



The Concerns of The Most High

An Investigation of the Prophets of Israel
for Christians

S. Neil Von Fange

THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH.
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PREVIEW EDITION

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THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH

THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH speaks to a world which is full of itself to the brim, and to a church which is not on the alert as it should be.

The service of the kingdom of God will be difficult to manage for all disciples of Jesus Christ, with the potential for serious mistakes, particularly for those with callings involving higher visibility or level of responsibility.

The God of the universe is something like a landlord who does not like to be ignored, and who demands a reply by humanity to his expectations. This book seeks to identify and characterize his concerns as expressed by the prophets of Israel.

S. NEIL VON FANGE is a retired system engineer, project leader, and developer from several fields in high technology. He graduated from Northwestern University with BS and MS degrees in mechanical engineering.

He originally comes from Montclair, New Jersey and then Indianapolis, Indiana. He makes his home in southern Indiana, where he remediates long standing erosion on his property with gravel, rock, and the transplanting of much ground cover.

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THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH

Dedication

This book is in memory of Alpha Humbard, a traveling evangelist and prophet who ministered for better than 30 years in many areas of the U.S. in the first part of the 1900s.

Humbard tells of one of his early meetings in an Arkansas town. After the attendees had left for home, he was taken by local tough elements, led out of town to their campfire drinking club in the woods, and beaten severely with a tree limb. He survived the ordeal and was met by an angel. A search party which had given up looking for him was then met by the same angel. Following instructions they found Humbard sitting next to railroad tracks.

The next day, he reached out to those in town who had opposed him, and then continued in his meetings. He refused to co-operate with an attorney who recognized significant money in the case, citing Rom. 12:19. In the next 90 days several of the perpetrators of the incident suffered death, and one that had done the whipping horribly so.

Humbard's memoirs are found in his book, *From the Plow Handle to the Pulpit*. This book is dedicated in his memory, as well as many other true servants of Jesus Christ who have built upon the foundation set by the first century apostles.

These all set aside their lives and endured much hardship to fulfil their respective heavenly callings. Without their pioneering labors, this book would not have been possible.

THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH

Preface

The charismatic movement made an enormous impression on my generation in the 1960s and through the 1970s. It was as if a tidal wave swept through many churches and Christian communities in all parts of the world, most of which I was unaware of at the time.

Although the publicly visible anointing of those years is long past, it made a lasting impression on me in my university years. I realized that I had to pursue and develop my calling, which became a lifelong task for me. See my previous book, *The Tools of an Intercessor*, for further on this subject.

In the aftermath of these initial experiences, my first job out of university turned out to be a low time for me. In this context, I had an entirely unexpected encounter with a prophet of God.

During a picnic lunch, with two ladies accompanying this young man, we were rejoicing in the doings of the Lord among our acquaintances. Then he became very serious, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit was visibly upon him. The Lord cited a need I had and asked if I wanted him to deal with it; but I said no. I realized that how I answered could matter a lot, and I became very concerned and cautious in my replies.

He asked if I understood my responsibilities, and I said yes. He asked what these were; I said I needed to get certain things straightened out in my life and witness as a Christian. Then he quoted a scripture from the gospels, and he said it would be to me according to my faith. He also said that he could return about this matter at any time. At that point, our fellowship at the picnic table continued.

The kingdom of God involves strange and wonderful interactions between the God of the universe and his people, particularly after the baptism in the Holy Spirit with its associated prayer language. Such will not merge well with the sophistication and expectations of families and communities. The continuing task for Christians is to establish a Bible-based foundation, so they can evaluate their experiences and surroundings in a balanced manner.

The God of the universe is a holy God with actual concerns, and demands that humanity reply to his expectations. This book seeks to identify and characterize these concerns as expressed by the prophets of Israel. It is intended to support word ministry, which is tasked with training the body of Christ for its own service with its many aspects. My hope is that readers will benefit in their own lives as I have from such an awareness.

THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH

Introduction

While most people can be articulate to express their own concerns, the same people would often be hard pressed to adequately express God's concerns. These are expressed in particular in the writings of the prophets of Israel.

The worldwide revivals of recent centuries represent efforts by the Holy Spirit to get the church moving after a very long dark age. To a significant degree, these have taken place outside of institutional religion; have been among the poor and uneducated; and often have not been well documented.

Unfortunately, given the difficulties of managing the affairs of the kingdom of God, the Old Testament as well as church history is replete with cases in which the service of the kingdom has been mismanaged or assumed by individuals without a true calling. The result has been not only harm to not a few individuals, but also a widely held anticipation of any reason at all to speak against or reject external ministry in the name of discernment.

The presence of Divinely appointed and anointed ministry speaks of very serious efforts by the Most High to bring relief, instruction, and help to his people for their growth and service. The rejection of such ministry is a primary point of contention between God and man.

Given such a context, followers of Jesus Christ are expected to anticipate difficulties in their preparations (Matt. 7:13-14, 15-20). They are to acknowledge the gravity of Divinely appointed ministry (Mark 4:24-25); look for what is right, giving them considerable latitude; set aside full and free discussion; and not become vocal towards the shortfalls of ministry (2 Sam. 1:14; 1 Sam. 24). In sum, they are to identify and benefit from those aspects of the message which are plainly valid, while not taking wrong concepts into hand (Matt. 23:1-3). The above statements having been made, pastors will have to evaluate how to set direction for their assemblies with regard to external ministry including any errors or failings (Rev. 2).

This book seeks to identify illustrations from anointed ministry of the last 100 plus years in which Divine concerns are visible and consistent with the message of the prophets of Israel. For a conservative and scholarly treatment of the prophets, see *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Freeman) as well as *My Servants the Prophets* (E. J. Young).

It is my hope that these pages will be helpful as points of reference, to assist in the evaluation and testing of both personal and public experiences of faith which relate to the concerns of the Most High.

THE CONCERNS OF THE MOST HIGH

Interlude – Ezek. 2

And He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you." Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me. And He said to me: "Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day. For they are impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD God.' As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for they are a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.

"And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns are with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, though they are a rebellious house. You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious. But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you."

Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe.

| Chap. | Verse | Terse Summary | Cat. | Narr've | Call of Proph. | God's Concerns | God's Hopes | God's Justice | Base Subject | Base Ref. |
|-------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|---------|----------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 2 | 1 | Ezek. to get up, Y. has orders | A1.1 | x | | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 2 | Assistance by the HS to listen to Y. | A1.1 | x | | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 3 | Ezek. is sent to rebellious Israel | D2.2 | | x | x | | | Oblivious to expect'ns | Ref. Isa. 1:2-3 |
| | 4 | E. sent as prophet to rebellious Isr. | D2.2 | | x | x | | | Oblivious to expect'ns | Ref. Isa. 1:2-3 |
| | 5 | Is not about rec'n but for the record | A1.1 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 6 | No backing down during Ezek's trials | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 7 | Is not about rec'n but for the record | A1.1 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 8 | Ezek. to receive msg w/o resistance | D2.2 | | | x | | | Oblivious to expect'ns | Ref. Isa. 1:2-3 |
| | 9 | Ezek. views Div. message as scroll | A1.1 | x | | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 10 | Ezek. views extensive bad news msg | A1.3 | x | | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |

(Appendix A contains a list of categories relating to the prophets of Israel.)

The Concerns of the Most High

ZEPH. 3:3-4

Her princes in her midst are roaring lions, her judges are evening wolves that leave not a bone till morning. Her prophets are insolent, treacherous people, her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law.



B1.3 - SYNOPSIS:

Heavy handed government is at the forefront, with contempt for real needs.

Prophets passages: Zeph. 3; Mic. 3, 7; Hos. 5-6; Amos 5-6; Zech. 11.
(For references in the major prophets, search Appendix D1 thru D3 for B1.3.)

Other O.T. passages: Sons of Eli (1 Sam. 2-3); Rehoboam (1 Kgs. 12); Zedekiah (Jerem. 34).

DISCUSSION:

Dumitru Duduman was a Romanian pastor, and around 1950 became involved with transporting Bibles to Russia. He emigrated to the U.S. from Romania with his family in 1984.

In his book *Through the Fire*, he tells of his father's harsh sentencing as a pastor during repression by the Nazis. An 85-year-old woman was next in line, and received a 25-year sentence. When the judge ridiculed her hopeless position, she respectfully replied that the judge would complete her sentence. Within nine months, Russia invaded Romania, the same judge was imprisoned, and previously imprisoned Christians were freed.

This respite between rule by Nazis and rule by Russians only lasted for a matter of months. Duduman's immediate family endured significant trauma at the hands of the Communist party. Meanwhile, Duduman drifted from his childhood faith, becoming discouraged during these conditions. When was 17 years old, he entered the army, and was swiftly promoted. He was promised further promotion if he could find Bibles at his assigned port of entry for Romania.

During one inspection incident, Duduman found some Bibles, but while questioning a Dutch man, heard the reply that the Bibles belonged to Duduman's brothers and sisters. He came under conviction, returned the man's passport, and released him. Duduman soon returned to his faith, and began his life work of transporting Bibles to Russian Christians. This task lasted until the 1980s, when he was finally expelled from his homeland by the Romanian government.

Among his marvelous stories, he tells of an angel appearing to him in a vision one night, in which the angel wrote a license plate number on his hand under the skin, and instructed him to look for that car in a certain town on a certain day. When he later embarked from his train in a snowstorm, he found the car, where a man was waiting for him, having been instructed to take him wherever he said. The license plate number remained on his hand for an extended period.

Church leadership is not to utilize the methods of the world while maintaining reasonable order among the assemblies of God's people. The Lord cautions them to not be heavy handed (Matt. 18), and to not be overly assertive about rooting out questionable individuals (Matt. 13).

The Concerns of the Most High

Hos. 6:4

O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away.



C2.2 - SYNOPSIS:

Phony loyalty in need, emotional profession, or snooty religious practices are in contrast with real intentions.

Prophets passages: Hos. 6-8, 11; Amos 5; Isa. 65-66; Jerem. 2-3, 5, 12; Ezek. 8, 33.
Other O.T. passages: dark age of Israel (Judg. 6, 10).

DISCUSSION:

G. C. Bevington was a Methodist holiness evangelist who in his 70s still labored among the poorest of the poor in the 1920s. His ministry was primarily in the neighborhood of eastern Kentucky as well as in the surrounding region.

In his book Remarkable Miracles, he tells of being invited to an Ohio camp meeting as a speaker. Upon his arrival, he was met by the oversight committee, who asked how his compensation should be delivered to him. Bevington became concerned over the size of this compensation, and with unyielding persistence established that it was made possible by gate fees and food concessions.

This was a foreign culture for him, having spent much time ministering in squalid circumstances. He expected the gospel to be free for all and without dependence on money, consistent with Matt. 10:8-10.

The committee stood its ground, having operated in this manner for some time, but Bevington refused to participate in the meeting. They finally left in a huff, calling him a crank, and spoke of their usual standby speaker. Bevington knew this man to be an alcoholic who spent any money he received on further drink.

In the aftermath, Bevington was on one of his frequent long walks in the wooded countryside, carrying his luggage. Some folks driving by in their horse carriage recognized him as "that crank". They gave him a lift to another area, where the Lord used him in a significant revival action.

Although his story is 100 years past, Bevington must be considered a point of reference for the sincere labors of word ministry. Several of his stories are included in this book, these having been an inspiration for me in multiple ways as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

The Concerns of the Most High

JEREM. 2:23-24

How can you say, "I am not polluted, I have not gone after the Baals"? See your way in the valley; know what you have done: You are a swift dromedary breaking loose in her ways, a wild donkey used to the wilderness, that sniffs at the wind in her desire; in her time of mating, who can turn her away? All those who seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they will find her.



D2.2 - SYNOPSIS:

Elevated; intellectual; sincere; adolescent; selfwilled; too good for their God and his messengers.

Prophets passages: Obad. 1; Nah. 1; Zeph. 2-3; Hos. 2, 5, 7; Amos 6; Zech. 7.

Other O.T. passages: Opposition to Saul (1 Sam. 10-11); treason by Absalom (2 Sam. 15); opposition to Micaiah (1 Kgs. 22); opposition to passover by Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:10).

DISCUSSION:

H.A. Baker and his spouse were missionaries to Tibet in the early 1900s. In the 1920s, they managed an orphanage in a town of about 5,000 in the most southwest corner of China. In his book *Visions of Heaven*, Baker tells of a sovereign move of God's power among poor and illiterate children in their orphanage.

Over a period of weeks, and without intervention by the missionaries, the children attended prayer meetings day and night. By vision and experience they encountered many of the truths presented in the Bible. These experiences were repeatedly confirmed by multiple children, and is consistent with reports from other revivals, e.g. the Kentucky revival beginning in 1799.

In one case, Baker had interacted with and invited a university student to what was unfolding in the orphanage. The student visited for a few days, but politely kept his distance. Then, unknown to Baker until later, one of the orphan girls had occasion to interact with him, invited him to be a Christian, and warned him of the fate of unbelievers at death. The student was impolite and snooty to her, and informed her to mind her own business.

Not long afterwards, a funeral procession passed by outside the orphanage. It turned out that the above-mentioned university student had just died. About one month later, Baker heard the same orphan girl, while under the anointing, carry on a conversation with this young man, who was now in hell, as if she was speaking on a telephone. She could not help him; he had not been willing to listen to her; and this was to be his fate from now on.

Humanism comes in many forms, i.e. sophistication, intellectualism, comic relief, cynicism, ridicule, etc. Such stances by humanity will be no defense at the final judgment. It is only faith in Jesus Christ, and the working out of this faith, that will preserve his people at that time.

The Concerns of the Most High

JONAH 1:10-12

Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "Why have you done this?" For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them. Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?"— for the sea was growing more tempestuous. And he said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me."



E1.2 - SYNOPSIS:

Note is to be taken of blessings withheld, and especially a pattern of troubles or catastrophes.

Prophets passages: Joel 1; Jonah 1; Micah 6; Hosea 8; Amos 4.

(For references in the major prophets, search Appendix D1 thru D3 for E1.2)

Other O.T. passages: Israel (Judg. 3, 4, 6); David (2 Sam. 21); Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 19-21).

DISCUSSION:

W. V. Grant was an evangelist, prophet, and pastor whose ministry was centered in the southern states of Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana from the 1930s until the 1970s. He was a prolific and humorous writer, with several hundred pamphlet-like books to his credit. He came from poverty to build a successful business, and then fulfilled his call into the ministry. Grant took over the editing of *The Voice of Healing* from Gordon Lindsay (section B1.1) in the 1960s. He tells his story in his autobiography *The Grace of God in My Life*.

Grant tells of his early ministry, at 30 years of age, when a series of troubles came to him. He had two auto accidents in a matter of days, and he was seriously injured. He had a string of significant financial and other losses; and then had an illness which would not go away. It was not obvious to him why all the opposition was occurring all at once.

Eventually he concluded that it had to do with his call to ministry and his attitude toward his apparent shortcomings. He wrote out (Hos. 14:1-2) his position of commitment, and left it where his spouse would find it. She rose up gamely with an offer to contribute in some new ways; but she put her foot down about giving up her house. He replied that he would not only give up the house but her as well, at which she shed tears. Nonetheless, she knew that his word would be final, and she agreed. At that point his illness went away.

My own experiences in this realm are found in my other books. Christians are to be aware that Deut. 28 and Lev. 26 were not only for Israel, and that 1 Cor. 10 is not an idle threat. They are to keep a watch on their episodes of life, and recognize the Divine hand in the midst thereof.

| Chap. | Verse | Terse Summary | Cat. | Narr've | Call of Prophet | God's Concerns | God's Hopes | God's Justice | Base Subject | Base Ref. |
|-------|-------|--|------|---------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 1 | Jeremiah son of priest in Benjamin | --- | x | | | | | Historic bkgnd for prophets | Ref. Isa. 7:1-2 |
| | 2 | Message came in Josiah reign Y13 | A1.5 | x | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 3 | Also Jehoiakim until Zedekiah/exile | --- | x | | | | | Historic bkgnd for prophets | Ref. Isa. 7:1-2 |
| | 4 | Word of Y. comes to Jeremiah | A1.5 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 5 | J. a prophet to nations before birth | A1.1 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 6 | Jer. objects - youth + bkwd speech | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 7 | Y. says wrong talk, will obey orders | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 8 | No J. fear of people, Y. is with him | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 9 | Y. touches J. mouth, word present | A1.1 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 10 | Auth'y over nations, destroy + build | A1.1 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 11 | Vision - branch of an almond tree | A1.3 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 12 | Is about Div. vigilance to back msg | A1.3 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 13 | Vision - fire under pot, mouth to Jer. | A6.1 | | | | | x | Emphasis on agenda of Km | Ref. Isa. 2:1-4 |
| | 14 | Invasion fr. north = evil on all Judah | A6.1 | | | | | x | Emphasis on agenda of Km | Ref. Isa. 2:1-4 |
| | 15 | Invasion to bring determined aliens | A6.1 | | | | | x | Emphasis on agenda of Km | Ref. Isa. 2:1-4 |
| | 16 | Div. retrib'n due to apostasy/idolatry | C1.2 | | | x | | | Reworking of the faith | Ref. Isa. 40:18-20 |
| | 17 | Get ready to present, fear = embarr. | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 18 | Jer. invincible vs. people + leaders | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 19 | Adversity will fail, rescue is by Y. | A1.4 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| 2 | 1 | Word of Y. comes to Jeremiah | A1.5 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 2 | Y. memory - after exodus in wild'ss | D1.1 | | | x | | | Early exp'ces forgotten | Early experiences |
| | 3 | Exclusive property defended by Y. | D1.1 | | | x | | | Early exp'ces forgotten | Early experiences |
| | 4 | Word of Y. sent out to all Israel | A1.5 | | x | | | | Prophet bears Divine call | Ref. Isa. 6:8 |
| | 5 | Y. defends honor amidst distant Isr. | D2.2 | | | x | | | Oblivious to expect'ns | Ref. Isa. 1:2-3 |
| | 6 | No seeking orig. rescuer fr. wild'ss | D2.1 | | | x | | | Oblivious to expect'ns | Ref. Isa. 1:2-3 |
| | 7 | Brought to fruitful Lev., but pollut'n | C1.3 | | | x | | | Reworking of the faith | Ref. Isa. 40:18-20 |
| | 8 | No seeking by ldrship, only apost'y | D2.1 | | | x | | | Oblivious to expect'ns | Ref. Isa. 1:2-3 |
| | 9 | Liability is on them and descend'ts | A6.1 | | | | | x | Emphasis on agenda of Km | Ref. Isa. 2:1-4 |
| | 10 | Admon. - consider Gk./Arab. pract's | C1.2 | | | x | | | Reworking of the faith | Ref. Isa. 40:18-20 |
| | 11 | No one changes their gods cf. Isr./Y. | C1.2 | | | x | | | Reworking of the faith | Ref. Isa. 40:18-20 |