

THE PENTECOST



ISSUE #6 SEPTEMBER 2006

ROLL FORWARD OH ZION

When the ransomed of Jehovah,
From the east and from the west,
Shall return with joyous gladness
To receive their promised rest,
Then from every tribe and nation,
Out of every land, the blessed,
With rejoicing they shall gather
When The King shall come.

Roll forward, Oh Zion.
Grace shall be thy triumph till The King shall come.
Roll forward, Oh Zion.
Thou shalt be exalted when The King shall come.

THE PENTECOST

Hello! *The Pentecost* is back! For the last two months I have taken a break from printing issues but now, with the fall, things are starting up again. This issue deals with missions and revival and the spread of Christianity across the continents. We will consider some important scriptures foretelling this development. Also, we will hear from someone, my friend David Reitschoten, who is doing the work of missions together with others from Operation Mobilization, through the Logos II ministry. May God challenge you in the area of missions. Notice the change in my mailing address. God bless you.



Shawn Stevens

Zion Tape Ministries

P. O. Box 933,
Lynden, WA 98264,
U. S. A.

<http://members.shaw.ca/ziontapeministries>
fststevens@shaw.ca

IN THIS ISSUE

STONE, MOUNTAIN, WHOLE EARTH

GOD COMES THROUGH ON THE LOGOS II

STONE, MOUNTAIN, WHOLE EARTH

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Daniel 2.34, 35.

I have never heard anyone preach on this scripture passage before. I think that this is a shame, because I believe that this is one of the great passages telling of revival and missions. Before opening it up, let's give it some context.

When Israel became a nation under Moses' leadership, God made a covenant with them involving blessings and curses. This covenant maintains that "...if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth." (Deuteronomy 28.1). It also stated that "...if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God... The Lord will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known..." (Deuteronomy 28.15, 36).

The book of Kings records the disobedience of Israel and her leaders. In judgment, Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C. Judah, seeing this, did not repent. Consequently, Babylon, under King Nebuchadnezzar, captured Jerusalem, ending the rule of Jehoiachin. Slaves were taken back to Babylon in different waves, some even prior to the deposing of Jehoiachin. Daniel was among the earliest to be taken.¹

Though many Jews were backslidden, Daniel was a part of the holy remnant that still served God. He

was reserved and preserved for this special hour. He was raised up and gifted prophetically by God. His prophetic gifts would be of special use when, one day, King Nebuchadnezzar had a troubling dream.

Nebuchadnezzar knew that this was not an ordinary dream. He called before him his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers. He demanded that they make known to him the dream. They requested that he tell them the dream and that they would simply interpret it. To this, Nebuchadnezzar replied that he required them to tell him both the dream and its interpretation. If they could not, they would be killed. They insisted that Nebuchadnezzar was being unreasonable and again asked to be told the dream. Nebuchadnezzar became furious and ordered the destruction of all of the wise men of Babylon. Daniel was not a magician, astrologer or sorcerer but, because of his prophetic giftings, in the minds of the royal house he was among their numbers and should be killed along with the others.

Daniel sought God for the dream and its interpretation. God revealed both to him and he was allowed to stand before the king. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that Nebuchadnezzar had seen a great image which had a head of gold, a chest and arms of silver, a belly and thighs of bronze and legs of iron with feet of iron and clay. Next, we come to the scripture passage that this message centers around. Daniel declared:

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. (Daniel 2.34, 35).

¹ Raymond B. Dillard and Tremper Longman 111, An Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 338.

Daniel went on to interpret this amazing dream. The body segments of the image represented different kings and their kingdoms. Today, we know these kingdoms to be Babylon, Medea-Persia, Greece (Alexander the Great) and Rome. Daniel explained the meaning of the stone in these words:

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.” (Daniel 2.44,45).

Do you see the picture here? The stone is God's kingdom, come down from heaven to earth. It leaves heaven as a stone, it expands into a great mountain and then it fills the whole earth. I came across one writer who said that the fulfillment of everything from the stone striking the image to its mountain stage and, finally, to its filling of the whole earth is all reserved for the future millennial period.² I would humbly disagree or, at least, propose a dual fulfillment. I believe that at the center of God's kingdom is Christ and that He left heaven as the stone and descended to earth. Christ, referring to Himself, said “...*'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone' ?* Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” (Luke 20.17,18). Christ's first coming to earth and the setting up of His kingdom marked the beginning of the

destruction of all other kingdoms, which are to be ground to powder. Christ's kingdom would expand from rock to mountain stage and keep expanding until the whole earth is full. We read in the book of Isaiah that “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11.9).

This mountain, this kingdom with all its knowledge, will keep expanding and filling the earth. Its government will keep increasing. Why? Because we read concerning Christ:

For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end... (Isaiah 9.6, 7).

The point that I am making from these verses is that Christ's government will increase without end.

So it is that the stone left heaven, came to earth and Jesus was born in the Bethlehem manger. Angels announced this birth and shepherds heard, “For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2.11). Jesus grew up, ministered to the masses and was crucified on a cruel cross. His death has become the great provision for our atonement. His resurrection has also become our hope of resurrection.

On the Day of Pentecost, God's Spirit was poured upon the disciples and, later, Peter stood up and preached to onlookers that “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2.36).

² Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 1619-1620.

Interaction with Moravian missionaries led to Wesley's conversion and, ablaze for God, Wesley saw revival sweep England. In the Wesley revivals countless men and women were awakened, first to salvation and second, to their evangelistic responsibilities. A tidal wave of missionaries and itinerant, circuit preachers began sweeping England and, beyond, to the continents.

Christ's government kept increasing and America would never be the same as the revivals in England spread over its borders and, subsequently, swept the New World. Two Great Awakenings transformed countless colonizers from staunch adherers of religion to spiritually alive firebrands, ablaze with a passionately overcoming faith. The walls of prejudice that kept Puritans and other religions communities heterogeneous and closed, began to dissolve as men and women began responding to the missionary call. Forerunners, like David Brainerd, began winning the souls of native Indians. The first Great Awakening, beginning in the 1730s and reaching its peak in the 1740s, was followed by the second Great Awakening, that some would date between 1801 and the 1840s. Again, America was swept with revival.

Glorious as it was, God's kingdom was expanding from mountain stage and was starting to fill the whole earth. More revivals would come. The 1859 revival in Ireland, the Welsh revival of 1904 and the Azusa revival of 1906 would all have powerful effects upon the Church and their surrounding society. Revivals would revitalize the Church and would produce a tidal wave of missionaries being sent out to every continent.

Latin America had become largely Catholic. However, the influence of Catholicism in Latin America would fluctuate. Many priests took up political causes and, in some cases, this hurt their influence. Protestant missionaries began pouring into Latin America in two great waves. The first began in the 1820s and was comprised of a multi-denominational combination of

a multi-denominational combination of missionaries. Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists were especially active in this first wave. The second great missionary wave to sweep Latin America was Pentecostal.

The nineteenth century saw another tidal wave of missionaries come to the continent of Africa. Ministers, such as David Livingston, Mary Slessor, Johanna Veenstra and Henry Venn, left western comforts for the jungles of the Dark Continent, carrying with them the good news of Jesus Christ. Mission posts were set up along Africa's coasts and missionaries spread inland. They went everywhere, establishing churches, and many independent churches and indigenous churches rose up as well.

Asia saw a great influx of missionaries. In fact, between 1750 and 1950, more missionaries went to Asia than to any other place. Many independent churches were set up in China. By the time of the communist revolution (1949) there were 750,000 Chinese Christians. By 2001, there were approximately 645,000 Protestants in China and approximately 91, 700,000 Chinese attending independent churches. Christianity was planted in Korea by a Korean, Sung-Hun, who had converted from being a Confucian scholar to Christian faith. In 1784, after being converted in Beijing, he returned to Korea and began witnessing. More missionaries came from China into Korea. There were hard years of government persecution but, in the 1880s, the country opened its doors to missionaries and they came flooding in. In 1907, a great revival swept Korea. By 2001 there were approximately 16,954,000 Protestants in Korea.³

The earth continued to fill with the knowledge of the Lord and the gospel of Jesus Christ was taken to India. In 1793, William Carey had set up a mission station in Serampore and his team began doing translation and educational work. In India, he had to contend with the British East India Company which controlled India and restricted missionaries. However, in the 1850's, the British government took over and

³ Paul R. Spickard and Kevin M. Craig. *A Global History of Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994) and Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk. *Operation World* (Bethany House, 2001).

They were struck with conviction and many followed Peter's instructions to repent and be baptized. We read "...and that day about three thousand souls were added to them." (Acts 2.41). They continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers. We read further, "...And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." (Acts 2.47). The rock, here, is becoming a mountain.

God continued to use the apostles when a lame man was healed in front of the temple. Peter then preached to an astonished crowd. As the book of Acts progresses, we read that "...believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women," (Acts 5.14). Steven was martyred for his witness but this did not slow the growth of the church. Philip preached in Samaria and led an Ethiopian to Christ. Saul is converted to Paul and he began preaching in the synagogues. Peter brought the gospel to Cornelius' household and more Gentiles were saved. All of the apostles were very active and God raised up other men, like Apollos, to proclaim the message. Paul began his missionary journeys and churches were set up in Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica and Rome.

The mountain continued to enlarge. The early Christians lived under great persecution but, by 300 A.D., a significant change occurred in Rome. Emperor Constantine allegedly became a Christian in 337 A.D. Christianity was declared the state religion. The Church began to take the form of a recognized institution. It began to concern itself with converting the Germanic tribes north of it, which numerically were overwhelming the diminishing Roman population. The conversion of the Germanic tribes carried Christianity northward into Europe. I realize that this period is

controversial. So much of the early piety and living spirituality of the early Church was replaced with religious formality and tradition. The simple gospel message underwent great distortion in the hands of leaders who were, in many cases, impious. This Church would splinter and come to a crossroads with the eruption of the Protestant Reformation.

The Protestant Reformation was not the resolution to all of Europe's religious problems. However, it marked an important turning point which created for large numbers of Europeans an opportunity to escape the yoke of Roman Catholicism and to pursue the worship of God in new Protestant ways.

More reformation would come and greater leaders would rise out of Protestantism. The movement known as "Pietism" was formed and began to grow. Pietists began preaching a Christianity that was personal, emotional and practical. They reacted against dead orthodoxy and scholasticism and advocated a fresh and simple approach to Scripture which was Spirit-led. They congregated in larger assemblies and smaller groups to study the Bible together and to build a sense of community among themselves. They had a practical faith which reached out to the poor, sick and imprisoned. Taking this form, the Church was soon back on track and spiritually dynamic.

One man, heavily influenced by Pietism, was the German Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760). He afforded protection and religious freedom to a persecuted group of Moravians who formed a community around him at Herrnhut. After overcoming early struggles, the group blossomed into a dynamic spiritual community which began to look outward and think evangelistically. Zinzendorf had founded "The Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed" and pledged to love the whole human family and spread the Gospel. Moravian missionaries began launching out and working among slaves in the British sugar colonies. They began stepping out in faith with outreaches into North America. In transit from North America, they met their greatest convert, John Wesley (1703-1791).

established religious freedom in India. Previous to this, there were less than 100,000 Protestants in India but in a hundred years this number had grown ten-fold. Missionaries came as church planters and doctors. A huge percentage of women made up the missionary force. Most converts came from the lower castes and by 2001 there were approximately 25 million East Indians who claim some form of Christian faith.⁴

Some Bible scholars comment on how the book of Acts ended in such an unfinished-sounding way. It seems that the latter part of Paul's story is left hanging. Some have said that it was intentionally written this way so that readers wouldn't get the wrong idea, that the story of the acts of the Holy Spirit ended with the close of the book of Acts. His acts haven't ended but, instead, have continued throughout every age. This article that you are now reading is going to end in the same way as the book of Acts did and for the same reason.

The story isn't over; it isn't finished; we are not done yet; the torch has been passed to us. Jesus' government will keep on increasing and the mountain of His kingdom shall fill the whole earth. This kingdom won't spread as a result of our ingenuity, creativity or brilliant input. It won't spread by simply employing all of the church growth marketing strategies. This stone was cut without human hands. It will spread through revival.

God can still save masses in nation-sweeping revivals. The Romans totally underestimated the vitality and depth of conviction of the early Christian Church. Many also underestimate the conviction and potential of the Church today. We will take the Gospel to every corner of society and to the nations of the Earth. Jesus' government is increasing and the snowball of it has been rolling and building for a long time. The Church is not an institution; it is a living, expanding organism which is animated by the life of Christ. God is still adding to it daily those who are being saved.

Shawn Stevens

⁴ Ibid.

...continued from page 8

done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands."

The Logos II, where I have spent the past two years is a ship with 200 people, from 45 different nations, all working together to advance the kingdom of God. Because we are a ship, we need different things to sail from port to port. A medical doctor is one of those things.

"Everyone get into small groups and pray for a doctor. We leave this port in 3 days and we don't have a doctor and don't know where one will be coming from," the director said. Next day ... no doctor. Day after ... no doctor. More and more prayers went up to our heavenly Father to provide for us. Day 3 ... a doctor was found and was on her way down. Another provision was that we could stay in the harbour because there was a nasty storm brewing outside. Five days after the call went up, we sailed to our next port of call. God provided for us once again.

There are more stories like this ... visas being granted for free at the last minute, saving us thousands of dollars, food being provided for us in a very expensive port, berths being made available when we were told they were not, and the list goes on. Stories like these scatter my past two years on board the Logos II. Stories of seeing God work, stories of seeing answered prayer, stories of doors being closed but better ones opening, and stories of new challenges that I have been called to and God has provided for.

We serve a faithful and awesome God. I have tasted just a bit of Him during these past two years, and I want to know Him more in this next year. I desire for other people to know Him also. As I step out in faith once more ... "For You, O Lord, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands." Even now I will be glad for what He WILL do.

Yours on the Journey,
David van Rietschoten

GOD COMES THROUGH ON THE LOGOS II

The Logos II is a ministry ship run by Operation Mobilization. Over nine million visitors have been welcomed aboard for tours, programs and visits. This unique ship has visited seventy-six countries, including the Americas, Africa, Europe, the Near East and many island nations. My friend, David, has served a two-year term aboard the vessel and has just returned to it for another year. He brings this report, beginning with a story of God's provision during a portion of the journey when he was not on board, in the Dominican Republic.

Hello everyone

"Goodbye, Pastor Robin, thank you so much for your hospitality over the weekend! Hope to see you at the ship." These were the last words that we spoke to a pastor who provided a place



for us to stay over a weekend and who challenged my faith and the faith of the other team members who were with me. We ended up in a town in the Dominican Republic with no money and no place to stay (yes, we did this willingly!). God moved and answered our prayers and gave us a place to stay and food to eat. That just blew me away when that happened! God wasn't finished with us yet, not by a long shot. "Ok, God, now what?" we all said as we walked away from the pastor. We needed to get back to the ship and we didn't have any money. We knew that God was going to come through some way, but didn't have a clue how. We walked away from him and walked in faith where we felt God was leading us. "Father, you know that we need the money to get back to the ship, please provide for us!" We were walking away in faith, stepping out into an area that we had never been before. To me, it felt like we were stepping out into darkness and we were unsure of what would happen next. It started to rain, "nice touch," I thought. We paused under a tree wondering what to do. "Hey, wait a minute!" the pastor called out. "Do you have money for the bus?" Our hearts jumped in our chests as we turned around. "No, we don't," was our reply. "He must think that we are crazy," I thought. "Come back here and I will give you the money!" "What, no way!!!" "Praise you God," tears flowed, praises went up to heaven from the team. God moved in an amazing way to provide for us. We turned and walked back to the pastor. "You know what?" he said. "I was meaning to ask you that all day but I forgot just before I was going to ask. When you started to walk away the thought came to me again, so I asked." We were all blown away....Psalm 92:4. "For You, O Lord, have made me glad by what You have