

Perfecting in the Word Ministry

“Now What?”

Spirit of Truth Cathedral

53rd Church Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, July 29, 2018



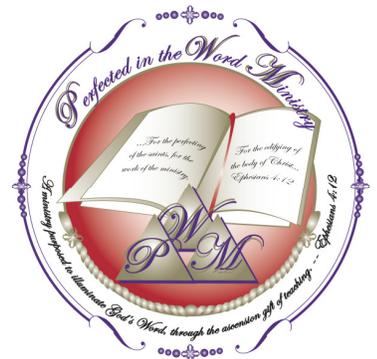
Preliminary Remarks:

This afternoon, God has given me a life-changing word for His people. Today’s message, in response to God’s directives to the children of Israel, is in the simple form of a question ... and the question that I am proposing to the church today is: “**Now What?**”

Text:

Deuteronomy 10:11-13 [King James Version]

- ¹¹ And the LORD said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give unto them.
- ¹² And **Now**, Israel, **What** [?] doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to **fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,**
- ¹³ To **keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes,** which I command thee this day for thy good?



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Introduction:

Saints of God, since we are celebrating the church's **fifty-third year** of formulation, you would certainly have to agree with me that throughout these many years history has taught us many lessons! Truly, **"the Lord has brought us from a mighty long way!"**

History teaches us many lessons ... George Santayana was quoted as saying: **"Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it."** Similarly, Winston Churchill was quoted as saying: **"Those that fail to learn from history, are doomed to repeat it."** Actually, Sir Winston Churchill was not exactly quoting George Santayana. In a 1948 speech to the House of Commons, Churchill slightly changed the quote when he said (paraphrased), **"Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it."** and George Santayana [1905] said, **"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."**

Meaning: We must always look forward, but we have to understand our history in order to not repeat the mistakes of the past. I have seen too many instances where people continue to pursue wrong courses of action because they do not take the time to think critically about what has happened in the past.

The third stanza of John Newton's now famous hymn, **Amazing Grace**, encourages us to continue our trust in God through the rough times, with the hope that we will someday be free of our persecutions, trials and burdens of our life's journey! *"Through many dangers toils and snares, we have already come; 'twas grace that brought us safe thus far, and grace will lead us home."*

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I. Possessing Our Inheritance!

Joshua 11:23;13:1 [King James Version]

So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war ... Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

During my time of research and meditation on God's Rhema for this afternoon's message, I was inspired by a message delivered by our founding father (Apostle James A. Parson, Sr., Ph.D.), entitled: "**Possessing Our Inheritance**." If you would indulge me this afternoon, I am constrained by the Spirit of God to share the introductory passage from his script ...

"The last time I stood (rather sat) behind this sacred desk to bring to you the Word of the Lord, I spoke from the theme: "**Crossing Over Jordan**." Today, the Holy Ghost has moved upon me to bring to you a sequel (follow up) to that message.

The Holy Ghost wants us to understand, this afternoon, that there is a great difference in being given an inheritance by God and actually possessing or occupying it.

The third division of the **Book of Joshua** is concerned with Israel possessing the conquered territories. The spiritual application to us is our need to possess our inheritance in Jesus Christ.

The first section of the Book (Chapters 1-5) emphasized the entrance into the land. Great decisions had to be made, decisions of faith, and this led to God working great miracles against their foes.

The second section of the Book (Chapters 6-12) deals with the actual conquest of Canaan. First a few cities were taken, then five kings from the south, finally 31 kings from the north. One after another, these foes were conquered.

Joshua's success as a leader is expressed in **Joshua 11:15**: "**As the Lord commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses.**" Brothers and sisters, this was true obedience and that is the reason why God blessed Joshua as He did.

Our text says: "**So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.**" It is likely that five years elapsed before peace actually came. It was a long campaign but a successful one.

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Paul, writing to the Corinthian church said, **“Now all these things happened unto them (the Israelites) for ensamples (types) and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come”** [1Corinthians 10:11]. So, my fellow saints, in order for us to benefit from the experiences of Israel we must remember that Canaan was an inheritance to Israel just as Jesus Christ is our inheritance today.

In the **Epistle to the Hebrews** we read: **“For if Jesus (Joshua) had given them (the Israelites) rest then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God”** [Hebrews 4:8,9].

We as God’s people have a rest that remains for us. This is not physical rest, but a rest of soul which comes from placing total confidence in Jesus Christ.

This is a rest which releases us of being constantly upset through trials and troubles. It is a rest from frustration and discouragement. Come what may, we find our rest in Jesus Christ. This kind of rest means that we have ceased trying to do what only God can do. This kind of rest means that we depend on His strength and not our own.

This is the rest that God has for His people today. This is why we have this exhortation from the Word of God: **“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief”** [Hebrews 4:11].

The unbelief spoken of by the **Writer to the Hebrews** has to do with the Israelites who failed to find Canaan rest because of their lack of trust in God. They tried in their own strength but because of unbelief, they did not go in and take what God had provided for them. We are warned not to be as they were. Today, we find our rest as the result of our faith and trust in Jesus Christ.”



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II. Now What?

Deuteronomy 10:12,13 [King James Version]

Now ... **What** [?!] Doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to **1** **fear** [yaré (yā-rá): reverence, honour, respect, astonishment, awe] **the LORD thy God**, to **2** **walk** [yalak (yā-lak): prosper, pursue, cause to run] **in all his ways**, and to **3** **love** [ahab (ā-hav): God's love toward man to righteousness] **him**, and to **4** **serve** [abad (ā-vad): worshiper] **the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul**, to **5** **keep** [shamar (shā-mar): guard, protect, be circumspect, observe] **the commandments of the LORD**, and **his statutes**, which I command thee this day for thy good?

God's requirements to us today is the same as it was for the earlier dispensation of the Israelites: to fear Him; to walk in His ways; love Him; serve Him with your all; and keep His commandments and statutes!

Deuteronomy 10:14-22 [New International Version, Disciple's Study Bible]

To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the Lord set his affection on your forefathers and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today. **Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.** For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who **shows no partiality** and **accepts no bribes.** **He defends the cause of the fatherless** and the **widow**, and loves the **alien** [ger (gār): unfamiliar, different, unacceptable, strange, foreigner, differing in nature or character to the point of incompatibility, immigrant, non-native], **giving him food and clothing.** And you are to love those who are **aliens**, for you yourselves were **aliens** in Egypt. Fear the Lord your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name. **He is your praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes,** Your forefathers who went down into Egypt were **seventy** in all, and now the Lord your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

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So, **Now What?**

- Do we just give up, or give in to our past struggles?
- Do we acquiesce, hoping that somehow a change will come by osmosis?
- Do we take God's directives to: "*Stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord!*" ... in the most literal sense? While holding steadfastly to the lyrics: "*If I hold my peace and let the Lord fight my battles ... victory shall be mine!*"?
- Are we supposed to (as expressed by the computer term) "bootstrap" our way out of the pit of misery?
- After observing years of decline since our founder was smitten, should we continue to "*wait on the Lord*" and "*be of good courage,*" believing somehow that "*He shall strengthen [our] heart*" and as well our situation?
- **Now What** is the path we should take, from the Oracle of the faithful Word of God, that will transform our stagnation to a church and life of renewed progression?

[Quote from President Barack Obama on July 17, 2018: "**The world is living in strange and uncertain times ... with each day's news cycle bringing more head-spinning and disturbing headlines ...**"] In an address marking the 100th anniversary of anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela's birth, President Obama's speech in South Africa opened by describing today's times as "**strange and uncertain,**" adding that "**each day's news cycle is bringing more head-spinning and disturbing headlines.**" These days "**we see much of the world threatening to return to a more dangerous, more brutal, way of doing business,**" Obama said.

This quote should spur, not only our political call to action, but our God-enate purpose to "*prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers;*" thus challenging us to keep our ideas alive by continuing to pursue our hopes and dreams at a more feverish pace!

3]John 1:2 [King James Version]

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

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Deuteronomy 10:12 [King James Version]

And **now**, [Spirit of Truth], **what** doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul...?

Psalm 39:7 [King James Version]

And **now**, Lord, **what** wait I for? my hope is in thee.

Sometimes, when we come to realize that we have been caught up in a quagmire of contentment and stagnation concerning our spiritual and personal growth, it becomes urgently necessary to objectively assess our perspective on past decisions and our motivations to these decisions, to determine a path forward to obtaining the blessings which God has promised to the adopted heirs of Abraham.

“**Where Do We Go from Here?**” – a single and a track from *Journey to the Land Of... Enchantment by Enchantment* (Song modified to reflect church’s position).

Where Do We Go from Here? [Revised]

Here I am - There you are –
We’ve been sitting here for so long.
You and I, catching each other’s eyes –
And wondering if we should give it all!

Should I just walk away (walk away) –
With nothing to say (nothing to say)?
Or take a chance on both hands [praying]?
Oh [church], tell me: **Where do we go from here?**

Here we are, all alone –
Finally got together to see (just to see).
If you and I can share a [God] affair –
To find out if [God’s plans] were meant to be!

Should I just turn my head (turn my head) –
Like nothing has been said (nothing been said)?
Or take a chance on [God’s] love?
Oh [church], tell me: **Where do we go from here?**

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III. God's Answer!

Saints of these Charismatic Churches, the answers to the “**Now What?**” question is indeed found in God's faithful Oracle! Through God's prophetic revelation, He is directing us to the same passage of life-changing instructions which were disseminated to the children of Israel; which is **seven-part: Deuteronomy 11...**

Deuteronomy 11:1-7 [New International Version]

Part #1: History Teaches Us A Lesson!

Love the LORD your God and keep his requirements, his decrees, his laws and his commands always. **Remember today that your children were not the ones who saw and experienced the discipline of the LORD your God: his majesty, his mighty hand, his outstretched arm; the signs he performed and the things he did in the heart of Egypt,** both to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his whole country; what he did to the Egyptian army, to its horses and chariots, how he overwhelmed them with the waters of the Red Sea as they were pursuing you, and how the LORD brought lasting ruin on them. **It was not your children who saw what he did for you in the wilderness** until you arrived at this place, and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab the Reubenite, when **the earth opened its mouth right in the middle of all Israel and swallowed them up** with their households, their tents and every living thing that belonged to them. **But it was your own eyes that saw all these great things the LORD has done.**

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Deuteronomy 11:8-15 [New International Version]

Part #2: Observe And Take Possession!

Observe therefore **all the commands** I am giving you today, **so that you may have the strength** to go in and take over the land that you are **crossing the Jordan to possess**, and **so that you may live long** in the land the LORD swore to your ancestors to give to them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. The land you are entering to **take over** is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. **But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of** is a land of mountains and valleys that **drinks rain from heaven**. It is a land the LORD your God cares for; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it **from the beginning of the year to its end**. 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** [in his due season], **both autumn** [the first rain] **and spring rains** [the latter rain], so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil. I will provide grass in the fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

Joel 2:23,24 [King James Version]

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the **former rain moderately** [autumn rains], and he will cause to come down for you **the rain** [abundant showers], **the former rain** [autumn rain], and **the latter rain** [spring rain] in the **first month** [as before]. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

Deuteronomy 11:16-21 [New International Version]

Part #3: Now A Warning!

Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Then the LORD's anger will burn against you, and **he will shut up the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce**, and you will soon perish from the good land the LORD is giving you. **Fix these words** of mine **in your hearts and minds**; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **Teach them to your children**, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **Write them on the doorframes of your houses** and on your gates, **so that your days and the days of your children may be many** in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

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Deuteronomy 11:22,23 [New International Version]

Part #4: Fear The Lord!

If you **carefully observe all these commands** I am giving you to follow – to **love the LORD your God**, to **walk in obedience to him** and to **hold fast to him** – **then** the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and stronger than you.

Deuteronomy 11:24,25 [New International Version]

Part #5: Prayer of Jabez! [Enlarge My Territory]

Every place where you set your foot will be yours: **Your territory will extend** from the desert to Lebanon, and from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea. **No one will be able to stand against you.** The LORD your God, as **he promised you**, will **put the terror and fear of you on the whole land**, wherever you go.

1Chronicles 4:10 [New International Version]

Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, “Oh, that you would **bless me** [barak (baw-rak')] and **enlarge my territory** [rabah (raw-baw')]! **Let your hand be with me** [yad (yawd)], and **keep me from harm** [ra` (rah)] so that I will be free from pain.” And **God granted his request.**

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 [New International Version]

Part #6: Blessings & Curses!

See, I am setting before you today **a blessing** and **a curse** – **the blessing if you obey the commands** of the LORD your God that I am giving you today; **the curse if you disobey the commands** of the LORD your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.

Deuteronomy 11:29-32 [New International Version]

Part #7: Proclamation Of Possession!

When the LORD your God has brought you into the land you are entering to possess, you are to **proclaim on Mount Gerizim** [“cuttings off”] **the blessings**, and on **Mount Ebal** [“stone” or “bare mountain”; “mountain of cursing”] **the curses**. As you know, **these mountains are across the Jordan**, westward, toward the setting sun, near the great trees of Moreh, in the territory of those Canaanites living in the Arabah in the vicinity of Gilgal. **You are about to cross the Jordan to enter and take possession** of the land the LORD your God is giving you. When you have **taken it over** and are living there, **be sure that you obey** all the decrees and laws I am setting before you today.

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Conclusion:

Saints of these Charismatic Churches, what is your answer to the “**Now What?**” question??? People of God, it’s time to cease from observing, and finally begin doing!!!

So, **Now What?**

- What have you done lately (for yourself/situation)?
- What has God done (for you/situation) lately?
- Didn’t God deliver you from the burning fire?
- Didn’t God deliver you out of the mouth of the lion, while in the midst of the lion’s den?
- Didn’t God heal your body from diverse sickness and disease?
- Didn’t God deliver you from the pit of misery?
- Didn’t God deliver your children from a quagmire of addiction and distresses?
- **Now What** is the path we should take, from the Oracle of the faithful Word of God, that will transform our stagnation to a church and life of renewed progression?

Let the words of one of the following slogans be your defining moment of reinvention...

- Change your attitude ... Change your life!
- Own your tomorrow!
- This is your year ... own it!

Final notes from our founding father (Apostle James A. Parson, Sr., Ph.D.):

- Brothers and sisters, many of us are living far short of our inheritance in Jesus Christ.
- Paul wrote to the Corinthian church: “**All things are yours ... whether ... things present, or things to come; all are yours**” [1Cor. 3:21,22].
- But many of us fail to conquer the enemies in our lives and take possession of everything that God has provided for us in Jesus Christ.
- The Church, as a whole, is blessed only as individual saints move forward to possess all that is theirs in Jesus Christ.
- Saints of Spirit of Truth, let us, as one body, move forward to possess our inheritance.

The Question: **Now What?** The Answer: Go, and **Possess the Land**!!!