

LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE

THE SIXTH CREATIVE DAY

RICHARD HOLT

At a traveling elders' retreat in Dallas a number of years ago, there was some discussion on creation, the early beginnings of man, and how it is unlikely that events of such magnitude took place within a twenty-four-hour period of time. In fact, Genesis seems to indicate that the event itself marks the beginning and end of each "day" of creation.

"And the earth brought forth grass, and herbs yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit after his kind; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day" (Genesis 1:12-13).

When we read of God's promises and their fulfillment, they are on such a scale that the human mind could never have imagined the greatness of it all. We only see in part and yet these parts flow together for a great purpose as tributaries flow together to form a mighty river.

Isaiah 55:8-9, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the*

heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

1 Corinthians 13:12, *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."*

At the 2014 Feast, Bro. Wayne Peters ministered on Joseph, and how God had given him a dream that he would one day rule such that even his own family would be subject to his authority. Bro. Wayne took us through the unfolding of that promise in Joseph's life, and how at the time, Joseph was mostly unaware that the fulfillment of this promise was taking place. It wasn't until Joseph met his brothers in Egypt, and as they were bowing before him seeking food in those desperate circumstances that it says in Genesis 42:9, *"And Joseph remembered the dream which he dreamed of them...."*

The Lord had never wavered from his promise no matter

what Joseph may have thought or felt throughout the experience. Not only that, the fulfillment of the promise to Joseph was but one step in the fulfillment of God's greater promise to Abraham. Genesis 26:4, *"And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."* We begin to see the evidence of His promise to Abraham materialize when Joseph entered Egypt, and yet it will not be entirely complete until Christ stands as king, ruling an everlasting kingdom in righteousness, blessing every nation of the earth.

There is very little in the Scriptures about that first creative day when light was brought forth out of darkness, yet it must have been an event of unimaginable proportion.

Scientists today speak of the 'big bang' theory, and perhaps there is truth in that, but the error is in not recognizing and honouring the Creator for what He has done. The subsequent creative days are also shrouded in mystery as there is not much more in the Scriptures than a declaration that they took place. Proverbs 8:23-31, describes how wisdom was present when the earth was brought into being. Verse 27, *"When he prepared the heavens, I (wisdom) was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth."* Job 38:7 describes the rejoicing as these great events took place. *"When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."*

When Jesus was teaching his disciples on the parable of the sower and the seed, the disciples asked Him why He taught using parables. Jesus answered in Matthew 13:11, *"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."* Something given is ours to possess. While the timing and the manner in which understanding is given is entirely in God's hands, and what has not been given remains "on the shelf," we believe that our walk by the leading of the Spirit includes an ever-unfolding revelation of His truth. Not to just a few, but to the whole body of Christ. This is so uncomplicated and so wonderful. Isaiah 35:8, *"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."*

The thought that has been on my heart is that the sixth creative day began when out of the elements of the earth a human being was brought forth, but that day will not come to a close until created man stands in the image of Christ. This has been God's unwavering purpose from the outset. Genesis 1:26, *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."* In essence, all of the Scriptures and all of man's history is centered on that purpose.

We can read how the religious leaders of Jesus' day did

everything within their power to put a stop to the ministry of Christ. Yet, just when they believed that they had succeeded, in spite of their wicked motives, all of their efforts could only contribute to the fulfillment of God's perfect will; exactly on time. Romans 8:28, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."*

It would seem that the account of creation in Genesis is not so much a record of the early beginnings of time, but an overview of God's plan and purpose.

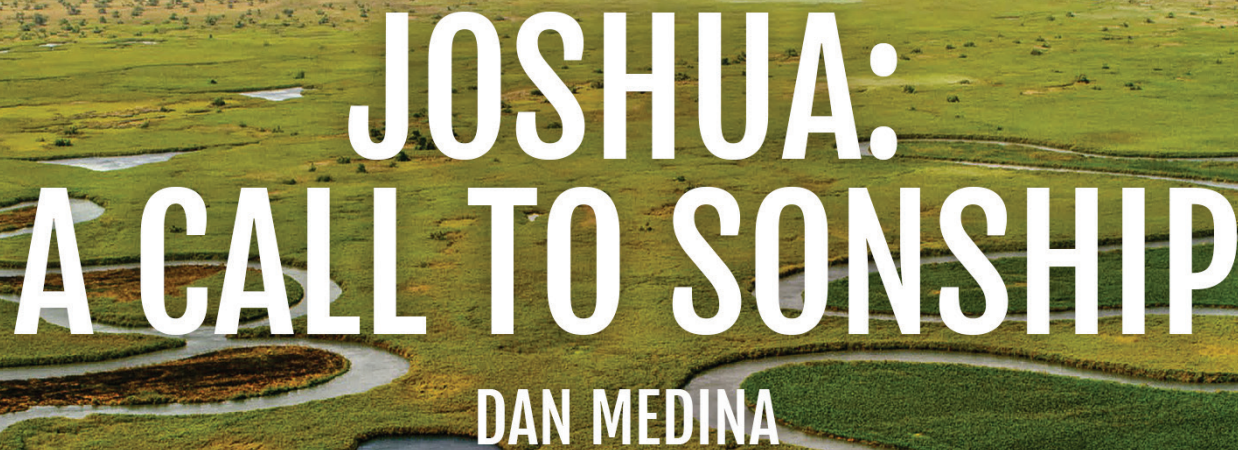
"God is an uncreated being, He has always been and will always be. He is not a being that the dimension of "time" has much meaning. It is only important to us humans. It seems to me that God sees all the past, the present, and all the future as if it were now, so the fact that creation occurred in periods called "days" of perhaps even varying lengths, presents no problems for me" (David Luff).

A few years ago Marie and I were visiting our son and daughter-in-law in Victoria, BC, and while there, we spent a weekend hiking the Cape Scott trail, which goes up to the very northern tip of Vancouver Island. It is a remote and beautifully pristine part of the island. The trail passes through rugged and heavily forested areas where huge trees, several hundred years old, stand. In places, some of these giants have fallen across the trail and a section of the trunk has been cut out to allow hikers to continue to pass through. It makes one feel rather insignificant standing beside one of these fallen trees whose diameter towers overhead. It is staggering to realize that some of these trees began life during the early days of Europeans coming to America.

In walking along the trail, and somewhat lagging behind the more energetic of our group, I looked off through the wooded forest, and couldn't help but give thanks to the Lord for the beauty and grandeur of His handiwork, and for placing us here surrounded by it. The thought that seemed to flood into my heart at the time was, that if the creation in death is beautiful, how much more beautiful will it be in life.

Although I had never thought of that before, in looking across the forest floor, it was true. Death was everywhere, an essential component of the natural world in which we live. Nothing can live unless something else dies. The very soil from which these great trees drew their life consisted of the remnants of the life that had gone before. Although it is impossible to imagine what that transformation could be like, we know that Christ has broken the power of death, and to walk with Him is to be transformed into His likeness. 1 Corinthians 15:22, *"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."*

What a tremendous future lies before us if we will be obedient and walk faithfully in the footsteps of the One who not only knows the way but as the Scriptures declare literally "is the way," and who has prepared the way before us. †



JOSHUA: A CALL TO SONSHIP

DAN MEDINA

At camp a few years ago the Lord spoke to us through prophecy of a door again being opened; a door that leads to sonship. This door stands open for anyone who will hear, so that collectively, as the body of Christ, we can enter in.

I would like to remind us of some of the things the Lord told us we will encounter on this journey.

We each have a path that will lead us to this open door. It is a narrow path with wide ditches on each side. There are trails (distractions, temptations) that would lead us off the path. These trails will lead us away from the narrow path on which God has called us to walk.

Matthew 7:13-14, *“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it”* (NKJV).

The prophecy laid out to us that, along this path, we will come across many altars. The Lord is giving us the opportunity to lay down earthly things (habits, desires, sins, and unforgiveness) that are in our lives that will cause us to become distracted and to detour from the path that He wants us on. God wants to impart His Spirit into our lives so that we can become more like Jesus.

Romans 12:1-2, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”* (KJV). The Ryrie Study Bible states it this way, “to conform one’s self, one’s mind and character to another pattern.”

We are exhorted that by the mercies of God to give ourselves to His will upon those altars. John 14:21, *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father; and I will love him and manifest Myself to him”* (NKJV).

We have been reminded that it is the “small thing” that many times we overlook that causes us to be distracted from God’s plan. Again, He is giving us the opportunity to recognize and deal with these distractions.

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: *“Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years. Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.’ So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My*

rest.’” Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion” (Hebrews 3:7-15).

We are told in Revelation in the messages to the churches, *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”* (Revelation 2:7, KJV).

Let us now look at the book of Joshua and the account of Israel entering into the promised land (sonship). God chose Joshua to lead the children of Israel, and it was essential that the people followed the instructions that God gave through Joshua. Also, we are blessed by the five-fold ministries that God has set in the church to lead us on this path.

Ephesian 4:11-16, *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ - from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love”* (NKJV).

The seriousness of this hour is not to be taken lightly. Joshua was instructed to call the people of Israel to sanctification, that is, to make themselves ready and pure to move forward. Likewise, we are called to the altars along our paths. Let us take to heart this calling and the hour in which we live. The Lord is doing a mighty work and we want the church to be ready to move as the Lord leads.

Joshua 1:7-9, *“Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go”* (NKJV).

Hebrews 10:15-25, *"But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,' then He adds, 'Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."* (NKJV).

In Jeremiah we also read, *"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; And will be their God, and they shall be my people"* (Jeremiah 31:33, KJV). These altars that the Lord is leading us to, are how He removes this fallen nature of man and by his Holy Spirit replaces it with His nature.

Romans 8:14, *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God"* (NKJV). What an incredible calling! Oh hallelujah, thank You Jesus! To become a Son of God, what a calling!

Joshua 1:16, *"And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: only the Lord thy God be with thee, as He was with Moses"* (KJV).

Let us, today, with one voice say as Israel said, "All that You ask of us we will do, and where You lead us we will go."

In Joshua 1:18, we have a warning that is given. It was for Israel, but it is for us as well. *"Whoever rebels against Your command and does not heed Your words, in all that You command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and of good courage"* (NKJV).

In Revelation 2:4, we have another warning which reads, *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love"* (KJV). The Ryrie Study Bible states that leaving their first love is "that their actions are intentional, not accidental acts." They chose to not place God first. Jesus gave us an example when he prayed, *"Nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done"* (Luke 22:42, NKJV).

Also in Revelation 3:15-16, we read, *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth"* (NKJV). The Ryrie Study Bible put it this way about being lukewarm, "the lukewarm church is a compromising or accommodating church. It is repulsive to the Lord and damaging to His purpose." The world has caused many to accept behaviors that the Lord has said to be sinful/wrong as if they were right. We read that in the last days right will be considered wrong and wrong will be considered right. Isaiah 5:20, *"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil"* (NKJV). Let none of us choose to follow the ways of the world.

Let us all, as Joshua 1:7-8 states, *"Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success"* (NKJV). Amen and amen and amen!

There is a song, "Hearts Courageous" by Maranatha! Music that has come to mind, and the words of the chorus are as follows:

"We are marching on with hearts courageous.
We will follow where you want us to,
And should you lead us where the battle rages,
Let us march with hearts courageous after you."

"If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31, NKJV). ✠

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Headquarters:
802 Airport Road
North Battleford, SK S9A 2Z3 Canada

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 934
North Battleford, SK S9A 2Z3 Canada

Telephone:
(306) 445-2733

Email:
info@globalmissionsinc.org

Online:
www.globalmissionsinc.org

Traveling Ministry Contact List:
www.globalmissionsinc.org/about

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