

The lost lands of the North

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Introduction

I have visited and worked in much of West Africa, and have contacts in Central and Eastern Africa. I have also worked in Southern Africa. But I have never had the opportunity to work in North Africa. So, until now, I have thought very little about those lands. One night, I was sitting on a platform in a West African country, listening to the preacher. Suddenly one line of his talk caught my attention. “What” he asked “are we going to do about the lost lands of the north?” In my mind I began to think about those lands – Mauritania, Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. What could we do for these predominantly Muslim lands? How could we begin? What action could we take? Some time passed before I returned to thinking about these lands. But slowly, over the past years, the Lord has been bringing these lost lands to my attention. At first, I could see no way forward, because I could not go there. But the Lord taught me that in the heavenly places, I can go wherever he sends me. So then I found the courage to ask him about them. I was greatly disturbed by what he shared with me. His first word was this:-

*“There is a great sorrow in my heart.
Darkness and despair have taken hold,
When I only desired peace and joy.
Now the people are in bondage,
And my heart breaks.
Was ever sorrow like mine?”*

It took me many days to let the emotional pain in this word touch my own heart. I had to repent of my failure to see this pain, and to recognise how much the lost lands meant to Jesus – that means ALL the lost lands, and ALL the people. I found reading the story of Jesus in Gethsemane (Mark 14: 32 -42) helped me, as well as the fall of Jerusalem and the deportation of God’s people. (Jeremiah 52 and 2 Kings 25) I had to let a feeling of loss, of grief and of sadness come into my spirit, and it was not easy. When I had come to some level of understanding, God spoke again, this time about his own people:-

*“Torn and bleeding
My people are like sacrificial lambs.
Day by day they are broken,
Poured out because of their love for me.”*

To get an understanding of this, I turned to the passion of Jesus, and read again of the pouring out of his body and spirit, for the sins of the whole world. Now his people in the lost lands have themselves become sacrificial lambs, poured out because they love him. Then God spoke to me about the peoples of the lost lands:-

*“Now many follow other gods,
Who bring them down in chains,
Binding them in law
When I longed for them to be free.*

*The land drinks blood,
And the bitter roots that grow
Bring only death.”*

From the heavenly places, this is the situation in Northern Africa. Not very encouraging is it? God grieving, the people lost, his people being sacrificed. But I have learnt in my time as a prophet that understanding the reality of the situation is the beginning of an opportunity to change it. It is possible for God to turn the lost lands back to himself. Let me share the last part of this word:-

*“Who will help?
Who will heal?
Who will set my people free?*

*Who will love me enough
To share my burden?
To minister to me by sacrificing their lives
To set my people free?”*

Maybe the time has come. Maybe God has at last decided that his Spirit is ready to move, to release and reclaim this lost part of his creation. He begins now to call for people to serve him for the lost lands, that they might be redeemed. A-men. Come Lord Jesus.

Windows

Before we can begin to understand how to act towards the Northern lands, we have got to learn to see them through the eyes of God. How can we do this? I think that we have got to ask God to open a prophetic window into each place – so that we can see the fundamental spiritual position of each country. This might be unusual for many people, because we are so used to seeing things from the earthly perspective. But God invites his people, and especially his prophets to “Come up here” (Revelation 4:1) to dwell in the heavenly places (Philippians 3:20) to see things as he sees them, (1 Samuel 16:7) and to share his understanding. (Matthew 9:35-38) So here are eleven windows, each one giving us a glimpse of how God might be seeing each land. Each needs reflection, prayer and testing before God. If any one of them particularly moves your heart, then perhaps the Spirit of God is directing you in prayer towards that land. In the end, it is prayer and faith which change things.

Mauretania

The land was like a fortress, with borders of iron, to keep the people in. And inside these iron walls, a furnace burns, to inflict pain, to harm, to destroy.

The smoke from the furnace
Darkens the sky, shutting out light.
The land is a place of bondage.

Western Sahara

There is no water for the people
to drink and be refreshed.

The water has been trapped, stolen by the desert.
The land is dry.
If anyone searches for water, there is none.

Morocco

Clouds have drifted across the sun, obscuring its light.
Now men have to make their own light, but the light is not light but darkness.

No joy can penetrate the clouds.
There among the darkness, the enemy walks freely, claiming the land for himself.

Algeria

A rock fell, and crushed the land.
It lay on the people, and they could not rise upwards.

So they lived with no freedom,
Slaves to the powers which had crushed them.

Tunisia

Sorrow has settled on the land –
sorrow as deep as any ocean.
Such grief.

Libya

I made a staff to lean on, and I fashioned it to be beautiful.
But it broke, and was no longer of any use to me.

I threw it away, and it lay in the sun, rotting and broken.
No one came to mend it.

Egypt

The land is a prison, surrounded by wire.
Those inside can come out, but whenever they return, the prison closes in on them again.
Egypt has always been a prison, a place which breaks the spirit, a place which people want to leave, but often cannot.

Sudan

Fire! Everywhere there is fire.
Nowhere is there peace or rest.
Who lit this fire, to make this place a spiritual wilderness, a spiritual desert?

And why can it not be put out?
While it burns, no good thing can grow.

Ethiopia

Such sorrow.
The sound of grief rises up every hour from this land.
The joy has been taken away.
Hope is dead.
All that lives are the tears, the mourning, the sorrow.

Eritrea

A baby fights for its life.
But without help, how can such a child live?
It screams for help, but will there be any?
Or will the child die?

Somalia

A man takes a glass, and smashes it on the ground with violence. Never again will it be beautiful.
But he is not content with this – he looks for more violence, for more opportunity to destroy beauty. He roams at will, and no one inhibits him.

Prophetic meditations

I believe these windows come from God, but they must be tested. If, however they are found to be from God, then they lead naturally to the next experience – prophetic meditation. This spiritual experience is quite natural. Most of us know how to mediate on the word of God, (Psalm 119:10) and a prophetic meditation is to dwell in the spirit of meditation before the throne of God, that he might give deeper understanding through his prophetic Spirit. Does this differ from ordinary meditation? I believe it does. Normal meditation leads to the personal upbuilding of believers. Prophetic meditation opens the heart of God to us.

Each window, when taken into meditation with the use of prophetic spirit will open up new understandings, both of the window, of God’s heart, and of the needs of the land. I have indicated a direction for prophetic meditation linked to each window. This is only a starting point. God may, and certainly will lead the one meditating along other paths. These are starting points. I encourage you – do write down what God teaches you. This is precious information, which will stimulate prayer and action for the lost lands. Do also be aware that the enemy will not like anyone caring about the lost lands, so the meditation will not always be easy.

Mauritania

“Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude towards them changed. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual.” (Daniel 3:19)

Meditation

What must we ask God to do for this land? Do we need him to break down the walls of the fortress? To put out the fire of the furnace? To break the bondage of the people? To let light penetrate into their gloom? As we reflect on this land, seen through the prophetic window, we must seek God for exactly what he wants us to pray for. The land is so locked into its bondage, that only the Holy Spirit can direct our prayers.

This isn’t the first land which has been turned into a furnace. Nebuchadnezzar himself was like a blazing furnace, destroying all good, and raising up false religion. But when he took on God in a direct assault, he was unable to prevail. Victory can be achieved, but it is not going to be easy.

Prayer

“For God who said ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (2 Cor.4:6) Lord, let your glory be revealed in this land. Set the people free, and destroy the works of darkness. We commit ourselves to pray, until we see this happen.

Western Sahara

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)

Meditation

Where there is no water, there can be no life. The people may know this, and even search, but for them the search will end in failure. Somehow, their water has been denied them, stolen by the one who was always a thief and a liar, and delights to be a murderer – murdering the people’s hope, life, and spiritual power.

The Bible teaches that from the throne of God flows the river of life, with its leaves for the healing of the Nations. It is not God’s will that there should be no spiritual water. How can we pray so that the water begins to flow again? Only the Holy Spirit can direct us.

Prayer

“Whoever drinks the water I give will never thirst.”
(John 4:13) Lord, you hold the springs of living water in your hand. Let them begin to flow to this people, who are dying for lack of hope. We ask you to be merciful.

Morocco

“ I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

Meditation

In the darkness, the enemy walks freely. He is a creature of the darkness, and likes to work in underhand ways, deceiving, spoiling, destroying, and all in the dark, where men find it hard to see him. This is not the will of the Lord. He longs that all men should walk in the light, where the deeds of darkness can be clearly seen, and where freedom can be the breath of life. How has the darkness come on this land? Pharaoh’s darkness came because he was disobedient to the voice of God. In the end, it seems the darkness comes on a land because that is what the land wants. But Pharaoh was unaware of the consequences of the darkness, and so are the people of this land. They try to make their own light, but it is useless. We need to pray that the sun of righteousness will arise over this land, with healing in his wings.

Prayer

“Light has come into the world.” (John 3:19)

Lord, let your light penetrate the darkness of this land.
Show your love, and show your power. We intercede before you for this land.

Algeria

“For Christ died for sins once and for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body, but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who disobeyed long ago.” (1 Peter 3:18-19)

Meditation

When a mountain falls, all beneath it are crushed. They lose their life, and can never again live, love, or be free. A mountain of satanic evil has fallen on this land. The people have been spiritually killed, and there is no freedom for them. When Satan gets a hold over a place, he squeezes until that place is dead – and he keeps it dead. There is no spiritual hope. But Satan could not keep Jesus dead, even though he fell on him like a mountain. By the Spirit, Jesus not only lived again, but he went to Satan’s very throne, and preached to those held in bondage there. Algeria can be free. People can know freedom. Satan’s claims to total victory are false, as he and we know very well. But who will open the eyes of the people?

Prayer

“All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.” (Matthew 28:17) Lord Jesus, look with love and mercy on this Nation, and its sad state. You who destroyed all that the enemy can do, you can set these people free. In your great love, reach out your hand and begin a new work in this country, so that all may know that power and authority belong to you.

Tunisia

“Woman – why are you crying?” (John 20:13)

Meditation

When we look through this window, a great ocean of sorrow is before us. The sound is like a million parents, grieving for their lost children. The pain is unbearable. This is a sad land, where the spiritual joys have been replaced by spiritual sorrows. The future looks dark and empty. The way of grief and sorrow stretches ahead. How has this happened? It is quite simple – the thief has stolen the joy, and replaced it by mourning – which is the complete reverse of what the Bible teaches about God. (Psalm 30:11)

But Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He calls to us in our grief, and reminds us of his sovereign power, and that all of life is in his hands. He is the hope for the hopeless,

joy for the sorrowing, life for the dying. If he calls to this land, then the sorrow will be changed into dancing. The thief will have to run away, and Jesus will restore and bless. What a precious hope.

Prayer

“You turned my wailing into dancing.” (Ps 30:11) Lord, we call to you to have mercy on these people. Look at their sorrow, and in your mercy, open the way for them to find yourself, and your joy.

Libya

“But you do not realise that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.”
(Rev 3:17)

Meditation

God made all the Nations of the world. He made them beautiful, so that they could be a joy to him. How sad when something so blessed turns out to be so little blessing. God made the Church in Laodicea, but it became a spiritual wreck, with nothing to recommend it. Yet he went on loving – loving enough to warn, to call to repentance and new beginnings. In the same way, God made Libya to be a blessing to him. It has failed in this task, and now lies rotting in the sun. Must things stay this way? We must seek God, to see what his purposes are. Perhaps he will turn again and bless this land, calling it to repentance and new beginnings.

Prayer

“The lord turns our darkness into light.”(2 Sam 22:29) Lord, turn again towards this land. See not its damage, but its potential. Come again, and pour out your Spirit of repentance, that the people may again be a blessing to you.

Egypt

“No one was strong enough to subdue him” (Mark 5:4)

Meditation

Legion (Mark 5) was in a fiendish prison. Captured and destroyed by evil spirits, he could find no escape. Even if he did find periods of calmness, he was soon drawn back into his demonic prison. There was no hope for him, even when he found some peace. Only Jesus could help him.

This country is in a similar state. There is no spiritual freedom or peace. The people are in prison, and even if they do find some periods of escape, the situation is only temporary. In no time at all, they are back in their demonic prison. Only Jesus can help them.

Prayer

“The truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32) Lord, this nation needs a visitation from you. It needs to hear the words which set Legion free. It needs to be set free from its prison. Only you can do this. Will you?

Sudan

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves...” (2 Chron 7:14)

Meditation

It was easy for those who wanted to destroy Jesus to buy his betrayer, but once the fire was lit, they could not put it out. Trouble on trouble came to them, until their Nation was destroyed. This is the danger with all those things which are not of God - once they get hold, it is impossible to take control of them again. What has taken control of the Sudan? Only God really knows, but it is now a fire burning out of control. Unless God intervenes, it will destroy everything. How did this happen in the first place? God’s people must have abandoned their watchtowers of prayer. When the enemy came looking for trouble, he was not spotted and beaten back. The future looks very bleak, and God’s people must bear the responsibility.

Prayer

“Nothing is impossible with God.” (Luke 1:37) “Father, reach out your hand and stop the fire which is destroying everything in this land. Raise your people up to repentance and intercession. Act for this land out of your great mercy. If you do not hear us, everything will be lost, and that which you created as beautiful will be destroyed as well. Hear us Father, as we, your people cry out before you.”

Ethiopia

“The sorrow in my heart is so great, it almost crushes me.” (Matt.26:38)

Meditation

This window is one of saddest, and one of the hardest to look through. Everywhere God looks, we have to look, and everywhere there is sorrow, and more sorrow. Grief has found its way into the very heart of this land. Joy is crushed, and hope extinguished. If

you have the courage to look through this window, and feel this pain, you will not need me to write anything further. Spend time in tears and sorrow before the Lord for this hurt and damaged land. It might help to study the plagues which afflicted Egypt, and their devastating consequences on the people and on the land. (Exodus chapters 5 to 11)

Eritrea

“Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me” (Mark 11:47)

Meditation

Small nations are always at great risk, yet God loves small things, and loves to do big things in small places. He also challenges us to realise that in spiritual terms, “small” and “big” mean nothing. This is a small Nation, and one which is not guaranteed survival. Does God want it to survive? Has He called it into being, or is it a creation of men? Only prayer will give the answer to this question. As you pray for Eritrea, hold the picture of a small baby in your heart before the throne of God.

Prayer

“Your will, not mine be done..” (Luke 22:42) Lord, how can a small Nation survive, unless you hold it in your hands? Remember this land, and lead us to the right kind of prayers for the people.

Somalia.

“Greater love has no man than this, than he lay down his life for his friend.”
(John 15:13)

Meditation

Violence destroys. It destroys those who carry it out, destroys their victims, destroys good morality, good citizenship, hope, trust, and the soul of the Nation. How can a Nation live in this way? And how long can God be patient with such a land, before His justice and righteousness overcome His love and mercy? Are the days of this Nation numbered? And if they are, what of the innocents - the children, the sick, the old? This land is in desperate need of intercession. Where will it find intercessors, to cry to God for its desperate needs?

Prayer

“This is what love is - not that we loved God, but he loved us, and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven.” (1 John 4:10) Father, this land needs

people to love it. Only you can give that kind of love to us. Help us to love the land, and the people, to see their needs and to cry to you.

What now?

There can be no end to a book like this - at least not until God brings all things to an end with the return of Jesus. The needs of the lost lands will go on and on, pressing themselves into our hearts, needing prayer, prayer and more prayer.

I can only encourage you to pray and think about what you have read here. May be God will raise up an army of intercessors, to be followed by an army of missionaries, many of whom might become martyrs. May be God will show His love again to these lands. Only time will tell us, and only prayer can change things.