

Heal My Land

By Carol Madison

“We inquire of the Lord, and then we repent of everything He shows us.”

That was the simple explanation of “ministry strategy” given by the *Healing the Land* team from Fiji. This group of young adults was invited to the Canadian Arctic to pray with the indigenous people regarding the healing and restoring of their land. As the team traveled to different villages, they were welcomed by community leadership to lead in powerful times of prayer and repentance.

The *Healing the Land* team has seen the literal healing of their own land in several villages in Fiji. In desperation for God’s intervention, the people of Fiji are willing to humble themselves according to the covenant promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14: “...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 will I hear from heaven and forgive their sins and *heal their land*.”

This is probably one of the most frequently quoted verses about the hope for revival in our churches and communities. There is a growing awareness of our desperate need for repentance that might attract God’s manifest presence, favor, and blessing. We understand the principles of humility, seeking God, and repentance, but we’re not quite sure about the promised outcome. What would a *healing of our land* really look like? What does that mean for *my* community?

Literal Healing of the Land

In Fiji, people are overjoyed at how God is responding to their humble pleas of brokenness and repentance. In one of the villages, God showed the people their need to repent for the generational sin of cannibalizing the first Methodist missionary to Fiji. The Fijians invited the descendants of the missionary to come and receive their humble apologies for the sins of their ancestors. In turn, the family offered their forgiveness in a moving ceremony that was covered by CNN.

Since then, many villages have experienced the healing of their land as the believers have inquired of the Lord and repented of absolutely *everything* God shows them. Sometimes they take as much as 18 months to seek God and make certain that they have left no sin unconfessed and no reconciliation incomplete. They have watched God restore relationships in families, churches, and even between villages where the history of cannibalism has bred animosity over generations.

In the village of Nuku, a toxic stream that had been poisoned for 40 years was suddenly healed as a result of intentional repentance for generations of sins. Whereas once people developed brain lesions from the water, the people are now able to freely drink from the stream. What is even more amazing is that the stream is still polluted above and below the village, but clear and healed as it flows through the community! ¹

In the Canadian Arctic, the *Healing the Land* team led in a very moving reconciliation ceremony between original inhabitants of the land and those who came afterwards to settle the area. As they repented and rededicated a particular plot of land, they were overwhelmed with God’s immediate response. Although caribou (a mainstay of life) had been scarce in the area for nearly four years, suddenly 15,000 caribou showed up two days later. The caribou “spontaneously” gathered on the very spot where the land had been rededicated and restored to God. ²

The mountain village of Almolonga, Guatemala, has been in a state of community-wide transformation for years after desperate people sought God and pleaded for His healing of their

land. Once known for idolatry, drunkenness, crime, and poverty, it is now estimated that more than 90 percent of the residents are followers of Jesus Christ. The jails have closed, churches have replaced bars, and the people are experiencing a healing of the land through shortened growing cycles and crops of vegetables that are of biblical proportions. If you walk the streets of Almolonga and talk with the people, they will stop to pray with you and declare God's glory. They will make certain you understand that to experience this remarkable transformation, "You must humble yourselves and pray. There is no other way!"

Land is Important to God

God is choosing to reveal Himself in the nations in ways that leave people "utterly amazed" (Habakkuk 1:5). Causing fish to return in abundance or healing the coral reef in Fiji are demonstrations of God's sovereignty over His creation. Gathering up 15,000 caribou to show His favor is an undeniable mark of His love for the land and all creatures. When His presence so fills a Guatemalan village that children can walk the streets in safety and the only police problems are a few traffic incidents, God is fulfilling His promise to heal the land when His people turn back to Him.

Throughout Scripture you will find that God connects obedience to His commands with abundance and wealth of the land. "So if you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to love the LORD your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul—then I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and oil. I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied" (Deuteronomy 11:13-15).

God's original intended purpose for His creation was that it glorify Him, as well as bless and sustain its inhabitants. God designed earth to be His sanctuary that declares His glory. When He created it, He declared many times over that it was good (Genesis 1). He took great care to make certain that His creation would work in harmony to benefit man and all creatures. God intended for man to be intimately connected with the land for as long as man remained in faithful covenant with God.

The Defilement of Land

But God's intended purposes for His creation were interrupted by man's sin. Man's sin defiled the land, as well as fractured the relationship between God, man, and the land. Sin has continued to defile land as we heap on more and more layers of broken covenants with God. Because of this broken relationship between God, man, and the land, the god of this world (Satan) has been given an authority that was not in God's original established order. Satan has greater influence in our physical and spiritual realms than God intended in His design.

God is very specific about the sins that defile the land:

- Sexual immorality (Leviticus 18:24-28)
- Murder and vicious atrocities (Numbers 35:33-34)
- Idolatry and occultism (Psalm 106:34-37)³

Romans 8:20-22 describes the defilement of creation—as well as its hope for healing and restoration: "Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to God's curse. All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."

Ultimately the new heaven and new earth will be established with Christ's return, but with God's grace we can experience a taste of that glorious restoring here and now.

Steps to Restoring and Redeeming Land

Because of our personal sin and generations of sin, we are responsible for defiling the land. Therefore it follows that we are critical to the healing and restoring of the land. God prescribes the answer to our fate in 2 Chronicles 7:14 when He offers repentance as the means of restored covenant with Him.

It begins with our own hearts. As the *Healing the Land* team teaches, this means inquiring of the Lord of everything that needs cleansing and restoring through God's forgiveness. It means being willing to spend time in intimate consultation with the Lord (Jeremiah 23:18), asking Him to reveal every area of your heart that needs repentance. This means learning to live a lifestyle of repentance that is always inviting the Lord to speak into your life.

Then God invites us into repentance on behalf of others, a prayer effort that has been termed "identificational repentance." Daniel, Nehemiah, and others repented on behalf of the sins of their people and nation, even though they were not personally guilty of the sins.⁴ We can experience the impact of generational sins that continue to plague our families, churches, or the land. God is looking for people who are willing to humble themselves on behalf of those sins. In Ezekiel 22:30, the importance of just one humble and willing person is emphasized: "I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn't have to destroy the land, but I found no one" (NLT).

Praying and repenting on behalf of sins of community that have occurred over generations requires accurate historical and spiritual research. This research allows "informed intercession" based on objective information-gathering (often called "spiritual mapping") that includes the origins of a community, religious roots, history of crime and sin, etc. By combining this research with Holy Spirit-led prayer and attention to God's revelation, you can pray accurate prayers of repentance regarding the defilement of the land in your community.

In Uganda, the president of the nation invited pastors and intercessors to stand in the gap of behalf of the land. After years of civil war and the inability of the army to make headway in capturing the rebels, the president realized the place of desperate prayer. Because the rebels were involved in occult activity, the president used government troops and helicopters to escort intercessors and pastors to "high places" of occult activity so that spiritual strongholds could be broken in the spiritual realms. As the believers prayed, the government troops began to make progress in pushing back the rebels and their reign of terror in the country.⁵

Vision for Your Own Community

After taking a vision trip to Almolonga, Guatemala, to experience the reality of a transformed community, God placed a burden and vision on my heart for my own community. This involved moving to a new town home on a hill overlooking my city, for the purposes of praying for revival and transformation. In fact, God showed me the exact town home I was to live in—the one with the best view of the central part of the community. It was not for sale, but I knew out of obedience that I was to pray faithfully and fervently for that specific town home. After several months of quietly praying in front of the home, it came on the market and God allowed me to buy it.

When I told the owners that I had prayed for their town home, they were obviously taken back and surprised. Then they shared that they had not intended to move, as they loved the town home and had just finished remodeling. But one day they literally woke up with a sudden urge to sell it. Within 24 hours, they made the decision to move, put an offer on another home, and put the town home on the market! Clearly God was leading me in a new assignment, and it was about the healing of the land.

God then brought a small group of people together who were willing to pray on behalf of the community. We researched the history of the community, as well as prayed about the spiritual climate. One of the first things God showed us was that the town was originally settled by believers who wanted to live in a community that reflected their Christian values. But through a variety of situations that represented a threatening and intimidating spiritual environment, the first established church was moved to another community. The first believers essentially “abdicated” their places of standing on behalf of the land. After that church moved, the community was void of a church of like faith for the next 100 years!

Upon learning this, we researched the place where we believed the original church was established. As best we understood through prayer and research, we went to the piece of land that was now a park. We stood beneath some sugar maple trees (as the early believers did according to historical documents) and rededicated the land back to the Lord. We thanked the Lord for the faith and vision of the original believers, but then asked forgiveness for how they folded under the pressures of spiritual intimidation. We asked God to redeem and restore the community to the original vision of a city that reflects biblical values. We asked Him for the courage to stand on behalf of the land, that we might fulfill His intended purposes for the community.

Since then we have prayer walked in a variety of places throughout the community, based on research and prayerful inquiring of the Lord. As God has revealed sin that has occurred over the years, we have purposed ourselves to repent for those sins and stand in humility before the Lord on behalf of the land. We meet regularly to pray and ask the Lord about our next assignment, and then walk in quiet and submissive obedience to His direction. Although we have not yet seen tangible healing of the land, we have enjoyed the adventure of prayer—and have received much encouragement from the Lord to stay faithful.

Prepare for Rain

In the movie *Facing the Giants*, a seasoned intercessor shares a parable with the football coach that encourages the coach to believe God for the transformation of his football team. The intercessor tells the story of two farmers who prayed desperately for rain, but only one farmer prepared his field to receive the rain. He poses the question to the coach, “Which farmer showed greater trust in God?”

The act of “preparing for rain” includes humbling ourselves before the Lord, confessing our sins, and repenting on behalf of our communities. If we invite Him, God wants to invade our communities with His undeniable presence that heals and restores our land—and brings glory to Him.

¹ *Let the Sea Resound*, a documentary on the transformation of Fiji, produced by The Sentinel Group (www.sentinelgroup.org).

² Account taken from report by Roger Armbruster on his ministry website (www.canadaawakening.com).

³ *Rededicating the Earth to God*, by G. J. Wiese. Unpublished dissertation.

⁴ Daniel's identificational repentance delivered the Jews from the demonic principalities of Persia and Greece (Daniel 9:4-6, 11). Nehemiah's repentance led to receiving favor from the king and permission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:5-9).

⁵ *An Unconventional War*, a documentary on Uganda produced by The Sentinel Group (www.sentinelgroup.org).