

A SIGNET IN THE EARTH

By Joanne Cook Danner

In the church world of today, we often hear of a concern for the burdens of humanity but seldom hear from those who have raised the sight of their vision from personal life issues to the intercessory burden that is in the heart of God. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth in this hour to seek out those who will pattern their lives after his eternal purpose and have a heart that is perfect toward him (2 Chron. 16:9). During the time of Zerubbabel, as in the church world of today, many people were focused only on themselves and had no desire to take to heart the burden of the Lord to build his house that his glory may have a dwelling place in the earth. Because the people were more concerned with their own dwelling place, or spiritual growth and problems, rather than the burden of the Lord, he withheld blessing from their land. Instead of blessing, his hand brought drought and stayed from the land the new wine and oil (Hag. 1:9-11). This principle also applies to the spiritual realm.

In the current religious climate, there exists a drought of the hearing and appropriation of the true word of the Lord that produces life (Amos 8:11). Instead of the life-giving government of God, religious form, legalism, control, and bondage has dominated the church world resulting in the establishment of entangled religious systems that are void of life (2 Tim. 5-7). Scripture tells us that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6). It would be difficult to find the life force of the living Christ through an intimate relationship with Jesus in religious institutions that do not teach people to focus on developing a personal relationship with Jesus. People may know about Jesus, but not through the relationship that the Lord desires us to have where he is our Lord and savior. People are aware that they are not spiritually satisfied, but they do not comprehend why. They have been starved for Jesus, the bread of life, because he has not been the focus. They long for his life-giving substance and the manifestation of his presence. This life of Jesus, the living word, should always be the foundation of his spiritual tabernacle in and through the church or body of believers (Jn. 1:1, 14).

During the time of Zerubbabel, governor of Judea, God had to turn his face away from the multitude in Israel and establish a forerunner remnant group to

complete the task of restoration. This remnant was directed under the leadership of Zerubbabel who heeded the word from the Lord to him through the prophet Haggai. The established remnant had a deep commitment to the purpose of God, which required them to set aside personal desires to devote their lives to rebuilding the temple of the Lord. This remnant had a disposition of heart like David because their foremost desire was to build a tabernacle where God may dwell and be at rest with his people. In typology, the last verse of the Book of Haggai compares the remnant of Zerubbabel to those with like heart whom the Lord will call together in the latter days to rebuild his spiritual temple (Hag. 2:23). It is very significant that the Lord indicates that he will make Zerubbabel as a signet or sign in the earth (Hag. 2:23).

During biblical times, a signet was used as a natural sign that carried with it the authority and power associated with a king. A kingly directive was sealed with a sign fashioned by a signet ring (Esth. 3:12). The signet seal was created under pressure. A signet seal was created with soft, pliable clay or wax or engraving on semi-precious hard stone. When the signet seal solidified, the image could not be removed. When an individual was commissioned as a messenger to transport a signet-sealed document to its destination, the messenger acted in proxy for the king. When orders from the king were sealed with the seal of the kingly signet, the orders were irrevocable (Esth. 8:8). The king's sign was associated with his name, or character. A signet seal displayed the inscribed name of the owner and confirmed the authenticity of the sealed contents. The breaking of a seal or signet could only be executed by an authorized individual.

The Book of Revelation speaks of prophetic seals. The only one deemed worthy to open the prophetic seals is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lion of Judah, the Root of David (Rev. 5:2,5). He is the only one worthy to open the seals within our hearts and to release the outworking of the flow of his presence in our lives. The Song of Solomon speaks of a seal upon the heart and upon the arm (Song of Sol 8:6). The heart seal is the impression of the nature of Christ in the heart, and the seal upon the arm is the seal of his strength and authority. The signet seal was often worn on a necklace that rested close to the heart or on a ring worn on the finger of one that is betrothed. The signet seal was maintained in proximity to the master and was always readily accessible for use when the command for its use needed to be executed. The foundation of God in our life has a seal based on purity

of heart, departure from iniquity, and transformation of character (2 Tim. 2:19). We are to be conformed to the image of Christ, so we become like him (Phil. 3:10). We are also sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, our teacher and comforter (Eph. 1:13, 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22).

The Lord is currently seeking individuals with the quality of heart that was in David, and the remnant of Zerubbabel, to fashion a group in our day with tried and tested strength of character that will be as a signet in the earth. Their lives will become a sign of the indwelling Christ as they become his hands and feet in the earth. Because the foundational structure of the spiritual foundation in their lives will be built upon Jesus, the living word, the word inscribed in flesh, their lives will be a sign of his nature, authority, and power manifested through the church. The living word is being made flesh in the tablets of our hearts, and we have been sealed with the signet of the Holy Spirit. The focus will be the reign of King Jesus in our hearts and lives and the outworking of the manifestation of his presence dwelling again among his people, the living church of lively stones built up together to provide a habitation for the Lord Jesus that is without walls (1 Pet. 2:5).

Throughout biblical history, the monumental religious systems of men have sought to choke and constrain the true expression of the spirit of God through bondage, control, legalism, religious practices, and the mixture of soul and intellect. Historically, the church has achieved many accomplishments, but there is so much more that is available to us through God when we focus on a deeper, more intimate relationship with him. There is so much more available to us when we desire to become like Jesus, rather than only doing things for him. There has been a lack of holiness and purity. Due to these conditions, the spirit of the Lord has not been able to take up a full abode or dwelling place in his spiritual temple. He is seeking out a resting place within his people, and his plan calls for a latter-day remnant who will commit their lives to establishing the foundations of his spiritual dwelling.

When God arises through his people, the destroying mountain, which is referred to as Babylon, will be cast out of Zion (Zech. 4:7; Jer. 51:25). No longer shall men stand upon this false foundation. The government of God shall be restored, and the revelation that inspired the Psalmist, David, of the tabernacle of God dwelling in Zion will again become a reality. The tabernacle of God will dwell again in his spiritual tabernacle, the end-time corporate church, through a

sanctified remnant that will set their vision as the eyes of a dove to build the proper foundation for the manifestation of his presence in and through their lives that have become his dwelling place. We want to hear the Lord tell us that we have the eye of the dove because our eyes are fixed on him (Song. of Sol. 4:1). We want to hear the Lord tell us that he wants to see our countenance as our countenance in the intimate relationship with him in the secret of the stairs reflects him (Song of Sol. 2:14). We want to hear him tell us that he will set his seal upon our heart and upon our arm (Song of Sol. 8:6). We want to be sealed and transformed into the image of Christ as he makes his habitation within our personal lives and corporate expression. We want to qualify to co-labor with the Lord in his vineyard for the end-time harvest that he has been waiting for throughout eternity.