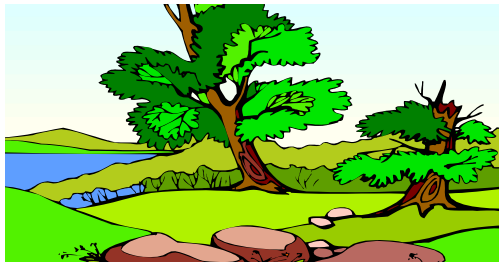


INHERIT THE LAND

God's plan for the Human Race



John & Elaine McLachlan
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PREFACE

Amos was only a shepherd. So says the Scripture. There are ordinary people out there – people who love God the Father, love Jesus and love the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of this book is to inspire and encourage these ordinary people to rise up in His power – this is His land, the great South Land of the Holy Spirit. It is time for the end-harvest, and it is also time that we demonstrate God's eternal purposes for this in-gathering. This is what the Lord Almighty says: “In those days ten men from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, ‘Let us go with you because we have heard that God is with you.’” (Zechariah 8:23) “The days are coming”, declares the Lord, “when the reaper will be overtaken by the ploughman and the planter by the one treading the grapes.” (Amos 9:13) [*People will come into the Kingdom of God without the traditional preparation, eg, Bible classes, and will be empowered even before they are traditionally “inducted”, eg, water baptism etc.*]

CHAPTER 1 God's Dream – God's Heart

We believe with all our heart that God has a dream, a longing for His Eden here on this earth. He has always had it since before Adam and Eve were put in Eden – His plan was His Family, in His Place, under His Care and Instruction. He wanted to work with them in fellowship and to enjoy their company as much as they would enjoy His. So that they could enjoy this relationship to the full, He gave them authority over everything He had created except each other. Their relationship with each other was to be one of support and encouragement as equals. He created them to be “speaking spirits” in His image.

Even after they disobeyed and were sent out of the Garden, God progressively, through the Old Testament, chose families and people with whom He made covenants. Noah was a righteous man so God rescued him and his family and gave him freshly washed land and the promise that there would always be seed time and harvest.

Abraham was chosen, blessed and instructed because his descendants were to inherit Canaan. This was to be a haven in the midst of those who were not God's chosen family, where God's favour would be demonstrated to attract people to God. Abraham is called a friend of God. God instructed him to look at, to walk on and to take possession of the land.

Promises and covenant were also given to Isaac and Jacob, which included possessing land, and particularly claiming land back from those who were not in covenant with God. They were to expect blessings and increase.

Moses was called by God to take His people out of slavery to this Promised Land, and although he did not enter himself, the Bible tells us that he looked forward to an eternal reward.

David was a man after God's own heart because, even though he made some bad mistakes, he was chosen and placed himself willingly under God's instruction in God's place. He trusted God to help him hold the land against God's enemies. God promised him that his family and his kingdom would last for ever. It was OK to make a mistake if you were also easily corrected and turned to God for forgiveness, in simple trust.

There are the well-known words to Solomon "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." (1Chronicles 7:14)

Over and over again God reveals this principle to the kings following Solomon. Those who removed the idols and high places in the land were considered good and right in the eyes of the Lord. These kings also commanded those they ruled to seek the Lord. God was with them in all their battles to keep "invaders" out of the land, and from taking the people captive. This good

leadership encouraged the people to seek God "eagerly" and they experienced His presence. (eg, Jehoshaphat, 2 Chronicles 17:6)

Joash's story is significant because while Jehoiada was advising him, the Kingdom and the land prospered, but after his death Joash listened to bad advice and the land and the people were overcome by enemies.

The Bible tells us that the next king who did what was right in the eyes of the Lord was Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:4-5). He sought the Lord and God gave him success.

Hezekiah's story is amazing. Not only was it said of him that he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord but he received such revelation that he was moved in his heart to clean up the temple and take out **every** defiled thing. He encouraged every person in the kingdom to repent and explained why so many disasters had overtaken both the people and the land. This was obviously a revelation from God because he consecrated himself and sought the Lord, submitted to Him and set his heart to be faithful. His testimony was that "the Lord is gracious and compassionate. He will not turn His face from you if you return to Him." (2 Chronicles 30:9) He prayed for the people, and Jerusalem (and all the land) was filled with the joy of the Lord. People spontaneously smashed all the idols and high places and there was great prosperity and extraordinary generosity.

When we read both Major and Minor prophetic writings we see they had the same revelation. In Isaiah 6, Isaiah has a vision of

the awesomeness of God, yet he is made aware that God wants to forgive sin, and empower and equip those who come into this personal relationship with Himself to represent Him and speak for Him. He saw the mountain of the Lord as a place of peace and prosperity. (Isaiah 2:1-4)

In Jeremiah (1:5) God tells Jeremiah that he was known by God before he was even conceived, and chosen before his birth to be God's prophet. Like Isaiah, God touched his mouth and he was consecrated to speak God's words. He heard from the Lord that God's people would be restored to the land that He had promised their forefathers. (Jer 30:3)

Ezekiel and Daniel also had visions and revelations of God and had this extraordinary personal relationship with Him so that they knew Him intimately and could speak so confidently what was in God's heart. When we read their writings they explain so clearly what God desires in relationship with His chosen ones. It is the most glorious and wonderful thing to be this close to God's heart.

Under the Old Covenant God chose special people for this relationship, because from the time Adam and Eve gave the authority God had given them to Satan, Satan had rulership rights on the earth and he was (and is) utterly determined to prevent people from this relationship with God – God's people, in God's place and under God's protection and guidance. God had to put His own strategy into operation step by step, methodically over the generations because His plans are predetermined from the

creation of the world and will not be thwarted. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. It is not wise to be at cross-purposes with the Almighty God.

Chapter 2 – God’s “Always” Purpose in SAVING / EMPOWERING / WORKING IN and THROUGH

Genesis 1:31 tells us that God considered His creation very good. He had created a delightful garden in which to place man, His treasured creation “in His image”. God gave absolute authority to rule and care for this place and to fill and subdue (v28). His man named the animals and by the words from his mouth and God’s power in his hand was to expect increase in plants and animals and keep things under his control. God obviously intended to instruct the man on an ongoing basis so He gave one instruction/warning – do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God’s wisdom is that we learn about evil only in the context of “good”.

When man listened to the devil and disobeyed God it must have hurt God’s heart unbearably. God surely hoped that when He confronted them they would be sorry. Adam and Eve must have realized when they noticed they were naked that something

was wrong because they went and hid. This is the ugly thing about sin. Instead they blustered, bleated and blamed each other and made excuses. Not only did the judgement of God fall on Adam and Eve but also on the land. (Genesis 3:17&18)

God said (Psalm 115:16)...the earth He has given to man. God has placed His word even above His name (Psalm 138:2), so He could not take back the authority He had given over His creation and now it was in the devil's hands. It could only legally be taken back by a man. This is why He planned a "second Adam", to get it right. (Romans 5:12-17)

It seems extraordinary that God trusted man like that to such a responsibility. But He had made him/her in His own likeness, and just as we need to train our own children, He intended to train His own too. Trust, hope, taking responsibility and exercising authority are learnt by practising these qualities under the guidance of one who knows. Just like any father, God must have had delightful plans and that's why he made us with free-will, so that it could all be learnt in the atmosphere of love.

When His precious creation, man, failed Him, God set in motion Plan B – to teach man about blood sacrifice. He clothed Adam and Eve with the skin of animals and made a promise in Genesis 3:15 concerning the offspring of the woman who would crush the serpent's head. The shedding of blood could absolve guilt (Hebrews 9:22&23) and cleanse from the stain of sin.

See how hopeful God is! He is thinking that man would be happy to know that there is a way out of the death penalty. God so much wants fellowship with His children so that He can pour out the blessings on them and through them to others. Thus everything we touch, physically and spiritually will be a blessing. His love is so great that He believes all people will want all the good things He has planned, including the personal relationship that was His original plan. However as we read in Genesis 5 only Enoch wanted that fellowship. (Hebrews 11:5) God shared with him about the flood He was contemplating to cleanse the land. Enoch spoke God's plan into being by naming his son, Methuselah, which means "when he is dead it will come". Perhaps Enoch was glad to receive his heavenly inheritance early because his righteous soul, like Lot's (2 Peter 2:7&8) was distressed by the lawlessness. Lamech, Methuselah's son, died before his father and Genesis 6 gives the account of those last 100 years of the increase in wickedness in the land. Lamech named his son, Noah, which means comfort, because he did not understand fellowship with God. 2 Chronicles 16:9 says that God's eyes range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. The blood sacrifice that Noah made when he was rescued from the flood pleased God and He made a covenant with Noah to bless the earth and all living creatures.

Sin increased again. This time people wanted to make a name for themselves. (Gen 11) God's strategy was to scatter them by

confusing their languages. Thus the people began to spread over the world. Most did not understand God's plan for man and His ways, so began to develop their own ways and ultimately their own gods.

God again chose a man. Perhaps He tried to speak to many in the nearly 400 years but it was Abraham who chose to obey the call to go to a land that God had chosen to bless. God's purposes are beginning to be established all over again – God's people, in God's place, in fellowship with Him, under His guidance. God Himself speaks wonderful and eternal promises to Abram, that can never be withdrawn (and never have been) and Abram believed them. This belief involved a faith walk of obedience, which at the same time showed Abram God's character and encouraged Abram to greater faith and obedience. This demonstrated the truth of God's promises as blessings flowed to Abram, his household and the people that Abram associated with. The personal relationship developed so that Abram became Abraham, the friend of God.

The Old Testament is a continuing story of a few who obeyed and many who did not. Hebrews 11 names those whom God considered faithful, either in a little or sometimes much. There were not many who longed for friendship with God as much as He wanted it with His children. But David was one who did. The Psalms show how David talked with God all the time and wrote down what God said too. David understood the empowering of

the Holy Spirit and the Anointing of God and knew that sin spoiled that. (eg, Psalm 51) David knew that obedience and generosity brought the blessing of God and the greatest promise that God could give – your house and your kingdom shall endure for ever before Me, your throne shall be established for ever. (2 Samuel 7:16) He appreciated the provision of God for cleansing from sin by blood sacrifice and was lavish in this by faith. We believe that David thought about the words of Moses, “the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him”, (Deuteronomy 18:15) and the expectation of the Messiah. It is amazing how God puts these marvellous thoughts into our hearts.

God inspired the Prophets later to tell more about Messiah, His coming in the flesh to be the Saviour of the world but God had even more wonderful plans to follow this event. He was orchestrating even more glorious plans for His children than anyone could have foreseen. It was as if the more His enemy seemed to succeed in overthrowing, the greater and more extravagant were the plans of God for those in fellowship with Him.

Chapter 3 – Satan’s Strategy– in total opposition to God

This topic is a very important one because it is not spoken about much and yet the Bible warns us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood (other people) but against the rulers, the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 6:12)

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers.

(2 Corinthians 4:4)

When Adam and Eve handed over the authority that God gave them at the beginning they probably had no concept of the long term effect of their betrayal of trust. 1 John 5:19 tells us that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. When Satan came to tempt Jesus he said “I will give you all the authority and splendour (of the kingdoms of the world) for it has been given to me...” This comment is probably the only “truth” he ever spoke and Jesus did not refute it because He was only too well aware of how Satan got it.

The story of Satan’s creation and fall from heaven is described in Isaiah 14 & Ezekiel 28. Satan was created perfectly beautiful, full of wisdom, in Eden the garden of God, ordained and anointed as a guardian cherub, with access to the holy mountain of God. He was created blameless but pride filled his heart and he began to think of himself as a god and he rebelled against God. He wanted to raise his throne above the stars (angels) of God.

He decided to make himself like the Most High and called himself a god, considered himself as wise as a god and that he should sit on the throne of a god. He was expelled in disgrace from God's mountain, cast down from Heaven. Jesus said (Luke 10:18) "I saw Satan fall like lightning from Heaven". Satan took 1/3 of the angels with him – fallen angels to do his work in direct opposition to God. These are the rulers and powers in the heavenly realms. Satan means adversary and is named variously the Accuser of the brethren, the devil, Deceiver, father of lies, Beelzeboul (Baal of Baals) and prince of this world. The Apostle Peter stresses the ferocity of Satan's opposition to God and any of His family "as a roaring lion". (1 Peter 5:8) The Apostle Paul writes of Satan's cunning as masquerading as an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14) Satan is therefore a malignant reality, always hostile to God and to God's people. (*Quote from L.M. in the New Bible Dictionary*)

Jesus describes Satan's mission is to kill, steal and destroy. He knows well the "letter" of God's word and any form of legalism has his signature on it. This is one of his favourite ways to attack followers of Jesus. He also knows that we are created as "speaking spirits" and tries to get us to speak contrary to God's heart. He also likes to misapply God's word as he did to Jesus in the temptations. What is really repulsive is that Satan knows well the effect of Adam's and Eve's original sin on the human race and has people blaming God for the natural disasters that occur

on the earth though the Bible says that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (Romans 8:22)

It seems very curious that an angel with such an important position in the garden of God would rebel. There are some very interesting verses in the Bible which could answer this question and also warn us of falling into the same trap and become agents for God's enemy.

Psalms 8 talks about David's wonder at God's concern and care for man. "You have made him a little lower than Elohim (God) and crowned him with glory and honour. You have made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet."

Peter wrote, in talking about the salvation plan of God – even angels long to look into these things (1 Peter 1:12) and Paul wrote – the glorious mystery of God, which is Christ (the anointed one and His anointing) in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

Jealousy must have been a factor as well as the pride that we have already mentioned. If God had chosen man to be His representative, did Satan decide that he would not do it that way? **God works by love** and has given man free-will but **Satan works by control**.

Satan's strategy also includes using his fallen angels (demons). Satan actually cannot create anything but he is a shrewd imitator. God designed angels to serve Him and to serve those who will inherit salvation. (Hebrews 1:14) So Satan uses his

demons to wait on the mistakes of people and then do what these foolish people “authorise”. These demons are assigned to areas (land) and also to people. They prowl the area or bother the person, waiting for those who are ignorant (even believers) to open their mouths and invite or “prophecy” destructive things which are contrary to God’s plans. These demons desire a body to operate through. Those who are not filled with the Holy Spirit are vulnerable to be puppets/agents of the evil one. Once destructive things begin to happen more demons are sent to reinforce, until an area becomes known by those characteristics. Demons like to be promoted. They like to have charge in an area (or someone’s life) so that place becomes known by their name. We call these territorial spirits and they have a satanically inspired right to rule. Those who are being used by the devil often have no idea because the devil has blinded them. This is why Jesus said on the Cross “Father forgive them for they don’t know what they are doing”. If a person gives him “permission” to gain a foothold in his/her life by actually falling into temptation, the demons are quick to take advantage unless the person repents and is cleansed by the blood of Jesus, preferably before the effects cause trouble. (1 John 1:9) Otherwise the same principle operates and that person can become ruled by demonic powers.

The kings in the Old Testament were considered evil if they allowed these places which were ruled by false gods to flourish and were regarded as doing right and pleasing to God if they

pulled down the “high places”, where the rulers and powers were leading people away from God. Keeping the land free from Satan’s power and dedicated to God and His rule was a top priority for spiritual purity. The spiritual environment is more important than the physical. (eg, Genesis 13) This was of course the reason why God commanded the Israelites to annihilate His enemies from the Land.

Exorcism is not God’s way to release people from demonic influence. Jesus was the expert and He delivered people through compassion and love. When people receive the Holy Spirit through inviting Him into their lives, they are made clean instantly. This is why Jesus sometimes said “Go and sin no more”. (eg, John 5:14)

Chapter 4 – Knowledge and the Wisdom of God

Who can know the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God? (1 Corinthians 2:11)

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:9)

My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. (Hosea 4:6)

Pay attention to what I say...keep them within your heart; for they are life... and health to a man... (Proverbs 4:20&21)

The tongue has the power of life and death. (Proverbs 18:21)

Knowledge puffs up. (1 Corinthians 8:1b&2)

There are two distinct senses of “knowing”

1. – learned information from experiences of the past

2. – fresh revelation by the Holy Spirit based on God’s word

God is the source of all wisdom but educational success depends on how much knowledge a person can acquire and spew forth, whether it is relevant to one’s life or not. It might be enjoyable to outspoke another person in a debate and win an argument but if taken too seriously it will divide people into factions. Titus 3:9-11 actually warns us not to do this.

For the born-again Christian, ie, a follower of Jesus Christ, we have an obligation to obey God’s word. “If you love me you will obey what I command”. (John 14:15) This does involve careful study of God’s word, but our motivation should be to understand God’s heart, to get to know His nature and be transformed by the renewing of our minds. (Romans 12:2)

Theologians have tended to debate Bible word origins and meanings, entirely independent of God’s revelation by the Holy Spirit and this has resulted in learned information from the past.

God however is really up to date. He does keep track of world trends (Satan’s latest fad) and is quite ready with an even better strategy which he is more than ready to reveal to one of His followers. Fresh revelation is essential to have victory over these world trends and enforce Jesus’ triumph on the Cross. He has no

one but us now, His church, His body, to carry out His work in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Whatever is good and perfect comes from God. (James 1:17) Modern things like e-mail and computers as a means of communication are supposed to be a blessing so we would be pretty stupid to continue to communicate by carrier pigeon.

It is up to us to take hold of any new revelation which is from God, share it and work together, not hanging on to our old ways in stubbornness and pride.

God's intention from the beginning was to teach us His ways into our hearts. "I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees..." (Ezekiel 36:27)

I will tell you of new things, of hidden things unknown to you, you have not heard of them before today, so you cannot say 'yes, I knew them'... (Isaiah 48:6)

I am the Lord your God who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. (Isaiah 48:7)

The Lord's chosen ally will carry out His purpose against Babylon (the world's system)...He will succeed in his mission...(Isaiah 48:14)

In Jesus' time on this earth people were amazed at Jesus' knowledge but He told them "my teaching is not my own. It comes from Him who sent me". (John 7:16) He warned the Jews, the very people to whom God had sent Him – "You diligently

study the Scriptures... which testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.” (John 5:39&40).

Revelation from God’s heart to ours (Spirit to spirit) is the only knowledge that is of any spiritual value. (1 Corinthians 13:8) Where there is knowledge it will pass away. There was a time when people thought the latest weapon was a gun – considered a great improvement on bows and arrows. There was a time when Morse code was considered the best communication tool. There was a time when a hot-air balloon was an incredible way to fly off the ground. These are old-fashioned novelties now.

When God’s word abides in us only then can it bring forth practical knowledge. Knowing the truth sets us free. Jesus says He is the truth. The people of Jerusalem knew Jesus as son of Mary and Joseph and they knew His brothers. They saw with their outward eyes, but they did not have a revelation of who He really was. They saw the miracles and heard His teaching and their heart witness was that He was sent from God but their rational minds argued with their instinct (their hearts).

The Psalmist, David, wrote “O Lord ... you know me”. (Psalm 139) Paul wrote “Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known”. (1 Corinthians 13:12) James wrote “If any of you lacks wisdom he should ask God, who gives generously to all”. (James 1:5) We are absolutely convinced that God longs for us to seek Him, to learn from Him, one step at a time so that we can know His heart, His character, His wisdom, so that we can put it

into practice in our lives. God's wisdom is not to air off our superior knowledge and debate with others.

Chapter 5 – Choices

So far we have looked at God's dream and man's inability to grasp it or appreciate it. Many people think that the Old Testament is all God's judgement, war and death, but this is very superficial reading. God's heart was, is and always will be not wanting any to perish. (John 3:16) He has always wanted people to have happy, fulfilled and prosperous lives, blessed so that they can bless others, at peace, living in a good land. Any good father wants this for his children. God is good all the time and if we can confess this we can experience this too. Take David's experience and testimony in Psalm 103.

He forgives all your sins

He heals all your diseases

He redeems your life from the pit

He crowns you with love and compassion

He satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed...

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed

He is slow to anger because he is abounding in love (patient acceptance of our weaknesses)

He does not treat us as our sins deserve

He has removed our transgressions from us.

The most cursory reading of the Old Testament, with one's mind-set being that God is good all the time brings to view the promises such as these. Every time God reveals His own name, YAHWEH, it is accompanied by a revelation of His character, eg, The Lord, Healer, or the Lord, Righteousness. (Exodus 15:26 and Jeremiah 33:16). The "Names of God" is a (knowledge) study in itself but belief (trust in Him) brings the reality of these names into our experience. Every revelation that we receive into our hearts and not just our minds helps us to believe more in a personal God who wants to be in relationship with us. This attitude makes sense of the price Jesus paid on the Cross for our salvation and begins to give us a concept of "His incomparably great power for us who believe". (Ephesians 1:19).

Even before Jesus came to redeem us, and people were dead in their transgressions and sins, blinded by the god of this world, objects of God's wrath (which is not actually God's anger, more accurately God's revulsion of sin). God still loved us, because God IS love. All through the Old Testament it is recorded that God, through His prophets, invites "Repent, turn to me". (eg, Hosea 14:1&2 and Joel 2:12) Perhaps parents whose children have rebelled would understand God's anguish and such a longing for reconciliation. The difficulty is that sin breeds guilt and fear and these are what Satan's destructive mental attacks feed on, so

that we are frightened to go to a Holy God. Thus we continue in Satan's power. To really believe that God longs for us to be free of Satan's power gives the necessary impetus for us to return to Him and overcome our fear that we will fail again. God has commanded us to forgive seventy times seven (Matthew 18:22) so He must be prepared to do the same or even more. He is prepared not only to forgive us but to free us from Satan's power which causes us to do the sin in the first place. His perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. (1 John 4:18)

Our responsibility is to make the good choices. Justifying ourselves and blaming others for and in our problems is exactly what Adam and Eve did when caught out in sin and people have done that ever since. The best choice is to accept that God has already dealt with the whole sin problem when He put the WHOLE blame on Jesus. We sometimes call it the Divine exchange. God made Him who had no sin to be the sin offering for us so that we might become the righteousness of God. Jesus took our sin and gave us His right standing with God in exchange. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

This right standing gives us confidence to approach the throne of Grace so that we may find help in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16) If this is freely available to us why not choose God's most excellent way?

But there is still more. God wants to pour out blessing upon blessing to those who will receive. There is not just salvation and

eternal life. Every time we come into God's presence with faith God will give us more. He seals us with His Holy Spirit but He wants to fill us with His Holy Spirit until we manifest His holiness for all to see His glory on us. Everywhere we go we can be a blessing. He told both Moses and Joshua "I will give you every place where you set your foot". (Joshua 1:3) If His anointing (His glory on us) breaks yokes and removes burdens, (Isaiah 10:27) ie, the curse on mankind, it has also broken the whole curse which included the land. Jesus has won back our dominion as set out in Genesis 1, but it is up to us to claim it. We do have angelic helpers to serve us and they await our instructions. (Hebrews 1:14) Not much has been taught about how to handle this but it is important to learn because of the invisible powers.

There is great interest in our society today about the occult. There are many practising witches, sorcerers and mediums about and they operate in all of Satan's powers. The word of God says that greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:4) These are not idle words but an encouragement to overcome. These people openly "pray" to Satan and curse. It doesn't just happen in pagan countries. It is happening in supposedly civilized societies and rich countries. If Christians are wondering why bad things happen to good people they might be shocked that there are some people who could be cursing them, "praying" that their marriage or health break down or speaking out that hurricanes are going to hit such and such a town, giving Satan a legal right

to kill, steal and destroy. God has, however, provided us with guardian angels who we can instruct to protect us and our property (our space or our land). We don't just take God's protection for granted but activate our faith according to His "manual for living" (the Bible). God has provided everything for us but we need to know and believe and then act out our belief. These are our choices.

Chapter 6 – The Strong Support the Weak (Israel's Vulnerability)

Israel, the apple of God's eye, was God's focus for most of the Old Testament and also Jesus' own ministry. (eg, Deuteronomy 32: 10) When He said He came to seek and save what was lost He primarily meant the Jewish people who had turned away from God. (Luke 19:10) The story of the healing of the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman also indicates that Jesus came primarily for the Jewish people. (Mark 7:24-30) God always wanted them to be a witness to the nations, so that, for example, when they were leaving Egypt, by the favour of God, many Egyptians came with them because they saw that God was with them. (Exodus 12:38 & 44) Jeremiah writes that the Lord said "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness..." (Jer 31:3)

It was not meant to be “especially holy” people but all God’s chosen people. But even as early in the Bible as Sinai the people chose to have a representative (Moses). (Exodus 19) They continued to make disastrous choices of disobedience and lack of trust for the next 40 years.

Because God is so patient He went on blessing them (if they would receive from Him), but eventually, at the end of the Old Testament God was apparently silent for about 400 years. Paul explains it in Romans 9-11. Theirs is adoption, divine glory, covenants and promises of God. (Rom 9:4) They are the human ancestry of Jesus. God’s word had not failed. They were zealous for God but refused to believe God’s way for righteousness, by faith, and chose to establish their own. (10:2&3) God has decreed that our right standing with Him, from the time Jesus died and rose again, is in the Messiah and the anointing that He bestows by the Holy Spirit. God has also decreed that there is no difference between Jew and non-Jew – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him. (10:12) Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. God’s grace is extraordinary. He has cut off the original branches because of unbelief in order to graft in new “shoots.” These are not of the “original” plant but are given opportunity by God to be nourished by the Root. There is a powerful warning though. If the “original” branches were cut off because of unbelief how risky it is for the grafted branches for the same reason. There is also a

powerful incentive with the boot on the other foot, to encourage the original branches to be grafted back easily. In other words, the church has a responsibility to walk out their lives in a way that will attract the Jewish people to Jesus. The Holocaust was **NOT** a good way! Of course we understand that Hitler was actually a Satanist and this really is an extreme. Jesus does give us a really helpful instruction. "By this all people will know you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35)

Accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgement (Romans 14:1) and we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak. (Romans 15:1) Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. (Colossians 3:12&13)

Love is not a mushy thing. We are not meant to condone evil but love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8) Jesus was obviously never surprised at the depths to which people can sink when Satan has got a hold. Acts 10:38 says that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power...He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him. He said about Himself "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners". (Matthew 9:13) It is always about whether people want to break free of their sins, failings and illnesses. We never know how Satan got his hold. It might be one small mistake which opened the way down the

wrong path. We have heard it said that the Gospel is about your future, not about your past.

The Bible says “how can they hear without a preacher?” Actions speak louder than words, or as James puts it, (2:17) “Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” If we preach and don’t practise we are hypocrites. This brings our witness into disrepute and, by association, our message.

Love, as taught by Jesus, is to do the best for people, not by one’s own power, but in the power of the Holy Spirit, according to the will of the Father, whose heart is full of love and wanting to set people free from anything that hinders them from being what He has planned for them.

1 Corinthians 13 teaches that love is patient, kind, not envious, not boastful, not proud, not rude, not self-seeking, not easily angered, doesn’t keep a record of wrongs, doesn’t get pleasure out of evil but rejoices in the truth. Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres, and never fails. This means that God is like this, all the time. The fact that Jesus has already paid the price for sin means that there is no reason for us to not be in fellowship with God except our own stubbornness or ignorance.

Those of us who already know (have experienced) God’s love have a responsibility to demonstrate this love to those who are weaker in the faith, and especially to those who do not yet have faith in God.

God has allowed Israel to suffer, so that the church can experience God's love, but we also should have a love for them so that their eyes will be opened to Jesus, the Truth. Just because they might be dealing with their neighbours in the Old Testament way, we should not be judging them from the perspective of the fact that God has opened our eyes to His New Covenant and sins forgiven.

Chapter 7 – How Effective Witness Works

We are still talking about people rather than land, yet the Bible speaks about the Holy Land.

We actually do understand the link because even as children we associate good experiences and happy times with particular places. I heard of a lady who would never go to church again after the funeral of a special relative because of the memories it evoked. Children (and adults who take their grandchildren there) love McDonald's because it is a place for treats. These examples help us to realize this truth.

If people come into a church and have any sort of unwelcoming experience, if they have a struggle to follow what is going on and no one comes alongside to help them, if all the music is unfamiliar and there is not an enthusiastic group that look as if they are enjoying it, they might not only not return but

might be put off trying anywhere else again. The very strange thing is that most, though by no means all, churches expect new people to manage somehow on their own. The prevailing culture seems to be that this is our tribe, our way of doing things so make an effort to fit in. If the people speak to the visitor it is to find out where they are from and if it is a long way from there the visitor is dropped like a hot cake, because they are not likely to join that church. In the last four years we have visited many churches as part of our research towards this book and these facts are true in the majority of places. When we talk to people in the streets many do not like the church although they love God. They are really happy when we just want to pray God's blessing on them, and often return to pray again.

These are very alarming facts. It would seem that the church, to a great extent, has lost credibility in the community. People seem to think that you go to church if want a baptism or funeral. Weddings are happening more often in parks and other "happy" places. They seem to believe in the religious rituals but are even being refused those because they are not members of the particular church that they perceive as a "beautiful" atmosphere for their function. Now we are not speaking against people's "legal" principles here. We are trying to address effective witness. These problems need to be thought through if the church is to be an effective ambassador for the love of God. (2 Corinthians 5:20)

First, there is Jesus' commission to the church "GO..." (Matthew 28:19) It is very interesting that He did not say "make them come to your little group and adopt your little culture". He actually said "make disciples of all nations". Heaven is to be filled with people from every tribe and language and people and nation, to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign on earth. (Revelation 5:9&10) We will all fellowship together, not in separate blocks. We are going to love each other in spite of our differences and communicate with each other in love and appreciation. We need to start learning to do this while we are on this earth.

Then there is the story of the wedding banquet. (Matthew 22:1-14) It is plain from this story that the people who had been first invited to the banquet were too busy to bother to actually attend. They had not realized the significance of this particular banquet and had not taken the invitation seriously. We meet many who turn down the offer to pray for God's blessing. The ones that give me most concern are those who turn up their noses and say, in a haughty voice, that they are Christians already and prayed the sinner's prayer 25 years ago, so they do not need to say it again. This action always reminds me of these guests.

We are not sure about the motivation behind most invitations to attend a particular church but we are sure why Jesus, the head of the church, would like people to come to Him. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take

my yoke upon you and learn from me... (Matthew 11:28&29) See, it says come to ME. This means that effective witness introduces people to Jesus.

What about the weary and burdened bit? The church has always been good at the charity idea – old, cast-off clothes and unwanted goods, especially using these to “raise” money for their other projects. We were good at this ourselves until the Lord spoke to us about giving Him left-overs. (Matthew 25:40) But this does not address why people are like this – without wisdom to budget (allowing pests to devour crops and vines to cast their fruit). (Malachi 3:11) God’s economy is “give and it will be given to you”. (Luke 6:38) The widow who gave two small coins understood God’s giving nature better than the teachers of the Law. (Mark 12:42) Some churches with the biggest and the most vibrant congregations are openly criticized for teaching this, yet the people there are prospering amazingly.

What about the sick and those oppressed by the devil? Do people get free at the church? Some churches do have healing meetings so they are trying to address this problem. It would be a more effective witness if the people who belong there were not talking about their own illnesses and such and such a doctor who cured them. Jesus is the healer. He might choose to use ordinary medicine or medical procedures but we should heed Asa’s experience. (2 Chronicles 16:12)

Take my yoke upon you – we have long connected this with Proverbs 3:3. “Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck...” – we are yoked to God, revelling in His love and loving Him in return, aware of His faithfulness and promise to never leave us and we know that our faithfulness to not leave Him is what sustains us and also blesses Him. What an incredible privilege! Almighty God and me together! Oxen were yoked together so that the strong one could help the weak. Good picture!

Lastly, learn **from** me, not learn about me. One needs a personal relationship with Jesus to learn from Him. **My** sheep listen to my voice...they follow **me**. (John 10:27) This personal relationship can only come through being born by the Spirit of God. God has limited Himself by giving us free-will. Just as we cannot go into another person’s house unless that person invites us in, so also Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, cannot come into our lives. There are some churches that teach this but the common practice, in our experience, is that there are teaching classes and/or baptism ceremonies, necessary Bible study and church attendance before one “qualifies”. Effective witness demonstrates that it is easy to come into God’s family – **repent** (change your mind from going your own way and be willing to try God’s), **believe** (that Jesus has paid the price for us to be connected with God) and **receive** (the Holy Spirit birth).

Chapter 8 – What is coming, Good and Bad

There are many modern-day prophets speaking out what they believe. Some are even getting onto the television, radio and in the newspapers. Most Christians, though, sense that the time is short for us to preach the Gospel to the nations before the return of Jesus. Yet though there is this sense of urgency for evangelism the church is still using the way that they have always done to reach people.

We heard a very interesting prophecy in 1999 when everyone in the “world” was worrying about Y2K. It was not long after the year 2000 rolled over without a hitch that we first prepared the outline for this book. But, apart from the outline, we had no idea what we were to write, so we put the outline aside. It is only this year, 2010, nine years later, that we have had the go-ahead from the Lord to finish the book. In the intervening years the Lord has taught us many things, because we have asked Him many questions, the most important one to us was whether there was a quicker way to evangelize than what we had done before when we were members of a local church.

Friendship evangelism, where one makes friends with a non-christian until they are willing to come to church, was the established way in the church teaching. The church has variously encouraged door-to-door visiting, programmes of explaining

Christianity, surveys, tract ministry where one hands out either an invitation to the latest programme at the church or an exposition of beliefs, prayer nights (or mornings) where one fasts and prays for God to save everyone, and probably a dozen other ways to “evangelize”, all of which we took part in, when the church leader promoted a strategy.

The serious difficulty with these methods was the person doing the work or method. If the “target” is not drawn to you as a person you are wasting your time, or worse, putting them off joining the church completely. None of us has completed our faith journey and so there is still refining to be done by the Potter. The people in the world often look for excuses to justify their position and point to hypocrisy in the church. They know instinctively that we are supposed to be good, but their ideas of “good” are based on their own perspectives. Friendship evangelism has fallen far short of being effective and only really works for really “nice” people.

So what is to be done if your personality is bold and confrontational? We each have said to the Lord “Here I am, send me”, but bold and confrontational is not “nice”. This is where our prayer came in. Is there a quicker and more productive way to evangelize?

Yes, there is but there is a “price”. The price is to lay down all preconceived ideas and try something quite different. Paul writes that his message and his preaching were not with wise and

persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that the hearer's faith might not rest on man's wisdom, but on God's power. (1 Corinthians 2:4)

This, then, is to be purely by the Spirit of God.

This is where we go back to the interesting prophecy, as mentioned above. The prophet believed that all the panic about Y2K was not about the natural things but about what was happening in God's realm. About 6000 years had elapsed since the Garden of Eden, when authority was given to man to rule. He was to work for six days and rest on the seventh. God therefore had to honour man's methods to be fruitful and multiply. The Bible says that, to God, a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. (2 Peter 3:8) The prophet therefore considered that man had his chance but God wants to show us how to do the work effectively. On this earth He will still use man (indeed, according to His word, legally He must) but this is the seventh day when we are to rest from our labour, and allow Him to work through us. This means we must surrender our ways, our intellect, our hands, feet and mouths to be the instruments of the Holy Spirit. He has made us the way we are. Do we trust Him to use us as He sees fit? The old way of doing our pathetic best for God is finished. Instead, God wants to do His best through our surrendered lives, which have been refined in the fire as gold. (Malachi 3:3)

These last 9 years have been that time for us, and we have found this revelation to be true. God has given us an anointing to be bold and confrontational with people. We do not need to waste time trying to make friends because we can just ask them if they want to be blessed by the Holy Spirit and many will say “yes” on the spot and immediately pray the sinner’s prayer to ask Jesus into their hearts. This is not only for we two but also members of the Combined Churches Mission Group. We all practise this method and even though we have different personalities, God works the same and many people pray to become members of the family of God. So this is very good.

What is the bad side then?

Well, to start with, our enemy, Satan, does not want us to take people from his kingdom to God’s and will oppose us at every turn. Every evangelist has the same commission as the apostle Paul stated for himself. “I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” (Acts 26:18)

Satan, unfortunately, is not stupid. He knows very well how to undermine us and we have written on his strategies in chapter 3. Not only has he got his demons working, but he has everyone who is not in the Kingdom of God. This includes members of churches and even pastors of churches. The criterion for pastors, to a very large extent, has been on learning success and exam

results and membership in most churches has been attending church once a month. If everything “seems” OK just cover over the cracks and push on. Hurting people are told to snap out of it, sick people go to the medical centre and people who are tormented by demons end up going to abusive “exorcists”.

This brings us back to the territorial spirits that hold power in a place. No matter how “good” the people are or how well intentioned, these demons will oppress anyone unless they are clean before the Lord, and are continually filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus was insistent that you MUST be born again by the Spirit of God. (John 3:7) This filling with the Holy Spirit is not a one-off experience. Certainly there is a first time, but the Bible makes it plain. Paul states that we are marked in Him with a seal (Ephesians 1:13) and then goes on to pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ...may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know Him better. (verse 17) This “know” is intimate relationship. There can be no compromise. James explains it. Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. (James 4:4) His advice is “submit yourselves to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Wash your hands and purify your hearts.” (4:7&8)

We need to become righteousness-conscious but the church is mainly sin-conscious.

Righteousness-conscious is an awareness of what Jesus has accomplished for us on the Cross. We are the righteousness of

God as his gift. We do not want to do anything that indicates that we do not value this otherwise we are betraying Him. We have let Satan remind us that we **were** sinners and, because we still make mistakes, God's promise is not really true. Satan enjoys seeing us grovel and beg God to do what He has already done.

The obvious response for us to make if we do make a mistake and the Holy Spirit whispers that we have, is to repent immediately, so that God will cleanse us again according to His promise. Otherwise Satan steps in and tells us we have blown it completely this time. He has a much "louder" voice and shouts down the quiet and gentle disciplining of the Holy Spirit to put us under condemnation.

The bad side is that wickedness and godlessness is increasing in the last days. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) It is easy to feel hopeless about this but we know that nothing takes God by surprise. He does have a strategy and we have the responsibility to find it, understand it and do it.

Satan is also having some success in the "natural" arena. Jesus warned us that people will come claiming to be the Christ. There are going to be wars, famines and earthquakes. Many ignorant people think that, because Jesus warned us, God has done these, so this must be His judgement. This is a lie of the devil because Jesus came to give us abundant life so it is not His nature to kill people arbitrarily. The territorial spirits though are quite happy to do this sort of job for their master. They have

been permitted to multiply in an area to the point where the small number of Christians praying to God has been grossly outnumbered by the evil influences, and these Christians do not practise what Jesus said about the advancement of the Kingdom – forceful men lay hold of it. (Matthew 11:12)

Jesus demonstrated how we have His authority to speak to the natural in His name and see it come under His power instead. (eg, Mark 4:35-40) In our ministry we do this all the time. If you don't have a church building and use the open air you need to. We have satisfied ourselves that God means us to do this all the time as the needs arise. If God's people rise up and beat the devil at his own game God is glorified.

Chapter 9 – The Spiritual Links to the Land – The Folly of Sell-off

God's vision is God's people in God's place. When Paul was preaching in Athens he made a very interesting statement. "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 to Him and find Him,

though He is not far from each of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:26-28)

It is clear that God has placed us in our family, in our land, and even in our “religion”. Yet, inside each one of us there is created a desire for God, so if we are not satisfied, we will reach out for God. Isaiah says He holds out His hands all day long (65:2) and Jeremiah says you will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. (29:13)

The place God has put us is our country, our land, our roots. We are spirit beings in a body and we have a soul which consists of our minds, our wills and our emotions. Our bodies are made so we can live on this earth. This shapes us to be who we are. Each place has its own unique culture and should express an aspect of God’s own culture. This is God’s view. He has given to every place, every tribe, every nation, every language, something unique. He thinks that in this way we will learn to appreciate each other because, to understand God’s ways, we need to get the whole picture. No one is superior to another. We are all humans and made in God’s image.

The Israelites were given a country, specific land. Certainly, at the time, it was inhabited by others. These inhabitants had a choice to give way to the people God gave the land to and live peacefully with them and enjoy the prosperity that a nation with God’s favour would enjoy. For example, when Joshua sent the spies across the Jordan River into Canaan, although the

inhabitants knew God was fighting for the Israelites, only Rahab capitulated and was blessed. The rest fought and lost.

God is always trying to help us understand His dream, God's people in God's place under His protection and guidance, but He sees that in many places this threefold ideal has not happened. He knows that the most devastating circumstance is that the place is not under His protection because territorial spirits have taken over. His precious humans are vulnerable to every whim of Satan. This is what God's wrath is directed at. A human body has to live somewhere and that somewhere was to be a place like Eden. But Adam and Eve let Satan take control and he is still spoiling God's beautiful plans of blessing.

The Bible assures us that God looks over all the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. (2 Chronicles 16:9) If His hands are reaching out and He is encouraging us to seek and find Him, then the religion that one is brought up in is no barrier to God. Just because God has revealed the truth (Jesus) to some there is no need to condemn others who have not yet found Jesus. We should be more zealous to demonstrate His life-changing power in our lives. This attitude of 'my culture is better than yours' creates barriers. It does not persuade people to cross over and experience another, although evangelism is essentially just this.

God's nature is as a giver. He has called us to be the head and not the tail. We are to lend to others and not borrow and

better still be a giver like God. Especially we give others the benefit of the doubt, generously. When we respect others' cultures and religions, their land and their languages they will respect ours. This gives us the right to put our beliefs forward freely, and gives the Holy Spirit room to speak into the hearts of seekers.

God is at present, especially with the refugee situation, moving people all over the world, taking them out of familiar land and into foreign land so that they are looking for a place to settle down and call home. Home must also have an object of worship. This is planted in man's psyche. This is an incredible opportunity for the Christian gospel. We have a land, a culture, a God who is the true God and, even if people have come with other gods, they desperately want to fit into the culture they have come here to adopt.

Unfortunately, although our country (Australia) is constituted on Christian principles we have lost our appreciation of this and have become too tolerant so that "anything goes". Instead of relying on God for protection and guidance we are guided by so-called scientists and sensationalist media. They are speaking out for us and "prophesying" disasters and doom. Nobody is contradicting them, especially the church whom God meant to be the leaders in a place.

We have begun to sell off our land, which is sacred trust from God Himself, to foreign powers so that they can infiltrate their

“cultures” which are not our own God-given principles. This is a very different case to migrants coming here to be Australians. This is foreign occupation and very dangerous spiritually. This amounts to allowing any spirit to have access to the hearts of the people. We cannot stress enough that our war is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual powers. We ignore this to our peril. This is why we have to defend our country in war. We know what the enemy wants – our land and its resources, both human and riches, and the enemy that inspires war does not seem to care about the price paid.

The main reason “Christian” countries support Israel in these days is because of God’s eternal promise to bless Israel and that all who bless what God blesses will be blessed themselves.

Because the Psalms express the emotions of their writers about their links to their land, Psalm 137 is an interesting song because it was written when the Israelites were in a foreign land and, instead of God’s presence, they had foreign gods and foreign customs, compared with Psalm 126 when they were filled with joy again.

Whenever we go on a journey anywhere we are all glad to come home. This is our spiritual link with our place and it is a God-given instinct.

Chapter 10 – The Ultimate Insult to the First Australians

The first Australians were obviously the Aborigines. They had their own culture, their own gods and their own worship. These were probably not Christian but they were spiritual. They had revelation, probably developed over generations of how best to live in a land “of red dust plains and summer rains” as is expressed so beautifully in the song.

We actually saw a movie about the last of the “nomads”, who used to go “walkabout” all over Australia. They kept the wells dug out and clear, each one was about a half day walk from the next. They also burnt the spinifex as a means of communication and that also apparently fertilised the ground so green things could survive, so that the animals could also survive and they could thus eat meat. Though this sounds a bit primitive to our modern day thinking, this way of living satisfied them. These people were, by God’s grace, living in His place for them.

We have, in the last chapter, written that this way of life was given to them, that if they felt a lack they would seek and reach out to God.

The fact that the explorers came to these shores to find new land should have been the answer to their seeking. The first “boat people” had a need, but it never occurred to them that God had sent them to bless the people who occupied the land. They

knew the Gospel, or supposedly did, and certainly knew that Jesus had died for the sins of the WHOLE world. But because the people they met when they arrived had black skin (wow, how surprising since they mostly lived out in the open under the sun) and rather primitive customs, they assumed they were animals and proceeded to treat them as such. This was the primary sin that was committed against these people. The following acts that the then Prime Minister of Australia (The Hon Kevin Rudd MP, 13 February 2008) has apologised for are the compounding of the original debasement. Just as the ground cried out because of Cain's sin, so does the ground still cry out because of this unrepented sin.

The "spirit" that the Aborigines cultivated was an easy going and tolerant attitude. This was their undoing when the first boat people came. We have never had war here (although it came close) because of this spirit and we thank God every day because of them. Nevertheless, they did not have information about the saving power of Jesus, because they had never been told. All they had was the desire to seek, but they were betrayed. How can God bless us with this disgrace on our hands?

This is not the responsibility of the political authorities. This is the responsibility of God's people. We are, or should be, spiritual leaders and reach out all the time, gently, to those who do not yet know the power of God in their lives, for their benefit, not for ours.

It was a Godless political leader who gave Aborigines access to alcohol, which has caused unending grief, but there are some

beautiful Christian leaders among their people who know from God what to do and they should be supported in every way possible. The alienation from their land and their cultural ways was forced on them. They should have been shown in a way that did not demean them but appeal to them as a better way, which God's way always is.

We are writing this chapter as our way of speaking out what is wrong and prophesying what should be done so that these precious people can be freed from the demonic strongholds that have engulfed them as a people so that they can follow Jesus which was their destiny in God's plan from the time the first boat people arrived.

Chapter 11 – Take the Land – Inherit the Land

It was while we were meditating on Psalm 37 that this title of the book came to us. While we were enjoying the meditation, we did not know where the thoughts for the book were going to go. So we are back at the beginning, yet at the end. It is really interesting to compare the idea of inheriting the land with taking the land. The latter was usually done by war and also in modern times by political manoeuvring. Nobody is interested in God's

possible method, especially against aggressors. Yet He had a clear strategy every time He told the Israelites to take land which He had already promised them. God had already judged the nations that the Israelites fought against and, because He was with them they were successful.

Inheriting the land, on the other hand, is completely relying on God to deliver places that he has put onto our hearts to claim as territory for Jesus. This really is intentionally bringing God's blessing to a place, especially if it is presently under the power of demonic spirits, and God has shown us to do it by anointing with oil. God means us to reign and rule with Him and we are in training while we are in this body.

Psalm 37:9 – Those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land. The word “hope” includes waiting, putting our trust in and looking. This is for the present and for our future, which is Heaven. Isaiah 53:13 indicates that possessing the land is both physical and spiritual, talking about Zion, the Holy mountain of God. This place is above the heavenly realms which Satan and his demons presently inhabit. God has raised us who are alive in Christ and seated us with Him. (Ephesians 2:6) Satan is under our feet, by faith in what God has said. That is why we are also told to set our minds on things that are above. (Colossians 3:1&2) In Isaiah 49:8 God wants to help us restore the land and reassign its desolation caused by immorality, so that captives (to the territorial spirits) and those blinded by Satan to their own spiritual condition are set

free. Peter says we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that we may declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)

Psalm 37:11 – The meek will inherit the land and enjoy great peace. “Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5) This word, meek, has been misused. A modern dictionary gives meanings like spiritless and weak but this is not God’s meaning. Humble and long-suffering are more appropriate meanings. We are easily guided by God, ready to agree with Him to do His will, patiently waiting His timing. Waiting on God to lead gives great peace because we are confident that His will is perfect. An open ear to His soft voice and a willingness to obey will inherit the land.

Psalm 37:21&22 – The righteous give generously; those the Lord blesses will inherit the land. When our money and possessions are dedicated for the Lord’s use, and we not only tithe but give over and above as the Lord leads, considering that investing in the Lord’s work honours Him, this brings forth a harvest up to a hundred times the investment and delights God. This hundred-fold increase is God’s blessing which entitles us to inherit the land. Paul writes about sowing generously to reap generously and how God loves this. (2 Corinthians 9:6) God is able (with our investment) to make all grace abound to the giver. Men

will praise God because of this service. People are brought into the Kingdom of God.

Psalm 37:29 – The righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it for ever. The more we practise God’s way of living the more likely we will never backslide and instead grow “from one degree of glory to another”. (2 Corinthians 3:18) We learn to love and value what our eternal life really means, hearing Jesus’ voice often and especially his “Well done”, the most reassuring and precious words. Some of us are a bit insecure and look for reassurance. God’s encouragement is the best encouragement of all and will satisfy completely.

Psalm 37:34 – The Lord will exalt you to inherit the land. Everyone wants promotion as they develop in their gifts and talents. We understand this principle and expect it. The Lord also promotes His faithful people, and anoints and equips them for His work. God exalted Jesus to the highest place (Philippians 2:9) because of His obedience to God’s call on Him. It is the most amazing thing that Jesus has called us to continue His work in the power of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:18-20) He warns us that the world will hate us because it hated Him (John 15:18) and we will be persecuted, but that He will do whatever we ask in His Name. (John 14:13) We are to advance the Kingdom of God and we are expected to be passionate about it. As we have the favour of God He will give us favour with men. In Psalm 2:7&8 it was prophesied, “You are my Son, today I have become your Father.

Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession". It is important that we realize that, to complete the task Jesus entrusted to us, we must inherit the land in God's way.

We would like to enlarge on Hezekiah's strategy as mentioned in chapter 1, and written in 2 Chronicles 30.

- He sent word of invitation to all Israel, to come and celebrate. (It is a very special privilege to speak to people wherever we travel, to encourage them to receive a blessing.)
- Come and celebrate the Passover to the Lord. (This invitation is to recognize that the sin problem has been dealt with. Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast...of wickedness, but with the bread...of sincerity and truth. (1 Corinthians 5:7&8) Jesus died on the Cross nearly 2000 years ago to open the door to the Kingdom of God, but people are still waiting to hear.)
- Return to the Lord. (It is so simple to return to the Lord. It is a really simple prayer which people only need to be encouraged to confess with their own mouth. (Romans 10:9)) The Israelites had been scattered and in captivity, not only physically but also spiritually. Away from their "place" meant that they were also away from God's guidance and they had become unfaithful. Their sin had not been confessed and

forgiven so it had increased, the mistakes leading to more sin, shame and guilt and self-justification and stubbornness.

- Hezekiah was not deterred by scorn and ridicule. (verse 10) He focussed on those who responded. The hand of God was on the people to give them unity of mind...(verse 12) This is important to receive the blessing of God. (Psalm 133) (In the past friendship evangelism worked quite well, where a person went to church and went to the Christianity Explained or some other course and eventually got more involved in the church life and eventually got baptised and confessed faith in God. We have given an interpretation of Amos 9:13 at the beginning of the book. If this is ridiculed and scorned then that person can answer to God for their own opinion.)
- There was a thorough cleansing of the city to remove all the idols. (verse 14) They understood that God would not be present in His glory when other gods are. (This is as true today as it has always been, yet people come to the church meeting wearing astrology symbols and some even hide pornography in their homes as if it does not matter unless you get caught. These idols become demonic strongholds.)
- The priests and Levites were ashamed and consecrated themselves. (verse 15) People looked to them for a witness to relationship with God, because they were the intermediaries between them and God. The Holy Spirit must have convicted them and they responded in obedience. (The ministers of the

churches need to do this too, if they have become lazy in their work. In former times pastors used to visit their flock in their homes for a prayer or some encouragement which rarely happens now because administration and the computer takes up pastoral time.) Then they helped the people who had not prepared become ready to come into the Lord's presence.

- The people participated in the Festival even though they were not ceremonially clean. (verse 18) It seemed that, to Hezekiah, participation was more important than legal requirements. He saw that the people had set their hearts on seeking God and interceded, "may the Lord, who is good, pardon all these". There was praise and rejoicing...and God heard them for their prayer reached Heaven. (verse 27) (The Communion is a precious opportunity for the church to welcome the "unclean" to come to Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb who took on Himself the sin of the whole world, so that they too can be saved.)

God is so ready to demonstrate His power in us who believe, and it is up to us to seek His new revelations so that we do inherit the Land, here and to Eternity.