-rulers with King Jesus. We are the men and women through whom, under God, history is going to be made.

You didn't choose yourself when you were converted to Jesus Christ; you were called like Lazarus was called out of the tomb. Dwight L. Moody said that if Jesus had just said, "Come

participating part of a prophetic community that recognizes that God is exercising His rulership over the nations. The God of time, space and history is the One who providentially rules the nations.

God's Redemptive Role

Now that we have seen God's providential role in the earth, we want to examine His redemptive role as it relates to the nations. In Psalm 67:1-2 we read:

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us; may your ways be known on earth, your salvation among all the nations (NIV).

God's salvation for the nations must come out of the blessing that rests upon the redeemed community. The prophetic community is the instrument of God to bring about the salvation of the nations.

We are not a band of slaves and underlings wandering through life aimlessly . . . We are the people of God destined to be co-rulers with King Jesus.

forth," instead of "Lazarus, come forth," the whole graveyard would have come forth. Every man and woman who names the name of Christ is the result of a direct, sovereign, regenerative command of God, who stood at the tomb of your spiritual deadness and cried your name. And you came stumbling out in your grave clothes and stood there mumbling through your face cloth until godly men came, unbound you, and let you see light.

What I want to accomplish in this article is to liberate you to a sense of your destiny, to make you see that you are something more than a little mob of people waiting to die and go to heaven. We are here to give light to the earth, to salt the world and, under God, to make history. We are a vital, par-

This is based on the promise in Genesis 18:17-18 where God spoke to Abraham:

And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?"

God's promise to Abraham was that in him all the nations would be blessed, and the provision for that promise is in the witness of the prophetic community. You and I are part of the prophetic community that is to bring the nations to the feet of King Jesus. We are the corporate Jeremiah. We are the community of the prophetic word, and as a community we are today what Jeremiah and the other

prophets were to God in their day. A prophet of God is a man who stands in the counsel of God and speaks for Him. A prophetic community is a community of people who stand in the tradition of the prophetic word, who speak that word and act that word on behalf of God.

I believe that today God is speaking through the Church of Jesus Christ as a prophetic community to all the earth. God's purpose is to save the nations. I have a hard time handling the exclusivism and narrowness many Christians seem to have, because those attitudes contradict the very heart of the gospel: "God so loved *the world* that He gave His only begotten son . . ." "Go into *all the world* and make disciples of all the nations . . ." "Jesus Christ tasted death for *every man* . . ." When Jesus bled His life out on Calvary, ascended into the presence of God and sat down at the right hand of God as Prince and Savior, He reached down and wrote His signature in bold script across the earth. He said, "It is mine. I have redeemed it. I claim *every nation*." For the Father had said to Him, "Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thy inheritance" (Ps. 2:8). Jesus Christ is not savior of just a small select group—His signature is written in characters of redeeming blood over *every nation*, and He will not be content until the earth sings in unison an anthem declaring that Jesus Christ is Lord.

What is the ultimate result of this redemption? Let's look at Isaiah 2:1-2:

The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. Now it will come about that in the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it.

This scripture is also speaking to

our faith out of revelation, that we may receive that which the God who makes history and whose signature is Alpha and Omega has spoken to the prophets as infallible. God has declared that He is going to put His government above

revelation out of faith and say, like Mary, "Be it done, Lord, according to Your word."

A Covenant Nation

In order for God's kingdom to be established among all nations,

God...is going to put His government above all other governments, and the nations are going to bow down before it.

all other governments, and the nations are going to bow down before it. As certainly as the Queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the earth to see Solomon's temple, so God is going to bring nations to bow their knees before King Jesus at the trumpet voice of God's prophetic community. This is what God is going to do, simply because He is God and He said He would do it.

When that great, imposing and impressive angel stood before Mary, a little peasant virgin, and told her she was going to have a son, she responded in a very normal, human way. "How can these things be, seeing I have not known a man?" The angel replied, "The power of the Holy One shall overshadow you and that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Mary still did not understand the mechanics of it—she could not recall a single instance where anyone had ever had a child apart from cohabitation with a male. But even though she didn't understand, she responded to that revelation by faith, saying, "Be it unto me according to thy word."

In the same way, if God says there will be a time when the power of the Holy Spirit will come upon the nations and that He will do a work in them and they will come streaming to the government of God, then we should believe it. We don't know how it will happen, but we should respond to that

we must understand our corporate role as God's covenant nation. In Exodus 19:5-6 God says to the nation of Israel:

"Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession *among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine*; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.

God's purpose for Israel was that they be the prophetic, corporate voice to the world, but they failed. Israel was God's covenant nation—He walked with them and protected them—and yet they continuously turned away from Him. Scripture records how Jesus looked over Jerusalem and lamented, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem! *How oft* would I have gathered you?" Into those two little words, "how oft," is written page after page of heart-breaking history as God stood back and watched Israel, the darling of His heart, repeatedly go astray and turn their back on Him, setting up stone idols and hydra-headed monsters to worship in place of the one true Jehovah. "How oft would I have gathered you. Again and again I would have brought you back, but because of your stubbornness, the time has come when My patience is exhausted and My moral obligation demands that I bring judgment." And in Matthew 21:43, we read the awful words

which complete His judgment:

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it.

I want it to be absolutely clear that I do *not* mean that God's covenant with ethnic Israel has been set aside. What I am saying is that the fulfillment of that covenant may be different from what we supposed. When Jesus told the representatives of Israel that the kingdom given to them as the prophetic community in the earth would be taken from them and given to a nation producing the fruits thereof, the nation He spoke of is clearly defined as the redeemed people of God, those who believe the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is God's ultimate gift, God's ultimate word, God's ultimate redeemer, and every Jew or Gentile who comes to God will come to Him through Jesus Christ. God has formed the new nation out of Jews and Gentiles alike, breaking down the middle wall of partition, making one new body under the headship of Jesus Christ. *That* has become the nation with which God is dealing redemptively and prophetically, and it is into *that* nation that ethnic Israel, in the hour of her destiny, will come for salvation. Israel shall be saved with the same kind of salvation that you and I have. They will repent, they will be baptized, they will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and they will come pouring into the predominately Gentile people of God, and the world will be enriched at the combination of those two entities, bound together in Jesus' blood and His Spirit.

The Ultimate Victory

All history is part of the majestic unfolding of God's ultimate victory, and in conclusion, we will consider that ultimate victory and its implications for us today. The Father, speaking to Jesus, said:

Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thy inheritance (Ps. 2:8).

That Jesus asked for and received that inheritance is clear from His declaration in Matthew 28:18: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." In light of this authority He then issued a command to us: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." (vs. 19). I believe that He meant just that. It is a shame that some Christians have misinterpreted this high mandate, causing it to become a matter of simply handing out a few tracts to salve their consciences. Nevertheless, there is a mandate resting on us as the prophetic nation that requires us to *disciple the nations* of the earth.

By faith, we must respond in a practical way to the command Jesus has given us to go and disciple the nations. Here are six practical suggestions for responding in faith to that revelation.

1. *Think biblically of the nations.* Not politically, not economically, not culturally, not sociologically, but biblically. View the nations as your inheritance *and your responsibility*, because God rules them and loves them.

2. *Contribute to the unity of the witnessing prophetic community.* A scripture relevant to this is Jeremiah 4:1-2:

"If you will return, O Israel," declares the Lord, "Then you should return to Me. And if you will put away your detested things from My presence, And will not waver, and you will swear, 'As the Lord lives,' in truth, in justice, and in righteousness; Then the nations will bless themselves in Him, and in Him they will glory."

Let us do everything in our power to bring about the restoration of the redeemed community. Let us work avidly and industriously at breaking down the causes of disunity, for only when the redeemed prophetic community functions in

the purity of its calling will the nations hear the trumpet call of the gospel.

3. *Consider ways to address the nations.* We need to realize that we are not just a little group of nobodies. We stand in the tradition of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zephaniah, Malachi and all the other prophets. We are members of a prophetic community that is destined to speak to world leaders, and we have to consider ways to address the nations. Pray for your leaders so they will know how to speak a word into the totality of national and international life.

4. *Proclaim truth as it relates to every area of life.* I am glad to see Christians starting to speak into

tion of what it has forgotten, we stand in the true tradition of the prophetic community.

6. *Engage in regular and unceasing community prayer for all men and all leaders.* You may want to reject much of what I have said, but you cannot reject the apostolic command to us as the prophetic witnessing community when we come together:

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior (1 Tim. 2:1-3).

The Word of God declares that all nations shall come to Him, and we are the prophetic instrument to help bring this to pass.

the areas of economy, education, culture and politics. The Lordship of Jesus Christ extends much further than just over a soul that is going to heaven or hell. It reaches over the entire creation which needs to function under the government of God in a time-space world. Let us proclaim truth as it relates to every area of life.

5. *Remind the nations of what they have forgotten.* Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked will return to Sheol, Even all the nations who forget God." It is our responsibility to remind the nations of what they have forgotten. I am grateful that in the recent election there were men with moral courage who stood up and, under the fire of the nasty darts of critics, boldly and straightforwardly said to America, "You have forgotten the sanctity of human life. You have forgotten the sanctity of the human body. You have forgotten God's right to declare His own laws. *You have forgotten.*" When we remind our na-

Until we respond to this apostolic mandate, we have no right to criticize our nation. We have no right to scorn the corrupt politician. We have no right to complain about the evil conduct of government officials until we have wrapped these men around with the prayer of an authoritative prophetic community. Until we have corporately importuned God to release righteousness in high places, we have no right to lift our voices in one single syllable of criticism.

The time has come for us to be more than just a soul-saving force. The time has come for us to be a nation-saving force—a world-saving force! We are to become the prophetic community that represents the God of the prophets, declaring and enacting His eternal Word and discipling the nations. The Word of God declares that all nations shall come to Him, and we are the prophetic instrument to help bring this to pass. ♥

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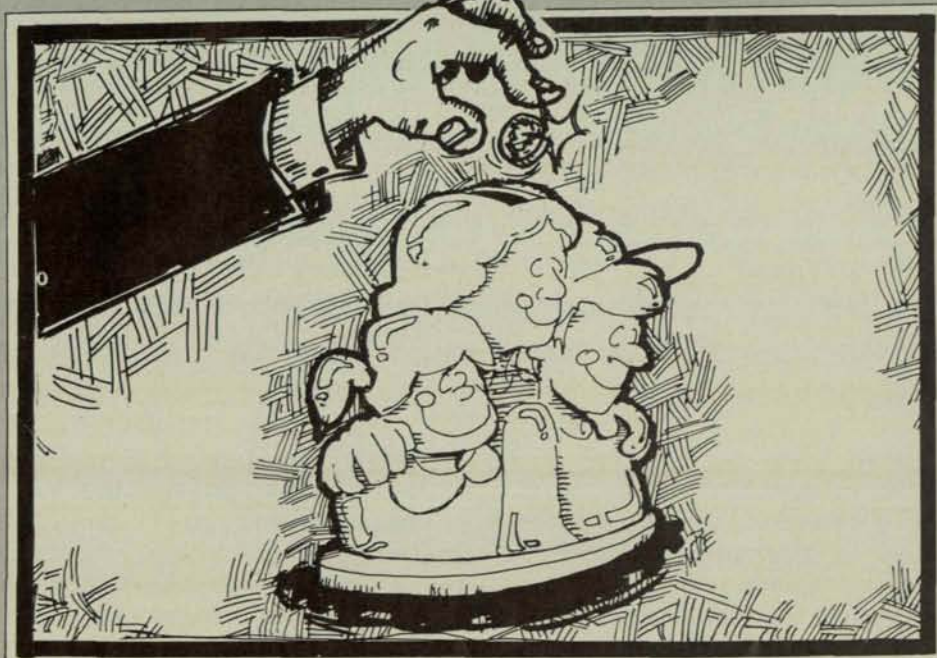
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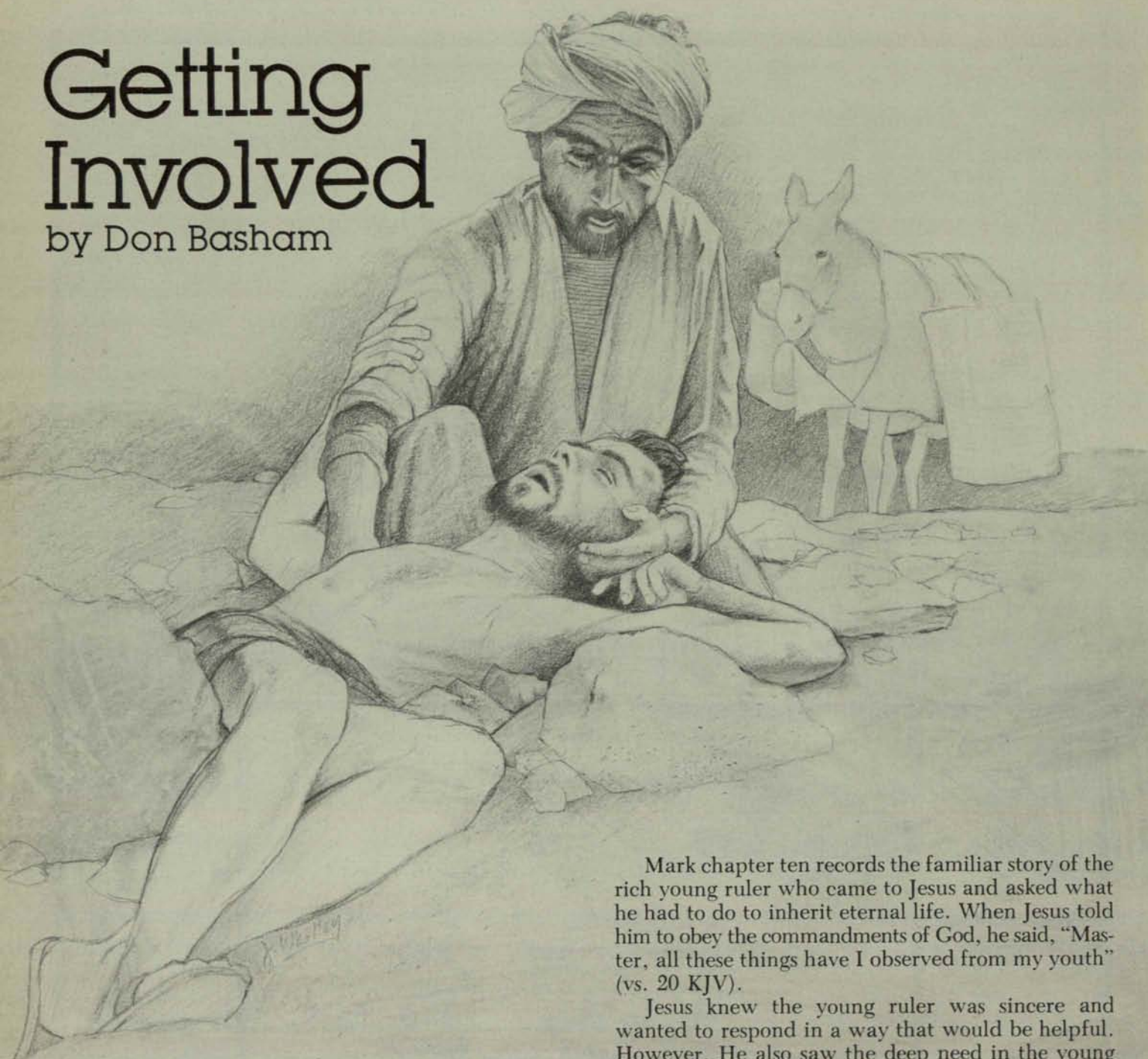


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Perspective for a Decade:

Getting Involved

by Don Basham



IN THIS ARTICLE, we want to address the question, "What is God saying to us about getting involved?" By way of introducing this subject, I want to examine two separate occasions in Scripture when two different men asked Jesus the same question: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The response Jesus made in each case was different, because the men had two different problems.

Mark chapter ten records the familiar story of the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and asked what he had to do to inherit eternal life. When Jesus told him to obey the commandments of God, he said, "Master, all these things have I observed from my youth" (vs. 20 KJV).

Jesus knew the young ruler was sincere and wanted to respond in a way that would be helpful. However, He also saw the deep need in the young man's life, and spoke directly to it.

One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions (vss. 21-22).

The obstacle to this rich young ruler's becoming involved in the way God would have had him involved was that he was wealthy. He was unable to give up his money in order to enter into the kind of life and ministry that God had for him. Though he was sincere in asking the question, he was incapable of making the commitment that would have enabled him to fulfill God's will for his life.

In Luke chapter ten, we read about the other man who asked this same question, a lawyer who was actually trying to trick Jesus. "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, 'Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' (vs. 25). This time Jesus didn't quote the law as He had with the rich young ruler, but instead posed a question of His own to the lawyer: 'What is written in the law? How readest thou?' (vs. 26). The lawyer answered with just one verse from the Old Testament:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

And he [Jesus] said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, *And who is my neighbor?*" (vss. 27-29).

Basically the lawyer was asking, "To whom am I to be committed, and to what extent am I to be committed to them?" That question is the basis for our understanding of what God is saying to us about getting involved.

In answering the lawyer, Jesus told the parable of the man going from Jerusalem to Jericho who was attacked by thieves. They robbed him and wounded him, and left him half dead. After a priest and a Levite had passed by on the other side of the road to avoid him, a Samaritan totally involved himself in the man's care.

Completing the parable, Jesus then asked the lawyer, "Which now of these three thinketh thou

was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" When the lawyer answered, "He that showed mercy on him," Jesus simply replied "Go and do thou likewise" (vss. 36-37).

Who Was the Neighbor?

The four characters Jesus chose for the parable give us real insight into what it means to be involved. The first character that Jesus mentions was the man who fell among thieves, was stripped of his raiment,

...to love your neighbor...you must get involved in what...has caused him damage or difficulty in his life.

wounded and left for dead. He was a travelling businessman, who one moment was a healthy citizen carrying out his profession, and the next moment through no fault of his own was a casualty. He fell victim to a crime—he was mugged.

I just want to observe in passing that the world is full of victims. We are surrounded by victims, and from time to time each of us is victimized in some way. Not only are individuals victimized, but looking at the status of America today, we see the family, the church, and the nation all have been victimized. To be significantly involved then means that we somehow must become involved with those who are victims. Jesus is saying that to love your neighbor means that you must get involved in what is hurting him, or what has caused him damage or difficulty in his life.

After the victim in the parable comes the second character: the priest. In Jesus' day, no one was more important than the priest, who performed two major functions. First, he led the worship in the temple and conducted all other temple ministry. Secondly, he ministered God's word to the people. Obviously then, this priest who was going down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was a man with an important ministry. We might even say he was one of the charismatic leaders of his day—a man faithful to his profession and sold out to God. He had probably been away at all kinds of seminars. Very likely, he hadn't been home in weeks, and perhaps he even had another week of meetings to go, responding to that powerful call that is familiar to all of us who have been in ministry: "Brother, we need you over here." More than likely, he was on his way to the Jericho city-wide charismatic convention, hurrying to get to the meeting on time, looking forward to ministering to thousands. But suddenly, here was this casualty confronting him in the middle of the road. It put him in the very difficult situation of

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having to make a decision between his public ministry and this private mess.

You can almost hear what he was thinking. "But after all, I am the main speaker! The success of the convention depends upon me being there! They scheduled me nine months ago, and much prayer and fasting has gone into the preparation for the convention." So he made his choice. He passed by on the other side.

The third character in the parable was the Levite. Now the Levite was also a religious man. He wasn't a bible teacher like the priest, nevertheless, as a Levite in Jesus' time, he had responsibility for caring for the temple and looking after other religious concerns. The Levite was on his way to the Jericho charismatic convention as well. He wasn't the main speaker, he was chairman of the planning committee for the convention. He was to preside at the meeting that night and take up the offering. The financial success of the convention was probably at stake, resting upon his ability to raise an offering. But he also was suddenly confronted with the same difficult choice. "If I stop to help this wounded traveler, and get involved in the poor guy's problem, obviously I won't be able to get to the convention on time. And if I'm not there to run things, the convention probably won't meet its budget." So he too made his choice. He passed by on the other side.

The fourth character to enter the parable is the Samaritan. In Jesus' time, the Samaritans in Israel were an outcast group, a cult, and a despised minority. The Israelites hated the Samaritans so much, in fact, that they would detour around Samaritan cities. So it is significant that Jesus, after describing how the religious leaders of the day ignored the man in need, makes the Samaritan the hero of the story.

The priest and the Levite had ambition, but the Samaritan had compassion, for when he found the wounded man, he *became involved*. What he did was lay aside his own plans, his own schedule and his own interests. He reordered his priorities and involved himself in that man's misery.

And it *cost* him. He went to him and bound up his wounds (he got his hands all dirty and bloody); he poured in oil and wine (took resources that were his—the oil and the wine—and expended them on the man's behalf). Then he set him on his own beast, brought him to the inn, purchased a room for him and spent the night taking care of him. Maybe the Samaritan was also on his way to attend the charismatic convention in Jericho, but he missed it. Instead, he spent the night with the man, helping him through a crisis.

The next morning, after paying the bill, the Samaritan said an interesting thing to the innkeeper: "Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, *when I come again*, I will repay thee." Do

you know what that indicates? It indicates that the commitment the Samaritan made to this victim was a *continuing* commitment. Instead of a one-time effort, the Samaritan committed himself on an ongoing basis to this man's welfare. Not only did he do everything he could for the man when he found him, but he also took him to a place where he could receive additional help. Even then he said, "I know my responsibility is not over. I'll come back and minister to him again and continue to look after him until he is better." *He committed himself to continuing care.*

The priest and the Levite were religious men who had reputations, ministries, vast public responsibilities, and probably correct theologies. The Samaritan was an outcast belonging to a despised minority—he may have had unorthodox theology, but he had a covenant heart. That covenant heart got him involved in another man's misery.

What Jesus was telling the lawyer was this: "If you want to know how to get involved, and how to

The priest and the Levite had ambition, but the Samaritan had compassion. . . . He reordered his priorities and involved himself.

have eternal life, go and involve yourself with a continuing commitment to people with problems—people who have been victimized."

Likewise, if we are going to be involved in the way that God desires, we will be involved with people who have problems. If there is one message that we have learned as God has moved us beyond charisma into covenant, it is that to be involved in covenant is to be involved with people and their problems.

Involved with Everybody

What is God saying to us, on a broader scale, about getting involved? First, He is saying that involvement means we must ultimately be involved with everybody—not just our group. I want to make it clear that my commitment to the principles of covenant that we are implementing is as total as I know how to make it. I trust that all of us are as committed as we know how to be to the principles of covenant, to the move of God as we understand it and to the establishment of the government of God in the earth. I have no doubt at all that our understanding and application of covenant relationships is in the central purpose of God. Even so, we must realize that those "in covenant" are just a part of the millions in the whole Body of Christ who have made

a covenant with Jesus Christ. Somehow we're going to be involved with them, because we are all a part of the same covenant.

Oftentimes we fail to think about the family of God the way God thinks about His family. When He looks down at His family, He sees a lot more people than just those in our particular group. Though we are a *part* of the family of God, *God* is the one who adds to the family, and He has added millions of people who do not yet understand what we're doing; many, for that matter, who even feel that we are opposing God's purpose. But somehow we have to maintain contact with those who don't understand us, even those who criticize us. Somehow we must remember we have a responsibility to love all those other brothers and sisters in Christ, even those we are estranged from and who don't understand us.

A poem by one of America's great poets, Edwin Markham (1852-1940) illustrates the attitude we need. Markham had a business partner who defrauded him and, unable to forgive the man for the hurt caused him by the fraud, Markham found that he had lost his inspiration and could no longer write poetry. After struggling with the sense of betrayal for a long period of time, he was finally able by God's grace to forgive the fellow who had cheated him. Immediately after he forgave the man he sat down and wrote this famous little couplet entitled "Outwitted."

He drew a circle that shut me out,
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But love and I had the wit to win,
For we drew a circle that took him in.

Though we be called rebels or heretics, somehow we will have to continue to draw a big circle of love around those who do not understand us. Ultimately we're going to have to get involved with everyone who names the name of Jesus Christ.

God's Supernatural Intervention

Another reminder God is giving us about getting involved is that it takes a combination both of what we can do and what God can do. Most of us came into the things of God through the charismatic renewal and during that phase our primary mentality was vertical. We concentrated on what God could do *for us* through miracles, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and other wonderful evidences of His love. It was a very valid and precious vertical emphasis. Then a few years ago, God began to direct our attention away from the vertical to the horizontal, causing us to think about how we relate to one another and our covenant with each other. We tended to turn somewhat from our dependency upon the supernatural power of God to focus our at-

tention on the necessity of working things out in our relationships. We had come rightly to see that the miracles of God were not the answer for everything, and there were some things that God wanted us to work out in terms of relationship. We could do it only by His grace, but in painful human ways.

We came to appreciate the necessity for working things out horizontally, and this has been a priority through the years of covenant, not only among families—husbands and wives, parents and kids—but between covenant brothers and sisters, learning how to deal with one another with honesty and openness. But God is showing us that it's not just one or the other, it's *both*. Just as we tend to go too far depending upon the miraculous and the quick way of escape, we may also tend to go too far in the horizontal, expecting to be able to handle everything by working out our relationships. But that has its limitations as well, as many of us have painfully found out.

Some years ago, I was invited to a covenant church in another part of the country to teach about deliverance. After my message there, the minister stood up and said, "We really appreciate Brother Basham coming and telling us about all those wonderful things that used to happen; but isn't it great now that we're related that we don't have to depend on deliverance?" I went home from the meeting more than a little upset. Do you know why? Because it's impossible to make covenant with a demon. For all that relationships can do, there are still times when we need the dramatic, supernatural intervention of God to set some situations straight. God is reminding us that getting involved on earth takes a combination both of what *we* can do and what *He* can do. It's not just the vertical nor just the horizontal—it's both.

A Wartime Mentality

Another point the Lord wants us to remember about getting involved is that we need a wartime

...getting involved on earth takes a combination both of what we can do and what He can do.

mentality to wage the spiritual warfare that we are in. When World War II broke out with the bombing of Pearl Harbor, I was a teenager in high school. I went to work in a strategic war plant that made ammunition and airplane parts while my older brothers went into the service. One of the things I remember most about the war, for all its tragedy, was its unifying effect upon the country. There was a unity in our nation that we've seldom seen since. There was a

vitality, discipline and unity that enabled us to go through a very difficult time with a very positive outlook. We developed a mentality in which our number one priority was to win the war.

The spiritual warfare we are in today takes a similar kind of mentality. In order to stand and function properly in the battles we face, we have to develop a wartime mentality. That's not a negative

...if we remain faithful...and get involved...we may very well live to see that day when the knowledge of the Lord will fill all the earth....

exhortation, but a positive one. If we have the proper mental stance, then we can face that which we have to face without losing our peace or our victory.

The Right Side of the Road

The last point I want to make brings us back to our parable. God is saying to us that to be involved on earth means *picking a different side of the road*. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho obviously had two distinct sides. There was the side that the priest and the Levite chose, and then there was what I've come to call the Samaritan side—the side where the wounded traveler fell, and where the Samaritan found him and ministered to him. To be honest, most of the time we prefer not the Samaritan side, but the other side of the road. The other side of the road is easier, more attractive, more exciting. When you travel on that side of the road, you are involved in things that are dramatic and exciting.

But in recent years, God has been saying something else. Now we are being pressured by God to cross over to the Samaritan side of the road. I don't mean to be either facetious or demeaning of the other side of the road—there is nothing wrong with it. It's an exciting, dramatic part of God's plan for Christian experience, and if Bob Mumford is right in his observation that another tremendous outpouring of the Holy Spirit is approaching, we are going to spend a lot of time on the exciting side of the road again. But in the meantime, we are having to confront life on the Samaritan side.

So, without being unappreciative of the excitement and drama of the other side, I want to draw some contrasts between that other side and the Samaritan side.

The other side of the road will get you into Jericho in a hurry; the Samaritan side of the road will get you into trouble in a hurry.

The other side is all pavement and promises; the Samaritan side is full of pot holes and problems.

The other side circles the city; the Samaritan side cuts right through the heart of the slums.

The other side calls for charisma; the Samaritan side calls for commitment.

The other side is an invitation to success; the Samaritan side is an invitation to sacrifice.

The other side looks for fame; the Samaritan side looks for family.

The other side holds charismatic conventions; the Samaritan side builds covenant communities.

On the other side of the road you seek God's power; on the Samaritan side you seek God's purpose.

On the other side you learn about faith; on the Samaritan side you learn about forgiveness.

On the other side you attend someone's crusade; on the Samaritan side you carry someone's cross.

On the other side you claim your rights; on the Samaritan side you accept your responsibilities.

On the other side you seek to be led; on the Samaritan side you seek to be ruled.

On the other side you hug the Christian who succeeds; on the Samaritan side you hug the Christian who fails.

On the other side you count the offering; on the Samaritan side you count the cost.

On the other side you share your testimony; on the Samaritan side you share your bank account.

On the other side you share the blessing; on the Samaritan side you share the blame.

On the other side you take up your ministry; on the Samaritan side of the road you lay down your life.

On the other side you touch the hearts of God's people; on the Samaritan side you touch the heart of God.

What is God saying about getting involved? He is saying we must move over to the Samaritan side of the road. And if we remain faithful enough, and get involved deeply enough, and are committed enough to establishing the kingdom and government of God in the earth, then by God's grace we are going to see the Church and the nations of the world swept into the divine purpose of God for the earth. And we may very well live to see that day when the knowledge of the Lord will fill all the earth, as the waters cover the sea. ♥

WHAT GOD IS DOING in Israel and the Middle East is a subject that is very relevant to our current world situation and one that is very close to my own heart.

I want to begin this article with a brief outline of my approach to this topic. First of all, I will establish from Scripture that God is saying something specific and important about Israel and the Middle East. Then in that context, I will briefly outline the main things God is specifically saying to us about it.

The Prophecy and Fulfillment

The first passage we will look at, Isaiah 11:11-14, looks forward thousands of years beyond Isaiah's day. Written before the Babylonian captivity and the subsequent return from Babylon, the passage envisages a second dispersion of the Jewish people, a much more total dispersion, and speaks of a second regathering of Israel from all the corners of the earth. We have seen this taking place in the twentieth century.

In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people from Assyria, from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, from Cush, from Elam, from Babylonia, from Hamath and from the islands of the sea.

He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah, from the four quarters of the earth.

Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's enemies will be cut off;

Perspective for a Decade:



Israel, God's Banner to the Nations by Derek Prince

Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim.

They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west; together they will plunder the people to the east. They will lay hands on Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites will be subject to them (NIV).

Let's examine that passage verse by verse. "In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people." Notice that Isaiah says the Lord is going to do this a *second* time. In other words, Isaiah clearly foresees a first dispersion, a first regathering, a second dispersion and a second regathering, and it is the second regathering that he is now envisaging.

When we look back at what has happened in the earth over the last fifty years, particularly in Europe, we often think of the Holocaust where approximately six million Jewish people were exterminated. Isaiah's words "the remnant that is left of his people" have particular application because of this. Notice, too, that his prophecy concerning the areas from which this second regathering would take place was never fulfilled in the return from Babylon—it is far wider. The second regathering would include Jews from Assyria, which today is probably partly Iraq, Iran and Turkey; from lower Egypt and upper Egypt, which is the totality of modern Egypt; from Cush, which is usually translated Ethiopia; from Elam, which became Persia and is today Iran; from Babylonia, which is mainly Iraq; from Hamath, which is Syria; and "from the islands" (or the coastlands of the

sea), which, when translated, refers to all the parts of the earth's surface which border on the

first went into captivity, Israel, or Ephraim, was taken captive by Assyria and Judah was captured by

"... the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people."

ocean—in other words, from all the continents. This second regathering of the remnant will take place from every area of the world, as, in fact, Isaiah confirms in the next verse: "He will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth."

It has been estimated that in the past fifty years or so, Jewish people have returned to Israel from at least eighty-seven different nations. When my wife, Ruth, and I studied at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in the summer of 1979, because of various circumstances we found that together we attended five different Hebrew language classes. We figured out that in those five classes, we rubbed shoulders with people from at least thirty different nations.

Going on, the next verse in Isaiah says, "Ephraim's jealousy will vanish and Judah's enemies will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim." Bear in mind that in Isaiah's day, Israel had been split into two separate kingdoms that were often at war with one another—the Kingdom of Israel in the north, usually identified as Ephraim, and the kingdom of Judah in the south, known as Judea. When the Jewish people

Babylon. These two distinct kingdoms remained in a constant state of hostility toward one another in captivity and out. But Isaiah says when this second regathering takes place, Israel will no longer be two distinct kingdoms but one, and the hostility between those two elements of the nation of Israel will be taken away. That has been exactly fulfilled.

Interestingly enough, when the state of Israel was about to come into being on the 14th of May, 1948, even up to a few hours before the state was to be declared a name had not finally been selected for it. A number of different names were proposed, and one which was almost chosen was Judea. But then at the last moment the choice fell to the name "Israel." That choice is significant, because had the name Judea been chosen, it would have perpetuated the division; but the name Israel denotes a united nation.

Then in verse fourteen: "They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west." Whenever you read "Philistia" or "Philistine," you need to know that in modern English that refers to Palestine and Palestinian. It is the same word with just a slight change of letters. Isaiah says the restored Israelites will swoop down on the slopes of the Palestinians to the west. That has been fulfilled. The "west" is the Gaza strip and the desert of Sinai.

What is interesting is the next passage which refers to "the people of the east," and it specifies Edom, Moab and Ammon. Ammon is today Amman, the capital of Jordan,



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and Moab and Edom are areas to the east of the Dead Sea. When you combine those three together they form the present state of Jordan.

Someone recently said that the Jordan River is a remarkable river—it is the only river with one bank, because all you ever hear about in the news is the West Bank. Well, I believe God is talking about the East Bank. I am not making a prediction, but the Bible suggests that rather than the Palestinians regaining the West Bank of the Jordan, the Israelites are going to establish some degree of rulership over the East Bank. You say, "That is not what the experts predict." Well, that does not worry me, because there has never been a situation in recent history where the experts have been so continuously wrong as in the matter of Israel. It almost encourages me to believe that I am right.

Hopefully this brief examination will convince you that these prophetic words, spoken around the 8th century B.C., are being precisely fulfilled in our world today. It is not a matter of speculation—it is in the headlines almost every day!

In Isaiah's statement in verse 12, we see what the Lord is accomplishing today concerning Israel. "He [the Lord] will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel." In gathering the exiles of Israel, the Lord is raising a banner for all other nations.

When you consider the tiny area that Israel covers, and the tiny number of people (only 3½ million) it represents, it is a staggering thought that that particular little area and that little group of people are the focus of all the world news today.

I can remember days when I was growing up in Britain before WW II when you could read the newspaper every day for a month and never come across a headline containing the name of a biblical nation. But today, you cannot pick

up a newspaper without finding the names of biblical nations somewhere in the headlines. First and foremost, Israel, then Iran and Iraq, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Jordan and others. In other words, there has been a tremendous shift of world interest in the last thirty or forty years from other nations to the very place that God calls the center of the earth—the land of Israel, its people, and the surrounding nations.

In past years, all that ministers thought of in presenting a message was reaching individuals. The entire thrust of our message was aimed at the individual. But I believe the headlines in the world news disclose the fact that God is now doing what He did in the Old Testament—He is dealing, not merely with individuals, but with entire

in a sense they are all vocal: sing, shout, praise, proclaim, and say, or pray.

What are we responding to? The regathering of the remnant of Jacob. To whom is it addressed? This is a question that might have more than one answer. It is not addressed primarily to the Jewish people because it speaks of them in the third person. So who is obligated to respond to these words at this time? The Church, the people who believe that the Bible is the Word of God and that we ought to obey it. Because we are a part of the Church, this is addressed to us.

The verse continues with, "O Lord, save your people." What is that? It is an intercessory prayer. God is asking us to intercede for Israel. God is saying, "I am restor-

As Christians, we have a tremendous responsibility to be totally committed to the outworking of God's purpose in history.

nations. It is of extreme importance that we recognize this truth.

The Response

I believe that God requires a response from His believing people to what He is doing in Israel and the Middle East. We are not permitted to remain neutral, apathetic, or indifferent. God demands a response.

In Jeremiah 31 verses 7 and 8, we read what the Lord commands us to do:

"... Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the greatest [or the chief] of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, 'O Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel' " (NIV).

The New American Standard Version says, "Proclaim, give praise, and say..." Combining these two versions I find there are five responses that God requires, and

ing My people. I am regathering them and I am asking you to unite with Me and My purposes in prayer." I think we must all face this as one of the mysterious facts of God—that when He intends to do something He will say to His people, "You pray that I will do it." In other words, He says "This is My intention, but it will not happen until you pray." As Christians, we have a tremendous responsibility to be totally committed to the outworking of God's purposes in history.

Let's go on to Jeremiah 31:8: "See, I will bring them [the regathered Israel] from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers, women in labor; a great throng will return." From 1949 to about 1959, those words were fulfilled thousands of times over. In that period approximately

700,000 Jewish refugees returned from nearly all the Arab states, most of them totally destitute because they had to leave all their wealth and possessions behind, bringing only as much as they could carry. It was exactly as the Lord said, "Among them were the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor."

Israel at that time was extremely poor and had very few resources. Nevertheless, they declared that Israel would not reject a single Jew returning from any area of the earth. Let me point out that during that same period, about 600,000 Arabs became refugees from Israel. Many of the Arab nations are the wealthiest in the world as the result of the oil situation, and yet they have done very, very little to resettle their refugees. In contrast, Israel, in its complete poverty and destitution, has successfully resettled a significantly larger number of Jewish refugees than the combined Arab nations ever had to deal with.

Let's go on to verses 10 and 11, still in connection with the regathering of Israel.

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands:

"He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd" (vss. 10-11).

If you really want to know what is going to happen in the Middle East, there is only one accurate source. . . . It is the Bible.

The message in both aspects is a divine action—God scattered them; God is gathering them. It is the same people. The Israel that was scattered is the Israel that is being regathered.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word that I quoted, "to gather them," comes from the root "kabbetz," which also gives the Hebrew word

kibbutz. A kibbutz is a collective settlement established in Israel, and it has become an essential part of the restoration and preservation of the state. Without the kibbutz, the state of Israel could never have survived. It blesses me to think that 2500 years ago, in a prophetic utterance, the prophet Jeremiah chose the very word that was going to be a distinctive feature of this regathering of Israel, a regathering which had never taken place in Israel at any previous time in their history.

The Bible Is Relevant

What is God saying to us in the restoration of Israel? I suggest that God is saying at least four things, all of them extremely topical, extremely relevant, and extremely important for the Church of Jesus Christ.

First, God is saying that *the Bible is a true, relevant up-to-date book*. I have already stated my conviction that what is happening in Israel and the Middle East has been accurately predicted with amazing detail in the Bible. If you really want to know what is going to happen in the Middle East, there is only one accurate source of information, and it is not *US News and World Report* nor *Time Magazine*, nor the six o'clock news. It is the Bible. Let's look at some scripture which confirms the

relevance of the Bible:

Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the people of the world revere him.

For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm (Ps. 33:8-9 NIV).

There is a requirement that all people fear and revere the Lord, and

for good reason. Why? Because when He says something will happen, *it happens*. His word stands firm, and that is reason to fear Him and revere Him.

But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance (vs. 11-12).

God's plans and purposes center around His chosen people. Thank God that what the nations propose, if it is contrary to God's purposes, will not come to pass. The United Nations has passed numerous resolutions against Israel. I'm just glad to know that the Lord will thwart them. They will not come to pass unless they are in line with the Word of God.

God's Covenant with His People

Second, God is saying that *He keeps His covenant*. In Psalm 89:34 God says, "I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered." It is of tremendous importance that we grasp the fact that when God makes a covenant, He will never break it. We need to know that. Our Bible consists of two covenants—the old and the new, and therefore, the essence of divine revelation is centered in covenant. If God were to break His covenant, we would have no hope, and it is my personal conviction that if God were to break His covenant with Israel, we would have no reason to believe that He would not break His covenant with the Church. You say, "Well, Israel failed God." Undoubtedly. But can you honestly say that the Church has not failed God? I am not capable of presenting God's point of view, but in my limited understanding, I see Israel receiving a covenant and failing dismally. I see the Church receiving a covenant and failing even worse than Israel.

One characteristic of the Jewish

people in more recent history is that they have seldom turned against one another and destroyed one another, whereas in the Church, the devil hardly has to give us any other enemies than our fellow believers. We can never point a finger of criticism or judgment against the Jewish people. I have come to know them pretty well in the last few years, and I can tell you that there is much that the Church needs to learn from the

This is what the Lord says: "Only if the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth below be searched out will I reject all the descendants of Israel because of all they have done," declares the Lord (vs. 37).

I don't believe the heavens will ever be measured, so consequently, I don't believe the Lord will ever reject the descendants of Israel, in spite of all that they have done.

...God owns the earth and everything in it—He does what He wants to do and nobody can stop Him from doing it.

Jewish people. Many of the same truths that we hold dear, and that we are fighting for, have always been held by the Jewish people.

In that light, let us examine God's covenant with Israel.

This is what the Lord says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the Lord Almighty is his name:

"Only if these decrees vanish from my sight," declares the Lord, "will the descendants of Israel ever cease to be a nation before me" (Jer. 31:35-36).

God declares that as long as you see the sun, the moon, the stars and the sea, Israel will remain a nation. It is His guarantee. I recently learned the remarkable fact that in the deportations carried out by the empires of Assyria and Babylon during the 8th and 7th centuries B.C., of the 110 nations that were uprooted and deported, only one ever returned—Israel. Why? Because God says, "As long as you can see the sun, moon, stars and sea, it is My guarantee that Israel will be a nation."

Going on to the next verse, we read:

The Sovereignty of God

Third, God is saying to us that *He is sovereign*. Another way to express that truth is: God owns the earth and everything in it—He does what He wants to do and nobody can stop Him from doing it. God is sovereign. In particular He is sovereign with what He does with the earth. God does not have to ask anybody's permission to do anything He wants with any part of the earth.

With that in mind, there are two remarkable statements, one in the Old Testament and one in the New, which tell us what God has determined to do with the area of the earth we call Israel.

When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the people according to the number of the sons of Israel (Deut. 32:8).

In other words, when God allotted the earth to the human race, His starting point was the area that He allotted to Israel. Every other nation was to have its inheritance relative to the inheritance of Israel.

Let me use a vivid little example of this. If I put on a vest with five buttons, what would happen

if I buttoned the top button in the second hole? You don't have to be a theologian to know that if I go on buttoning, I will end up with one button that has no hole. Why? Because I started wrong at the top. The beginning was wrong, so the end had to be wrong. So it is with the nations. When Israel is not in its proper hole, the other nations cannot be in their proper holes. It all centers around Israel.

If the Jews and Arabs and the rest of the nations would simply bow their stubborn hearts in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, all nations could be in their appointed place within a few months. The problem is in the stubbornness of the human race, but that stubbornness will never convince God to change His sovereign plan.

The other statement is Acts 17:26 where Paul, speaking to the men of Athens about God's dealing with the human race, says:

From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

God has a place for every nation, but they all center around the place that He has for Israel. As a result, when we are concerned for Israel's inheritance we are also forwarding our own cause, since God has so arranged the situation that other nations can never actually enter into their full and permanent inheritance until Israel has entered its inheritance. Our own interests are involved. God has set for the nations their proper times and places. I am absolutely convinced that at this time God is restoring Israel to their appointed place.

One last scripture for this is in Amos chapter 9:

"I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their

fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them," says the Lord your God (vss. 14-15).

All of that is happening. God is bringing the Jews back to Israel. They are resurrecting many ruined cities and restoring their biblical names. They are planting vineyards and drinking the wine. They are making gardens and eating the fruit. All of this is happening today. There is no question about it; it is an objective fact.

Let me remind you that this has never happened until now. Never at any previous period in human history has Israel been planted in such a way that they will never be uprooted. So we have two alternatives—either the prophecy is being fulfilled, or the Bible is not a reliable book. Personally I choose the first alternative—the scripture is being fulfilled.

The Last Act of the Drama

The fourth thing the Lord is saying is that *in restoring Israel to their land, God has set the stage for the last act of the drama of this age.* To go into this truth in detail

The Judgment of Nations

Why is it so important that we proclaim the truth of Israel's vital importance to the nations? Because, according to my understanding, God will judge all nations on the basis of their attitude toward Israel. Therefore it is only fair that they be informed of Israel's importance.

In Isaiah 60:12 God tells Zion: "For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined." That's very humbling to all gentile nations, isn't it? We have to serve that little, seemingly insignificant group of people if we are not to perish.

In the last parable Jesus ever taught, in the 25th chapter of Matthew, He pictures His judgment of the nations. Jesus says He will sit on the throne of His glory; before Him all nations will be gathered. They will be judged and separated, the sheep on the right and the goats on the left. The sheep will enter into His heavenly kingdom established on earth and the goats will be banished into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. That fire was never prepared for human beings,

still a man? The mystery of the incarnation is that when Jesus became a man, He never ceased to be a man from then on. He is also absolutely and totally our great God and Savior, but one of the mind-baffling mysteries and glories of the Bible is that there is a man at God's right hand. He is a man with a human lineage and His lineage is given in Revelation 5. He is the *lion of the tribe of Judah*. The name Jew is formed from the word Judah.

Jesus, for all eternity, as well as being God, is the lion of the tribe of Judah. So remember, when you are dealing with the Jews, you are dealing with His blood brothers. We had better be careful—America had better be careful.

Ruth and I pray regularly that America will never be aligned with the enemies of Israel. You ask, "Are you concerned for Israel?" No, I am concerned for *America*. I love this country. It has been so good to me. I would be terribly grieved to see America follow the course taken by Britain, my own original nation of which I am still a citizen. Britain turned against Israel at the vital crisis in their history—when the state of Israel was coming into being. They did everything they could do to resist Israel's statehood, and as a result, the world's largest empire declined to a second-rate power within one generation, without ever being defeated in war. That is the message. God is going to judge all nations by how they respond to what He is doing for Israel. ♡

Jesus...is the lion of the tribe of Judah. So remember, when you are dealing with the Jews, you are dealing with His blood brothers.

would require the quotation of a volume of Scripture, so I will simply make a statement, and invite you to check it for yourself. Every prophecy that relates to the close of this age is predicated on one important factor—the presence of Israel as a sovereign nation within her own borders. Before the fifteenth of May, 1948, when Israel gained statehood, none of those prophecies could be fulfilled because that one vital factor was missing. What happened on May 15th, 1948 set the scene for the fulfillment of all those prophecies.

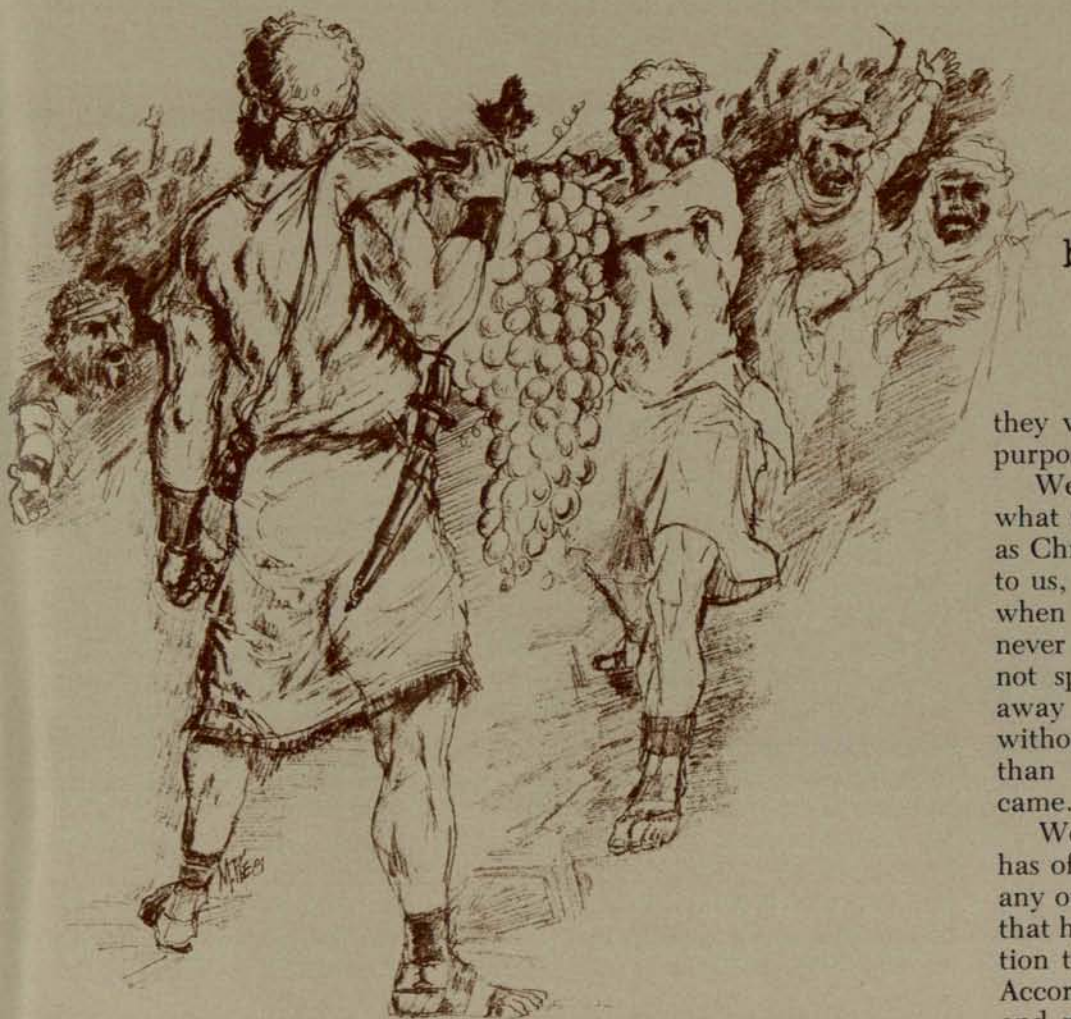
but they will go there if they don't meet God's conditions to escape.

What is the dividing line for the sheep and goats? Very simply, how people have treated the brothers of Jesus. If you cared for them, you come into the Kingdom. If you have not cared for them, you are not part of the Kingdom. That is the dividing line. I am aware that the term "brothers of Jesus" can be applied very widely. However, let me point out to you that this is a judgment of nations, and Jesus has a nationality. Can you receive that? Did you know that Jesus is

All messages in this issue are available in their entirety on cassette tape. You may order Ern Baxter's, Charles Simpson's, Don Basham's, and Derek Prince's from: Integrity Publications, P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616. Bob Mumford's may be ordered from: Life Changers, Box 22948, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335.

Perspective for a Decade: Obedience to God's Word

by Charles Simpson



THE PERSPECTIVE I have chosen for this article is what God is saying about obedience to His Word, and the basic text for my topic is the book of Hebrews. Hebrews is a book about *rest* and *responsibility*. The rest described in Hebrews is in sharing the rule of Christ and reigning in the Kingdom of God, coming to rest in His ultimate purpose for our lives and for the corporate life of the Church. The responsibility revealed

in Hebrews is our responsibility to obey God until we come into that rest, and into that place of rulership that He intends for us. One reason we are unpopular with some Christians is that we remind them of their responsibility. We tell them there is rest, but we also inform them that there are conditions for entering that rest. We remind them that they have a response to make to the gospel, and unless they make that response,

they will not come fully into the purposes of God.

We are obligated to respond to what God has said to us. All of us as Christians have prayed, "Speak to us, Lord." The problem is that when God *does* speak, we can never act again as though God has not spoken. We can never walk away from a word from the Lord without being more responsible than we were before the word came.

We are a people to whom God has often spoken. I don't know of any other generation in all history that has had the amount of revelation that our generation has had. According to the laws of sowing and reaping, we must be on the verge of reaping a world-wide manifestation of the purpose of God, because the Lord has sown more truth into this generation than any other.

As I look back on the conferences I have attended, I recall many significant things which God said. I can remember specific messages brought by Derek Prince, Don Basham, Bob Mumford, Ern Baxter and other men of God, and thinking, as I heard those messages, "That is something we must

do. We must respond." And yet, regretfully, many times the people received those words lightly, almost as entertainment.

When God gives input to His people He is not just entertaining them or making them feel good, or merely inspiring them, as needful as that is. He is seeking a certain *response*, an acknowledgement of His Word that will manifest His purpose to the nations in a tangible way. Repeatedly, I have seen the Word seemingly fall over a precipice or drop into a great hole. This is not always the case of course, for in every group there are those who are hearing the Word. But so many times people simply disregard His Word.

I have listened to men of God as they've shared the things of God that require a response, only to have the message fall on deaf ears. I have never heard Derek Prince preach a message without giving people an opportunity to respond in a practical way. Several years ago, when he and I were on the program at a Christian camp, the coordinators asked me to announce and perform the baptizing at a baptismal service. When I asked how many in the large audience were planning to be baptized, only about eight people raised their hands. But Derek whispered to me as I stood at the podium, "Just hold off for now. I am intending to preach on baptism later, so wait until after that to hold the baptismal service." Later, Derek preached on baptism like those people had never heard before. He just plowed up the whole con-

gregation. If you had listened to him that day you would have felt as if everyone who wasn't baptized immediately was going to bust hell wide open by the end of the week. After his message, I baptized 150 people. The people were so moved that some of them beat me to the water. They definitely responded to that message.

occasions, there is no later or better revelation than the Son of God.

When the writer of Hebrews says, "in these last days God has spoken to us through his Son," he is saying that God has given the final word. The Word of God has been fully manifested in Christ Jesus. The incarnate, full representation of the Word of God has come. God

Everything we could ever discover about God is manifested in Christ Jesus.

Jesus, God's Word Incarnate

We are a people who have heard much, but God desires also that we obey. The Word of God is delivered in order that we might make a tangible, visible, real response, and God will call us to account for every word that He speaks to us. Hebrews 1 says:

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (Heb. 1:1-3 NIV).

This passage tells us that God has spoken to us through His Son. As Ern Baxter has stated on many

has given both "logos" and "rhema" in Christ.

He is the totality, the fulness of the Word of God brought to earth. He who is the Word, Hebrews says, is the heir of all things. He is God's word and God's purpose. *He* is what God has to say, and He will receive all that God finally does. He is the image and the heir. He came to reveal God and He succeeded in that purpose. Everything we could ever discover about God is manifested in Christ Jesus.

If you hear something new about Jesus today, it isn't really new, because it was in Him from before the beginning. You can search Him out, but you'll never completely discover all there is. Nothing that you find out about God will be outside the incarnation of Jesus Christ, for the fulness of God is in Him.

It is important for us to see that not only did Jesus come to reveal the government of God's Kingdom but He also came to purify men from sin which hinders them from that government. In our misunderstanding of sin I believe we have missed the real reason why sin is bad. We may say, "Smoking is bad because it is damaging to your health." That is true, but there is a much more serious reason that it is harmful. It may be hindering us from obeying the will of God—that makes it infinitely



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worse. The reason sin is an abomination is because it causes us to miss the Kingdom. And if sin makes you miss the Kingdom, it doesn't really matter what else it does. So not only did Jesus come to reveal God and His government, but He came to release us from the hindrances of sin, which keep us from coming under God's government and seeing God's will done fully in the earth.

Pay More Careful Attention

In its essence, the gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ the Son of God came, lived a sinless life, died for our sins, rose again on the third day, ascended to the Father's right hand, where He now reigns as King and Supreme Ruler, with all things under His subjection. He is the unique Word of God in all creation, and all that God is saying He is saying through Jesus Christ. With that understanding as a basis we read in Hebrews 2:

We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? (vss. 1-3 NIV).

Now that God has spoken through His Son, we must pay

adjusted the course of his life, or when they spoke to Daniel or ministered to Paul or John, pay more careful attention because it is not an angel that has talked to you; it is My Son, who fully represents Me, who has addressed you." If the words of angels had such impact on these saints, what ought the words of Jesus Christ the King do to us?

I believe God will continue speaking to us *if* we respond to what He already said. *If we respond*, there is no limit to what God is willing to say. However this passage tells us that we cannot ignore the words of Christ the King and escape. When God addresses a people concerning a truth and they ignore it, there can be no deliverance for them, because deliverance comes from obeying the Word of the Lord.

As children of God, we can be secure and unafraid if we obey Him. But if we ignore His Kingdom, there is no escape. Those who set aside the cornerstone and attempt to erect a castle without the King shall not escape, according to Scripture, because what they are doing ignores God's eternal plan.

We must pay more careful attention. We cannot ignore the fact that Jesus sits on the throne, and still escape. We must decide exactly where we stand in regard to His sovereignty, because the neutral ground is being cut away by the

other and said, "If we're going to live, we had better get on the ball!"

God is hacking away at the middle ground and if we're going to be a part of His plan, we had better get on the ball.

Fix Your Thoughts

We need to pay more careful attention than any generation ever paid. In Hebrews 3 the writer says, "Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess" (vs. 1). This tells us that the way for us to pay attention is to fix our thoughts on Jesus. Fixing our thoughts means to be locked in on Jesus Christ, committed not to deviate from His purpose no matter what happens. Take note also of the fact that the writer says, "You who share in the *heavenly calling*," not "you who are called to heaven." Let's get one thing straight, Church: we are not called to heaven—we have a heavenly calling. We are called to the Kingdom of God on *earth*.

Fix your thoughts on Jesus, not on the memory of Jesus. The scripture didn't say, "You who share in the heavenly calling, think about what it was like when Jesus was alive." Jesus *is* alive. If I fix my thoughts on Jesus, I don't fix my thoughts on the historical man of Galilee or what He did while He was on earth. The writer is not talking about the Jesus that walked Galilee; he is talking about the Jesus who sits on the throne. We need to fix our thoughts on Him where He is right now. When you look at Jesus on the throne and you listen, you will hear the Holy Spirit say "Today" with a capital "T." "Today...harden not your hearts as in the day of provocation." What is today? Today is God's moment of obedience. Today is God's time of response.

God the Holy Spirit says, "Today. Now is the moment of obedience. Don't harden your heart

God will continue speaking to us if we respond to what He already said.

more careful attention than when the angels spoke. This is not to demean what the angels spoke, for whenever an angel addressed someone in Scripture, it made a tremendous impact. But now God says, "More than when angels spoke to Abraham and radically

purposes of God. It's like the story about the golfer whose ball landed in an ant bed. He hacked away and killed five thousand ants; hacked again and killed two thousand, and kept on hacking until finally there were only two ants left. One of them turned to the

Just Around the Corner

The Importance of the Individual

New Wine's March issue will be a helpful approach to the role of the individual in society and the Body of Christ.

the way Israel did."

Do you know how Israel hardened their hearts? They didn't respond properly to the tests God required them to face. In Exodus 17:1-7 we read about that great charismatic celebration on the far side of the Red Sea, after the Israelites had seen the enemy drown, when they sang the song of Moses and had a glorious time. But just a few days later in the wilderness, they had no water and they began to grumble against Moses. They came to the place where God was testing them and it provoked quarreling among them.

If your eyes are fixed on the Lord, you can respond properly when He begins to test you. But if you take your eyes off the Lord, the place of testing will become a place of quarreling and a place where you test His word. Don't make the mistake of trying to test God. When God is testing you, let Him test you all He wants to, but don't try to test Him. Let the Word of God prove you, but don't try to prove God. Just do what God says.

In order to enter into what God has for us, we need to let the Word of God test us without murmuring and complaining.

Complaining builds a callus on your spirit and then, when the Word of God comes, you can't tell whether it's from God or from a

man, and so you start to test it. "Moses told us to do this. . . ." "Who does Moses think he is?" When that happens, God looks down and says, "These people never understand. They are always going astray. I swear they will not enter the land."

If we are going to enter into what God has for us, we need to be ready to obey, so that when we come to that moment of testing we won't let anything harden us or keep us from entering the land.

Encourage One Another

Hebrews 3:13 says, "But encourage one another daily." To me, this verse indicates that the gasoline of progress in the Kingdom of God is encouragement. "Let's go on, brother. Fix your eyes on Jesus. God is speaking to us. Let's go on." That sound should be moving daily around the whole Body of Christ. Otherwise, discouragement will arise, and discouragement leads to sin, and sin, as we saw earlier, hinders us from doing the will of God. The Israelites who became discouraged started to quarrel and to test the word of God which led them to sin—and that sin caused them to die in the wilderness, having failed to fulfill God's plan.

We need to spend less time criticizing one another and more time encouraging one another. We need to spend less time prohibiting

one another and more time endorsing one another. Even though there are proper times to prohibit, there are many *more* times we need to say, "I thank God for what you did, brother. You did a good job. God is moving in your life. You are making progress. I know you can't see it, but God is using you."

Encourage one another daily, because discouragement leads to sin. People are never more vulnerable than when they become discouraged, because when you become discouraged your strength and your ability to resist are low. That's when the enemy starts whispering in your ear, "It doesn't matter anyway. No one really cares whether you obey or not." We must refuse to receive the things that bring discouragement.

Not only should we not receive discouragement, but we shouldn't let ourselves be discouragers—we need to be encouragers. Caleb and Joshua were encouragers. When they went to spy out the land, they saw the same obstacles the other spies saw, but they came back saying, "We can do it. We can take the land." The other ten said, "We can't do it. We are as grasshoppers in our own eyes," and they discouraged the people so much that they wanted to stone their leaders and turn back. Because of the Israelites' rebellion, God condemned them to wander forty years in the wilderness.

Throughout those forty years, Caleb and Joshua kept encouraging each other. Talk about encouragement! Here are two guys watching everyone else die off—witnessing hundreds of funerals each day.

Joshua: "You still going in, Caleb?"

Caleb: "Glory to God, I'm going in. I'm seventy, but I'm going in. You going in, Joshua?"

Joshua: "You bet your life I'm going in."

Caleb: "I heard Fred passed

away today—and George, and Ralph and Tom, too. You going in?”

Joshua: “Yes, I’m going in. I’m going on eighty, but that’s all right; my youth will be renewed. I’m going in.”

Caleb: “Too bad about Moses hitting that rock. You going in?”

Joshua: “Yes, but I’m not gonna hit any rocks. I’m going in.”

Caleb: “They say the Jordan River’s going to be too deep to cross today.”

Joshua: “Well, I’m going in anyhow. I’ve been waiting forty years. I don’t care if there is a wall of water forty feet high—I’m going in.”

Caleb: “Me too. I’ve been waiting too long for this. When that ark goes, I’m going in.”

Encourage one another while it is yet today. God has spoken, and we must pay more careful attention, fixing our eyes on Jesus, and encouraging one another daily. In addition, we must be careful not to come short.

Not Falling Short

In this day, God is challenging our faith with a higher revelation.

The Word of God is for a people who have set their faces for a city whose builder and maker is God.

Therefore, we must be careful not to fall short but rather to mix faith with what we are hearing and receive the word He is speaking. Verse eleven of Hebrews 4 says, “*Make every effort.*” Why does it say that? Because one look at history tells us that many people heard the Word, and yet fell short. Whole nations have come up to a certain place in the purpose of God, and missed it. God sent them away, commissioned to wander. When Cain killed his brother Abel, God said to him, “You are going to

be a wanderer, and you will be hated everywhere you go.” The punishment for falling short is never being able to stop, to stay in one place, or to come to a place of rest. That kind of existence is a living hell.

Some people have come right up to the rest God promises, right up to entering into God’s government and then have failed to go in, condemning themselves to a lifetime of wandering. Resting or wandering—that is the choice. Rest is the grace of God; wandering is the sentence of God.

For each of us, there is a moment of obedience—a “today”—and once you get there, you will realize that everything has led up to that moment. When that “today” comes, you will either rest from then on, or wander from then on. For many of us, that “today” has arrived. But regretfully, some people come right up to that moment and end up wandering for the rest of their lives.

We want to be a people who receive the grace of God to obey and enter the land. That is why it says in Hebrews 4:16: “Let us come boldly before the throne of grace with confidence so that we

you grace to go on into the land.” The mercy and the grace of God come through obedience.

One other observation from that passage concerning His mercy and grace is that the only place you can obtain grace is from a throne. Why? Because you can only get grace from where you could rightly get judgment. The only person who has the right to give you grace is the One who has the right to judge you.

When you come to God for grace, you need to be aware that God could just as easily judge you by the law. When you see what He *could* have done, and what He does instead, you understand grace; and with that understanding comes the strength to do what you couldn’t do before.

We need to come to the throne. We need to get to God. When we have failed in the journey and feel totally inadequate, God says, “Come to the throne, son. Don’t try to work it all out when you know you can’t do it. Come to the throne!”

Entering The Land

In closing, I want to list the obediences that I think will bring us into the land.

1. *We need to obey God in our personal lives and in our stewardship.* Since God has spoken explicitly to us about getting our personal lives in order, we must not neglect that priority. We must pay more careful attention to it. If God is speaking to you, whether directly or through the counsel of another, obey Him! We don’t want some personal hang-up to keep us from entering the land.

2. *Be obedient in your family life.* You say, “Well, I’ve heard all that before.” Yes, but have you obeyed what you have heard? Husband, are you the leader in your family? Wife, are you acting like a godly woman? Children, are you honoring your parents? Parents, are you caring for your children? Go back and do the first works

again if need be. "Going on" from a word doesn't mean you leave it behind and no longer obey it.

3. *Obey the word that has come to your fellowship or cell group.* In your basic spiritual unit (whether you call it your house church, cell church or your fellowship group), obey God's word to your group. Where there is abrasiveness and adjustment going on, be sensitive to hear what God is saying to you concerning the people He has placed you with.

4. *Work for the unity and health of the larger local church.* Work through the snags and the nitty-gritty problems of inter-church relationships. Keep working for the unity and health of the larger local church.

5. *Maintain a universal view of the Church.* Most of us know that is hard to do. We tend to want to limit the Church only to our family unit or our local church unit. But we must cultivate and maintain a universal view, remember-

ing that there are Catholics, Presbyterians, Baptists and many others out there who are our brothers and sisters in Christ. They may not like us or agree with us, but they are nonetheless our brothers and sisters. Maintain a universal view of the Church.

6. *Relate to nations, governments and leaders as God's ambassadors.* We must learn to relate, prayerfully and prophetically, to all kinds of leadership—vocational, international and governmental—as God's ambassadors. We must pray faithfully for them and be a prophetic example to them.

7. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.* Pray that God's city, natural and spiritual, will be protected from the schemes of the enemy. In many ways, our destiny is linked with that of Israel.

We are very much like Israel in that the odds are very poor that we can return to where we came from. "If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they

would have had opportunity to return" (Heb. 11:15 NIV). The odds are poor that you can go back. But *if your mind is set on going back, you will be given an opportunity.* "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe (go on) to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39 KJV). When Elijah said, "Elisha, go back," Elisha said, "No, as your soul lives I'm going on." When Naomi said, "Ruth, go back," Ruth said, "No, where you go I'll go." We are not those who go back, but those who go on to salvation.

When I consider you who are God's covenant people, it gives me hope. If we continue in obedience, the Lord who has spoken this word to us will perform it. And if He has done this much, He can do more. And if He does more, He can do it all, so that we may become the household of God and the nation of the Lord. We are not all of it—but thank God, we are a joyful part of it. ♥

the lighter Side

by Mark Pié



I can't stop now, but on the way back I'll probably have some great tapes on healing you can listen to.

THE WORD

Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.... From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth.... Psalm 33:8-14

The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth.... From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him.... For in him we live and move and have our being. Acts 17:24-28

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of

the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:18-20

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, "He

given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:20-23

And (the 24 elders) sang a new song (to Christ): "You are worthy to take

Perspective for a Decade: A Higher Vision

who is coming will come and will not delay." Hebrews 10:35-37

But the court will sit, and (ungodly) power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him. Daniel 7:26-27

(God raised Christ) from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be

the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." Revelation 5:9-10

I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them.... Amos 9:14-15

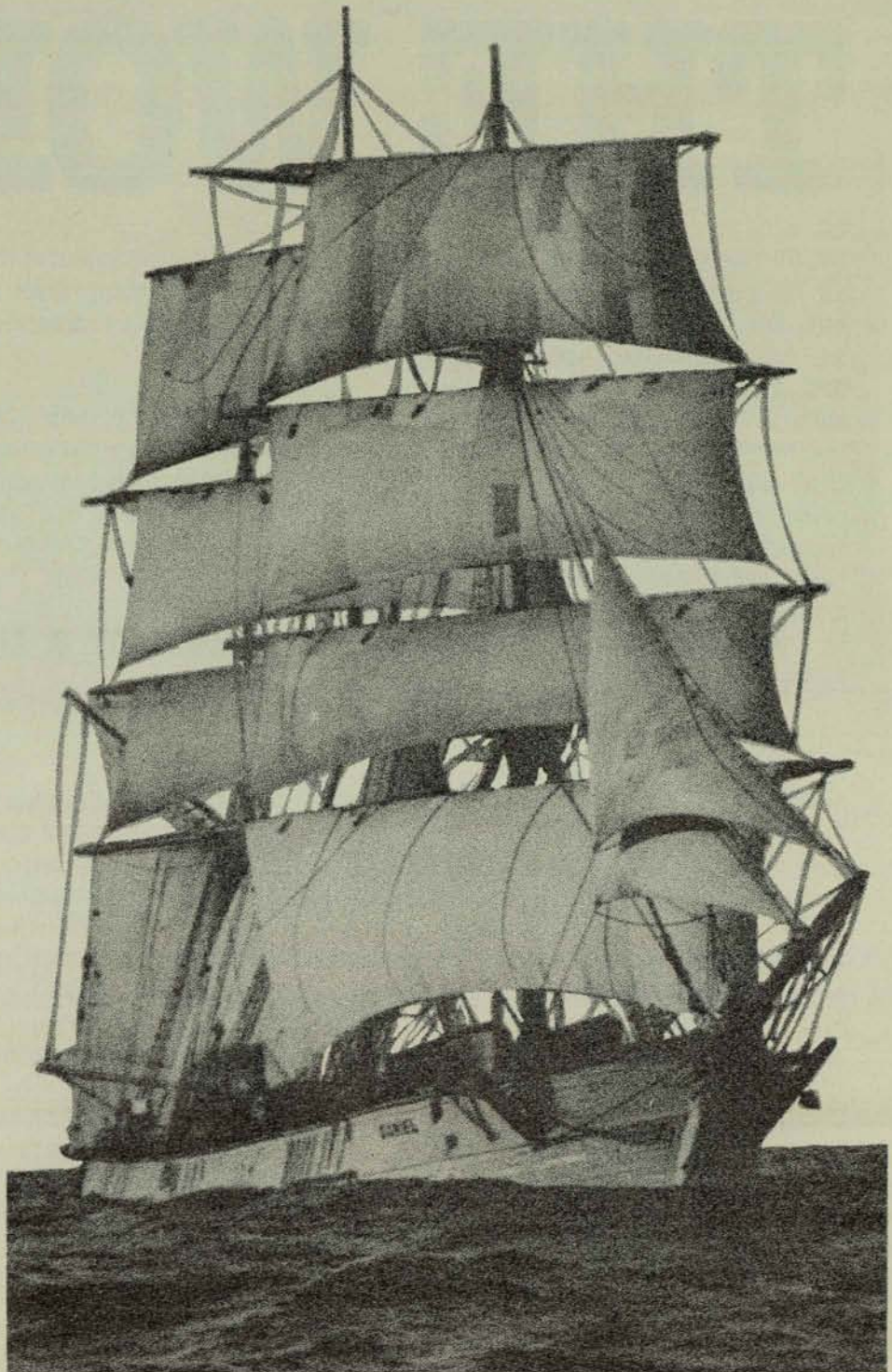
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Perspective for a Decade: The Prophetic Voice

by Bob
Mumford

AS AN INTRODUCTION to this article on what God is saying prophetically in the earth, I want to state my deep conviction that God does not have an alternate plan for establishing His purpose in the earth. And whatever He intends to do in the earth will be accomplished through the Church, through His body of believers. Regardless of how insignificant, scattered and weak the Church may seem, the people of God are the hope of the world. As such, we need to understand and apprehend the prophetic impact that we as a people are to have in the earth.

The prophetic impact I am referring to came alive to me when I was speaking one time at a large meeting. The Lord reminded me of the scripture which tells of the role of a rudder on a ship. "Although they [the ships] are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go" (James 3:4 NIV). As the Lord spoke that scripture to me, immediately faith began to leap within me. I realized God was saying that the prophetic word, like a rudder, can turn the whole Church into the purposes of God. Faith has risen in me to make me believe that this is really possible.



A clear, strong, prophetic word, though it may seem small, like a rudder, is powerful enough to turn us from our own ways into the ways of God. A prophetic word from the Lord prepares us to embrace God's purposes, even when that entails persecution, being misunderstood, or forsaking houses and personal possessions.

Unfortunately, the Church's prophetic ministry is a difficult calling. When reading the Old Testament the impression one gets is that the job of a prophet was to tell everyone that things were terrible when they looked great, and to assure everyone things were great when they looked terrible. Usually the reaction among the people to the prophet was, "Who needs this guy?" Even though that is the same reaction the Church gets when it fulfills its prophetic role in the earth, the prophetic word it brings is still essential.

Following is the concluding paragraph from the book, *All Things Are Possible*, which relates the history of the charismatic movement from 1940 to 1975.

Divided, disorganized, haunted by its past, bewildered by its success, threatened by respectability, the charismatic revival plunged ahead. The late editor, Alden West, of *Logos Journal* asked, "Where is the Holy Spirit leading us?" The voices of the prophets gave no sure answer. But modern charismatics remained undaunted in their faith that something greater was about to appear, something far surpassing the mighty works that earlier generations had

witnessed. If one would only believe, all things were possible.

What the author meant was that in 1975, which was when the

But I shall crush his adversaries before him, and strike those who hate him.

And My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be with him, and in

God's plan for the earth is like a huge bulldozer that keeps right on moving—crushing, working, plowing and moving until... His ultimate goals and plans are established in the earth.

book was published, the charismatic movement was divided and disorganized, searching for clarity and direction. In the last six years since that book was written, it doesn't appear that we are doing much better. There is an outcry in the land for God to give us a clear sound. I believe that God is now beginning to speak that clear sound to us, and it is one simple message: "There is no hope but the Church of Jesus Christ."

God Is Sovereign

The prophetic theme of the Old Testament can be summed up in a single passage of scripture:

Once Thou didst speak in vision to Thy godly ones, and didst say, "I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people.

I have found David My servant; With My holy oil I have anointed him, with whom My hand will be established; My arm also will strengthen him.

The enemy will not deceive him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

My name his horn will be exalted.

I shall also set his hand on the sea, And his right hand on the rivers.

He will cry to Me, 'Thou art my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.' "

I also shall make him My first-born, the highest of the kings of the earth.

My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall be confirmed to him (Ps. 89:19-28 NAS).

When you read about the Old Testament prophets, you find that they all had the same convictions. They knew that there was a personal God who ruled over everybody and everything; He was sovereign, He was demanding and He had certain standards established that were to be observed. In addition, they firmly believed that God had an inexorable master plan for the earth which He would accomplish, regardless of how men responded or failed to respond to it.

God's plan for the earth is like a huge bulldozer that keeps right on moving—crushing, working, plowing and moving until the job is finished. Do you believe that is what God is doing? Your belief affects how you respond—it decides whether you get on the bulldozer or get run over by it. But regardless of how we decide, nothing will prevent God from doing what He intends to do. Throughout the Old Testament we read how God deals with entire nations by raising up leaders and by putting leaders



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down. Like a bulldozer He pushes ahead until His ultimate goals and plans are established in the earth.

The prophets believed that when God's plan was fulfilled, three things would have happened. First, God's dominion would extend from shore to shore. Secondly, God would be recognized for who He is—the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords—and His name would be glorified in all the earth. Thirdly, they believed God's influence would be felt throughout all the earth—that “Out of Zion would go forth the law.” Today we believe all this will be fulfilled in one person—our Lord Jesus Christ. To understand this we need only read 1 Corinthians 15, which tells about Jesus' destiny:

Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God

conquered and present it to His Father so that once again the Father may be *all in all*. Like a mountain of soil before a gigantic bulldozer steadily moving forward, all that can be conquered is being collected into the arms of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose right it is to rule. He then will turn it over to God the Father.

If the earth's destiny as we have just described it is clear in our understanding, then what we are doing makes sense, because what we are doing is simply trying to discover the government of God and subject ourselves to it. The quicker we come under the authority and the government of our Lord Jesus Christ, the sooner we will see the ultimate goal of history fulfilled. As more and more people genuinely submit themselves to the government of God, His government will

we see that the problem is a very real one.

“If his sons forsake My law, and do not walk in My judgments, if they violate My statutes, and do not keep My commandments, then I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

But I will not break off My loving-kindness from him, nor deal falsely in My faithfulness” (vss. 30-33).

But the problem is not *making* a covenant with God; the problem is *keeping* that covenant! *It is learning to be faithful*. Too often, covenant people don't remain faithful to the covenant they have made. In the book of Hosea you will find that every one of God's commandments was broken by His covenant people. Even though the Church professes to be God's covenant people, it too has broken God's covenant and violated God's statutes throughout history.

Because of our disobedience, God says, “I'm going to visit you with My disciplining rod.” God promises not to withdraw His faithful covenant from us, but He also promises to bring strong discipline to us when we do not uphold our covenant with Him. It's important that we realize that His discipline does not always come when we might expect it, as Ecclesiastes 8:11 confirms: “Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.” This is one aspect of God's discipline that we need to understand. If you plan on stealing a cookie from the cookie jar, He is not standing there saying, “Don't do that.” If He were, it would be easy to obey. But the judgment of God is not executed speedily. We steal one cookie, six cookies, the whole jar, raid the entire kitchen and haul out the freezer and smuggly say to ourselves, “I got away with it. Therefore God must not know about it.” Because judg-

...the destiny of our Lord Jesus is to take everything He has conquered and present it to His Father so that once again the Father may be all in all.

and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.

For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.

The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him.

And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him that God may be all in all (vss. 24-28).

Here is what the apostle Paul is telling us very clearly—everything in history is moving inexorably toward a day when Jesus will have conquered everything and everyone. Then the destiny of our Lord Jesus is to take everything He has

increase in its intensity, volume, and nature until it extends to the ends of the earth.

Keeping the Covenant

What is God saying prophetically to us then? He is saying that our destiny and purpose are to be found in a covenantal relationship with Jesus Christ the King, in which we acknowledge Him as both Lord and Christ, bow our knee to Him, embrace His government, order our lives according to His Word and seek to walk in covenant with Him and with each other. As we subject ourselves to His government in this way, we begin to fulfill our part in moving toward the consummation of history.

But once we embrace this covenantal relationship, a certain problem arises. If we look in Psalm 89

ment is not executed speedily, we think we have gotten away unpunished.

This characteristic of God is what grieved the prophets. Often they would cry out, "God, why don't you punish them?" He said, "I love them and I want to be patient with them and give them a chance. But My mercy shall not always be extended."

God's goal is not to break covenant with His people...

The principle I am pointing out should put the fear of God in us. We must understand that if we steal out of the cookie jar, God sees it! He may not punish us for it this week, *but His judgment will surely come!*

We read in Scripture that God "... watches over his word to perform it," and this applies to His discipline, too. This realization should make us put the cookie back into the cookie jar, simply because we know that God's punishment is inevitable unless we do. Zechariah confirms this in his admonition to the children of Israel:

"Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds [from the cookie jar!]" ' But they did not listen or give heed to Me," declares the Lord.

"Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, *overtake your fathers?* Then they repented and said, 'As the Lord of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us' " (Zech. 1:4-6).

Being Overtaken

The word that is significant to my point is "overtake." If you have

ever been *overtaken* by a state trooper you already know what the word means. Once I went by a trooper doing 75 mph and I said, "Smite him with blindness, Lord." Well, when he didn't come after me I was feeling really good because I thought I had gotten away with it. What I didn't know was that *he had radioed ahead!*

Overtaking is not hard to

understand. It simply means something is sneaking up on your blind side. And when God's judgments overtake you, you have really been overtaken. The scriptures make it clear that God's judgments seldom come suddenly. They are almost always stretched out over a long period of time.

One word that I believe God is saying to our nation and to the Church is this: "Just because judgment is not speedily executed, don't think I do not know of your transgressions." The truth is, the man or woman who violates God and His covenant *will be overtaken by God's judgment.*

There is, however, a positive side to being overtaken which

"If you put fifty dollars in the offering plate, five hundred will come out." The truth is, it just doesn't work like that. The way it actually works is that when you are faithful to pay your tithe, you initiate the *extended* process of overtaking.

For example, the man who prepares my income tax return has said to me, "I don't understand how any family with four children can spend so little of their income for doctor and dentist bills." My reply to that is, "We've been overtaken by God's blessing." Even though overtaking is a slow process, it is a very real one.

What God is saying prophetically to us as a people is that He has established a covenant with us through His Son, Jesus Christ, whom He has set on His holy hill as King of all creation. God has promised to be faithful to the covenant He has made with us. Because of His faithfulness, if we are unfaithful as a covenant people, He will not reject us, but instead will use His rod of discipline to bring us back to obedience. God's goal is not to break covenant with His people. Rather, He uses the rod of discipline to bring us to obedience just as our earthly fathers have done. Aren't you glad your father didn't throw you out of the

...He uses the rod of discipline to bring us to obedience just as our earthly fathers have done.

we need to remember. Those who have been faithful to God's covenant will be overtaken by God's blessing. Scripture says that the day will come when, "The plowman will overtake the reaper," which means there will be blessing everywhere. But just as judgment doesn't come suddenly, neither does God's blessing suddenly overtake us. When some people talk about giving financially, they say,

house but rather corrected you with discipline to bring you to obedience? Rather than reject us, God disciplines us to make us obedient. Even though His discipline is painful, it is nevertheless an expression of His love.

Looking again at Psalm 89, we can see how God's discipline often "overtakes" us:

But Thou hast cast off and re-

jected, Thou hast been full of wrath against Thine anointed.

Thou hast spurned the covenant of Thy servant; Thou hast profaned his crown in the dust.

Thou hast broken down all his walls; Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin.

All who pass along the way plunder him; He has become a reproach to his neighbors.

Thou hast exalted the right hand of his adversaries; Thou has made all his enemies rejoice.

Thou dost also turn back the edge of his sword, and hast not made him stand in battle.

Thou hast made his splendor to cease, and cast his throne to the ground.

Thou has shortened the days of his youth; Thou hast covered him with shame (vss. 38-45).

The psalmist is describing here a

caused the psalmist to draw closer to God and His purposes. He wasn't rejected; he was corrected.

I believe this process is now taking place in regard to our nation. Our nation is on the edge of a spiritual awakening. I believe God is about to overtake our nation. The present situation in our country could easily precipitate a spiritual awakening which could surpass any of the revivals in our history. What we need more than anything to bring this awakening about is a strong prophetic people who have a clear vision of what is coming and where we are going.

But even as we look at the prospect of a spiritual awakening in this decade, that could surge across our nation with a tremendous outpouring of God's Holy Spirit, we can't help but see the negative side of what we face—a plummeting economic picture and a precarious

Lord and there is another way to live!" If, however, God does overtake our nation with chastisement, it simply means that He loves us and He wants to purge and cleanse us, and restore us to holiness and humility.

Regardless of which way He deals with our nation, God's bulldozer will go on and on, as His eternal plan unfolds. It behooves us, then, to get on that bulldozer and ride with it to its destination rather than resist it or stand in its way. God's prophetic word to us is: "Keep covenant and faithfulness, walk in holiness and seek the face of your God." The reason for that word is that at the culmination of the age, God will purge from the earth everything that is not redeemable. A civilization or a nation or a people who have deteriorated to the place where they cannot be redeemed are then subject to God's judgment—and the judgment of God is real and severe. But judgment is not God's will for His people.

What God is saying to us prophetically is that we are His covenant people—not His only people, but part of His people. As His people, God wants us to faithfully open our hearts to His purposes and get on the bulldozer of His purposes as He moves inexorably toward the consummation of the age. May God give us the prophetic vision to see clearly to the end of this age, so that no matter what God does, we will set our minds and hearts to move on with Him. ▼

We... must respond faithfully to God's requirements and move faithfully in God's purposes, conducting our lives with humility and personal holiness.

time when God, in His covenant faithfulness, has overtaken him with the rod of chastisement. As a result, the psalmist starts to pray:

How long, O Lord? Wilt Thou hide Thyself forever? Will Thy wrath burn like fire?

Remember what my span of life is; For what vanity Thou hast created all the sons of men!

What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his soul from the power of Sheol?

Where are Thy former lovingkindnesses, O Lord, which Thou didst swear to David in Thy faithfulness?

Remember, O Lord, the reproach of Thy servants; How I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the many peoples (vss. 46-50).

Being overtaken by God's rod

national military situation. In all this the most crucial factor is not how well we negotiate diplomatically—it is whether or not God will grant our nation His favor.

We, as God's people, must respond faithfully to God's requirements and move faithfully in God's purposes, conducting our lives with humility and personal holiness.

I believe this decade will be a time for declaration and proclamation of the purposes of God. Already a clear word is beginning to emerge and many people are responding to what God is doing in the earth. If God, in His mercy, refrains from overtaking us by an economic collapse or by a military upheaval, my deep conviction is that we will have a chance to say to the nations, "Jesus Christ is

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is a national day of
prayer and fasting

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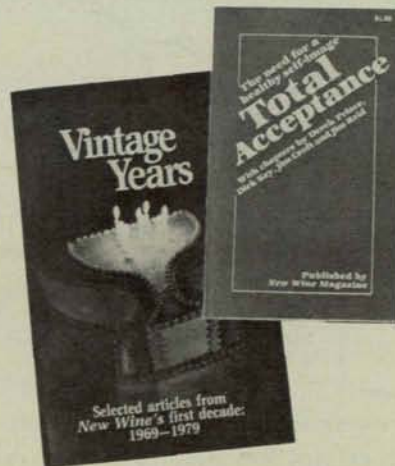


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Dear New Wine,

Politics

I believe that Christians and Christian ministries should be first concerned with the preaching of the Gospel to change men's hearts rather than to change the secular government by voting certain men into offices on the basis of two or three issues. To be blunt, I think in the November issue, even though you didn't endorse a candidate, I felt you were very much favoring the Republican ticket. Perhaps to balance out the David Goodloe article you could have printed an article by C.S. Lewis called "Meditation on the Third Commandment" from *God in Thy Dock*. Or along with William Simon's article you could have had an interview with Sen. Mark Hatfield who, as you know, is a fine Christian man at the other end of the political pole. The point I'm trying to make is does one have to be a conservative republican to be a committed Christian? That was the feeling I got from that whole issue, with the exception of Bob Mumford's article, "Is God Judging America"

which seemed to me starkly out of place (and perhaps rightly so) with the others.

Secondly, in the December issue, "Family" there was no mention of the place of the single Christian in the "eternal" Family of God, which is the Body of Christ. After reading "The Family, God's Unique Plan" I almost felt guilty for being single.

Daniel Beko
Columbus, OH

Alvie

We have enjoyed the December issue, especially Don Basham's "Alvie" story. I think he should write a book of stories. My children would be excited if he did because they really enjoyed "Alvie." We are planning to dramatize it ourselves for our Christmas pageant.

Pastor & Mrs. Dennis Heppner
Whitewood, Saskatchewan

Editor's note: A Christian publisher has plans to release Don Basham's "Alvie" in a children's book format for next Christmas.

Semper fidelis

My battalion is currently "on float" for a tour of Korea, Indonesia, Australia, East Africa and a cruise in the Indian Ocean, spanning a six-month period.

Prior to our departure from Hawaii, my mother sent me a box of tapes in which some "New Wine Tape of the Month" were included. I could never begin to tell you the blessings I've received from *New Wine*. I would like to continue receiving your magazine, but most of all I need your prayers that we

Christian Marines and sailors would not only return home safe, but be the witness that would justify souls everywhere we go. Not only to our comrades-in-arms, but to the native Filipinos, Koreans, Thais, Africans, Aussies and the whole bunch.

Jeff Peppers, L/Cpl.
FPO, San Francisco

Here's one side...

The Roots Series [Nov.] on the Latter Rain by Riss was excellent! Being a former Elim Bible Institute student I appreciated the author's depth and grace with which he handled this sensitive time in Church history. That last paragraph sounded like a latter rain prophecy!

Jerry Blackstone
Schenectady, NY

...Here's the other

Mr. Riss' article on the Latter Rain [Roots, Nov.] mentions none of the abuses of latter rain. You'd never know about the lives that were wrecked, the churches that were torn up, the pastors and men of God who got burned in this thing. It is nothing less than a cheap public relations scam on a very shabby chapter in American Pentecostalism.

R.C. Crenshaw
Eugene, OR

The new look

I appreciate your new cover. Now people will not be wondering what brand of wine you sell. I must say it is the *very best*.

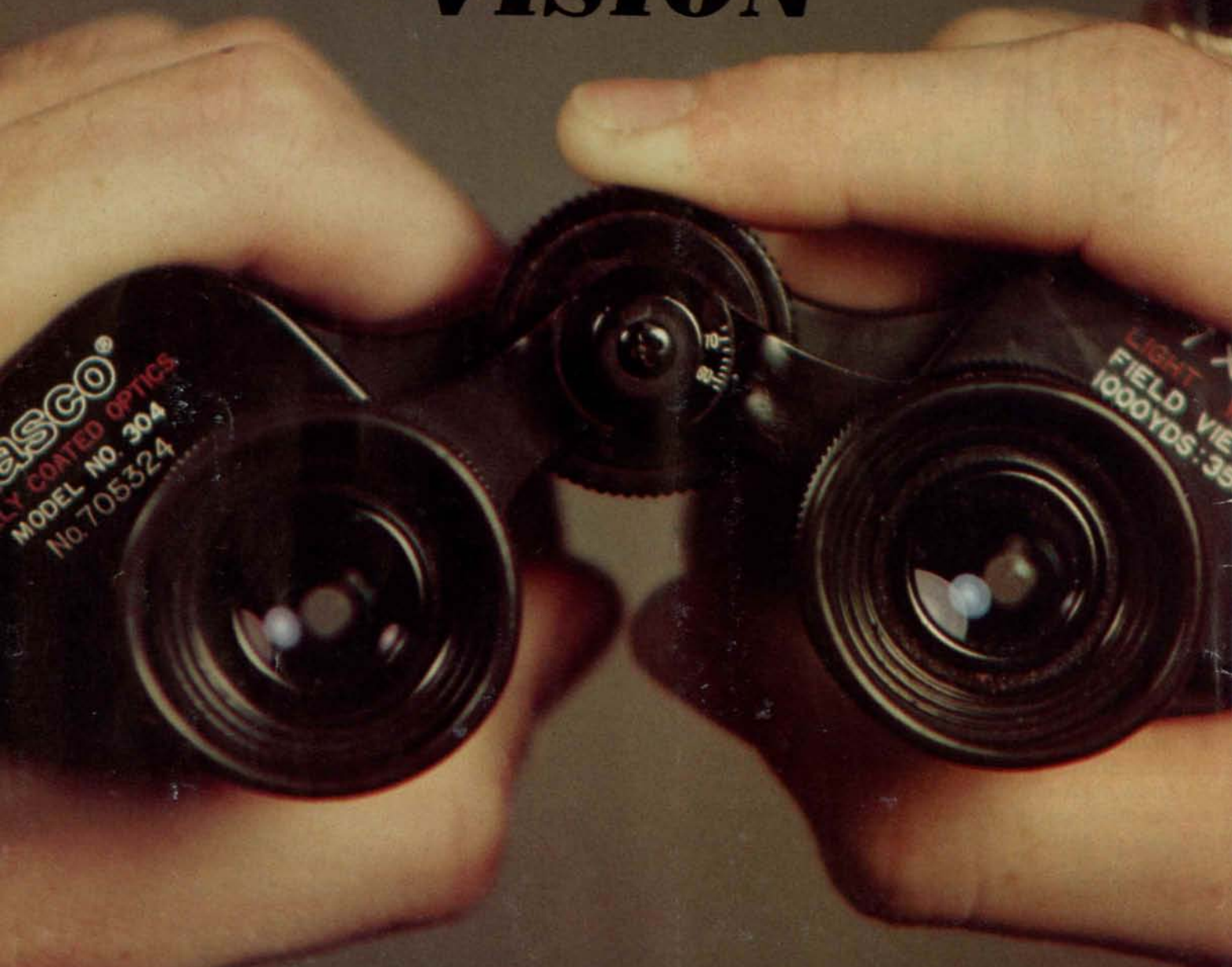
Phyllis Powell
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The editorial policy and purpose of *New Wine* is: (1) to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all nations, (2) to work with all Christian ministries for the maturity and unity of His Church, (3) thus making ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord. We recognize that, according to the Scriptures, God uses men given as ministries to build His Church in the earth. However, the basis of our relationship is not primarily commitment to human personalities, but to Jesus Christ as Head, to the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate standard by which all revelation and practice is to be judged and to God's purpose for His people in the earth at this time, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit. *New Wine* is a non-subscription magazine supported by the voluntary contributions of those who believe in its mission. All

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