

SPIRITUAL



MAPPING

KANAAN MINISTRIES

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SPIRITUAL **MAPPING** **PART 1**

Objective: *Stepping stones to research our area.*

Judges 6: 25-26 *Now it came to pass the same night that the Lord said to him, 'Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that is beside it:*

And build an altar to the Lord your God on top of this rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image which you shall cut down.

The road to Community Transformation

Transformed communities do not materialize spontaneously. In other words, there are definitive steps that we can and should take to position our communities for a visitation of the Holy Spirit. We want to consider recent evidence that shows God's people are acting on this proposition with great success.

Identifying Common Threads

When you bump into the same story ten or twelve times, however, your confidence will rise. You have now established a pattern, and patterns are compelling. Patterns transform inspirational stories into potent models.

Investigation into transformed communities has yielded several major hits. These include, but are not limited to the following five stimuli:

- a. Persevering leadership (Neh. 6: 1-16).
- b. Fervent, united prayer (Jonah 3: 5-10).
- c. Social reconciliation (Mat. 5: 23, 24; 18: 15-20).
- d. Public Power Encounters (Acts 9: 32-35).
- e. Diagnostic Research / Spiritual Mapping (Josh. 18: 8-10).

Although each of these factors recurs often enough to be considered common, two of them – persevering leadership and fervent united prayer – are present in all transformation case studies.

If these two factors play a central role in community transformation, it seems prudent to become better acquainted with them.

Persevering Leadership

Determined leaders figure prominently in the scriptural record.

Noah spent decades constructing a massive Ark while his neighbours mocked him as an eccentric fool.

Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem in the face of persistent threats from Sanballat.

Jesus ignored protestations from well-meaning friends in order to lay down His life at Calvary.

It should therefore come as no surprise that catalytic leaders associated with recent community transformations have also battled through strong opposition. These spiritual-change agents have refused to accept anything less than God's maximum – even when the pressure has come from family members and ministry colleagues.

In every case their single-minded faith, demonstrated by prayer and a steadfast commitment to the community, led to dramatic results.

United Prayer

The second factor in community transformation is fervent, united prayer. In each of these case studies, breakthrough occurred when intercessors addressed specific concerns.

United prayer is a declaration to the heavenlies that a community of believers is prepared for divine partnership.

When this welcoming intercession is joined by knowledge, it becomes focused – leading to and sustaining the kind of fervent prayer that produces results.

A New Way of Seeing

2 Kings 6: 8-18.

Elisha's servant at Dothan noted with dismay that ruthless Aramean troops had surrounded his city, Elisha responded by asking God to **open his eyes so he may see** (v 17). This was not out of concern for the young man's natural vision. What he claimed to see was really there. The problem lay with what he did not see. When the blinders were removed from his spiritual eyes, Elisha's servant discovered that the Aramean army was itself besieged by a fiery angelic host.

Armed with this new perspective, he was able to reach a very different conclusion about his prospects.

Kingdom Dynamics

To believe the impossible one must first see the invisible – the lesson Elisha taught his servant: War between Israel and Syria, and the prophet Elisha informing his people of the enemy's tactics through prophetic insight (v 12).

Here is the lesson: Prayer is the key to discerning our adversary's schemes. Further, the key to dispelling Elisha's servant's panic was his vision being opened to see the invisible. Note these crucial words: "Elisha prayed"!

Elisha did not ask God simply to show the servant another miracle; he asked for his servant to see into another dimension. The answer came immediately:

The Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (v 17). Seeing into the invisible is a key to victorious praying – discerning spiritual issues from God's perspective rather than man's, seeing the adversary's attack plan, and perceiving God's angelic strike-force.

When God breathed "the breath of life" into Adam's nostrils (Gen. 17), he brought forth something utterly unique in creation – a being endowed with the capacity to traffic in two dimensions (the material and the spiritual).

John 4:24 *God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.*

He wanted to insure His children could relate to him according to His nature.

Unfortunately, many people neglect to utilize their full range of endowments. Westerners, including an embarrassing number of Christians, are especially guilty of this. Having embraced the language and worldview of the Enlightenment, they dismiss spiritual vision as superstitious folly. Ask them to explain why things are the way they are in their communities, and they will instinctively turn to the oracles of sociology, economics or politics. Talk of spiritual explanations and you have bounded outside their comfort zone.

Like Elisha's servant, these individuals have become one-eyed jacks, able to discern material matters but blind to the spiritual realities standing behind them.

The problem here is a wrong assumption, namely that the material realm is the basis of reality. Unfortunately, wrong assumptions have a way of leading to wrong conclusions.

If we are to succeed in our mission to further God's Kingdom on earth, we must learn to see our communities as they really are, not merely as they appear to be. As Paul reminds us in Ephesians 6, our conflict is linked with dark supernatural powers. This being true, it does not make much sense for us to try and interpret our surroundings by natural means alone.

Spiritual mapping enables us to “see” things that were previously undetectable with our natural eyes.

See 1 Kings 19:18; 2 Kings 6:17; Luke 24:31. These veiled realities can include repressed hurts (associated with unresolved social injustice), spiritual pacts (solutions to individual or corporate trauma) and demonic strongholds (both psychic and territorial) that daily hinder the advance of the Gospel.

With its inherent diagnostic capacity, spiritual mapping empowers intercessors in much the same way that X-rays serve physicians.

Although we have the power to overthrow kingdoms (Jer. 1:10) and demolish strongholds (2 Cor 10:4), this power must be discharged in a controlled manner.

When the psalmist declares (God) trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle (Ps 144:1), the emphasis is on **preparation** and **precision**. Power alone is not enough to win the victory. Any modern fighter pilot will tell you the same thing. Divorced from accurate targeting coordinates, supersonic aircraft and laser-guided missiles are merely expensive toys. It is the **quality of intelligence**, not raw horsepower, which ultimately determines a mission's impact. God has not left us to fight blind.

Meaningful intelligence on our communities is readily obtainable through spiritual mapping.

Biblical Precedents for Spiritual Mapping

Joshua 18:4 *Pick out from among you three men for each tribe, and I will send them; they shall rise and go through the land, survey it according to their inheritance, and come back to me.*

The first example is found in **Numbers 13** where Moses, at God's order, dispatched spies into Canaan to "**see what the land is like**" (v 18). The expedition lasted 40 days and included a detailed research agenda. The fact that God was already well acquainted with Canaan's challenges testifies to the importance he places on human interaction with spiritual strongholds.

In this case, there were implications for an entire nation.

We see in **Joshua 18**, as the men left to map out the land, Joshua instructed them to “**write its description on a scroll, town by town, in seven parts**” (v 8-9). On the basis of this thorough research, the land of inheritance was divided among seven Israelite tribes.

Spiritual mapping was also undertaken in Jericho when Joshua commissioned two spies to go “**look over the land**” (Josh. 2:1), and in Jerusalem when Nehemia conducted three days of research prior to restoring the city’s walls.

Neh 2: 12-15 *And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem...*

And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king’s pool...then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.

In **Acts 17:16** we run into spiritual mapping again, this time in connection with Paul’s sojourn in Athens. While waiting for Timothy and Silas to join him, the apostle was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

Acts 17: 22-23 *Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription; TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.*

Now Paul, being a man of prayer (Acts 21:5; Rom. 1: 9-10), he addressed them with the wisdom of God: Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious... and by addressing them like that he had their attention and could speak freely. He didn't criticize by mentioning their idols, but focused upon their religiosity. Paul first saw their environment, then he started speaking with power.

We also know that he understood the relationship between idols and demonic powers (1 Cor 10: 19-21) and that he recognized these powers as the focal point of our spiritual struggle (Eph. 6:12).

As he made plans to penetrate the deceptive strongholds erected by these demons, Paul implored the church at Colosse to pray for an open door (Col. 4: 2-3).

Another reference to spiritual mapping is found in **Ezekiel 8**. In this memorable chapter, the prophet describes an intense and disturbing vision. Yielding to the Spirit's direction, he is taken to Jerusalem's Temple court where he is instructed to dig through a hole in the wall. Upon entering a secret doorway on the other side, he is shocked to find the elders of Israel engaged in idolatrous and perverse worship (v 7-11). After drawing Ezekiel's attention to this hidden abomination, God leads the prophet past the north gate of the temple where women are weeping for the Babylonian fertility god, Tammuz. The site of this ultimate desecration proved to be the inner court of the temple.

There, between the portico and the altar, the prophet observed 25 men bowing down to worship the eastern sun (v 16).

As Ezekiel carried this new understanding into passionate intercession, he was given a series of divine instructions designed to deliver Israel from her bondage to the doctrines of demons.

We have entered the most complex and turbulent period in human history. An explosion of knowledge (Dan. 12:4) has ushered in a brave new world of electronic stimulation and human cloning.

Breakthroughs in global evangelisation (Matt. 24:14) have triggered unprecedented demonic activity (Rev 12:12).

Spiritual mapping makes good sense now because the end times have become our times.

SPIRITUAL **MAPPING** **PART 2**

Objective: *Practical procedure of spiritual mapping.*

Deut 1:22 *And every one of you came near to me and said, 'let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.*

The whole question of **spiritual mapping is based on the principles of being informed** (Judges 7:11) **about the area where you live.** **"Listen to what they say ..."** **and spying out the land.**

Lots of material on this area of intercession can be found, e.g. Deut. 1:22; the life of **Paul** (he was informed and knew their culture, history, etc. and could relate to them intelligently); **Gideon**, **Esther** knew about the political situation in their country.

The big secret of spiritual mapping is not to go overboard, because this can put people off completely.

Don't trust in your own abilities but trust God the Holy Spirit to show you what is going on in the spiritual realm. Don't get hyped up and totally unnatural. This puts people off totally. Don't fabricate spiritual things happening. **Learn to keep God's secrets.** Only release them once God has told you to. Walk around with open eyes and sensitive ears.

Spiritual Mapping is not centred on the Demonic

Another tendency of many spiritual mappers is to give undue, and even exclusive, attention to the demonic.

This habit is most often seen in the rush to assign names to territorial spirits or to identify spiritual power known as ley lines. Any investigation of the spiritual dynamics at work in a needy community must consider three fundamental questions:

1. What is wrong with my community?
2. Where did the problem come from?
3. What can be done to change things?

Don't major on negative issues (political) and be negatively influenced. **Remember that the Word says our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against powers, principalities and spiritual forces of darkness.** In other words, focus on the devil who is the cause of it and break his hold, thoughts and plans over the people and area.

While the first two inquiries often do highlight satanic activity, it is a mistake to equate any answers we may glean with a finished spiritual mapping product. Communities do not change merely because we have become aware of the nature and origins of spiritual strongholds; they change because **revived believers enter into fervent and united prayer.** To assess the potential for spiritual breakthroughs we must consider initiatives taken by God and his people.

We must ask **what the Church is doing** to cultivate an appetite for unity, holiness and prayer and whether there is evidence that the Holy Spirit is responding to these initiatives. Unless, and until we complete this tour of "the light side" of spiritual mapping, we will not succeed in our mission.

Now, in starting, **put together a team** and **choose a leader**, not necessary a cell leader or any other leader, but **a person who prays**. Very important that every one of the team will submit and work with that leader.

Also very important, **choose a venue** and **plan proper meetings** so that different individuals will not run away on their own agendas.

In such a team there will be three units:

1. **Archival Unit**

They are the people gleaning all the information in libraries, municipalities etc.

2. **Field Unit**

They are the people persons; they extract information through their social skills.

3. **Intercessory Unit**

They spend a lot of time in prayer, the Word and with the saints. They are often the first of the three sub-units to perceive important cautions and patterns.

A Big Map

Get a big map (Ezek 4: 1-3) of the city, town or area with the following information (it is good to have more than one map):

- Indicate **churches with red crosses** and **cemeteries with black dots**.
- Where do you find temples or any of the following activities?
 - Free Masons.
 - Muslims.
 - Hindus.
 - Witch doctors.
 - Satan worshippers.
 - Various Sects e.g. Scientology, B'hai, Buddhists, etc.

- Indicate these locations with **luminous pink dots, circling them with purple lines.**
 - Occultic Centres, i.e. karate, judo, eastern meditation, theosophy, spiritism, fortune-telling, etc.
- Places of debauchery and worldly relaxation, i.e. escort agencies, prostitution, disco's, night clubs, video shops, cinemas, etc. in **luminous yellow.**
- Places of addiction in **royal blue**, e.g. bottle stores, places of drug trafficking and use.
- Is there a tattersall where betting takes place? Is there a race track (Rev. 4:4)? Indicate these with **purple crosses.**

- Indicate clearly **all entrances of the town**, as well as the **station, airport**, and **harbour/port** with **red, capital Es.**

Micah 4:13.

- Indicate the **highest points** in and around the town with **blue, capital Hs** (1 Sam 2:2; 1 Kings 20:23). Thus one can say, he **who rules the heights, water and air, will rule the area.** Good examples are Newcastle, Table Mountain and Sir Lowry's Pass.
- Where do the **rivers** run and where are the **great dams** and lakes located in the vicinity? Indicate the run of the rivers and the locations of dams in light blue.
- Where are the **sources of the rivers?**

- Mark all **educational centres**, i.e. schools, universities, technikons in **light green**.

VERY IMPORTANT: Always ask the following questions when dealing with the above:

- Are they enclosing certain areas?
- Is there any linear connection between them?
- How far are they from the city centre?
- Which churches, schools, residential areas, market squares, parks etc. are perhaps within their sphere of spiritual influence?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND **Prov. 24: 7-8.**

- Which place of importance does the particular area occupy in the country's history?
- Was there a time frame when a new culture or language started due to a conquest?
- Which antique, heathen worship activities took place where the town is located?
- At which point in time did a new type of worship start?
- Under which circumstances was the **Gospel preached for the first time?**
- Were there any **wars** that affected the town in any way, e.g. conquests, uprisings, civil wars? Did wars take place on the territory of the town?

- Where are the concentration camps of the Anglo Boer War?
- What happened historically on the grounds of your church building? In Koppies, for instance, the Rebellion started on the church property where we had been ministering the Word. In Garsfontein, an area was partially a burial ground for black people, and they speak about it as “Grasfontein” because they say the grass will grow over it again.
- After whom or what was the **town named** and why?
- What is the history and meaning of the **coat and motto**?

- Why was the town or city founded? Was there a need for it, or was it a matter of greed? Here you are looking for the **foundation** on which the place was built, e.g. Johannesburg was founded due to the mineral riches of the area; Bethlehem, in comparison, as a place to worship God.
- Who was/were the **founder/s** and what were their dreams?
- Who were the **pioneers** who originally resided in the place? What was their relationship with God like?
- What kind of people were they? What names did they give to their farms and why?
- Which **political, spiritual, and military leaders** came from the town? What kind of people were they and what did they stand for?

- Did **certain immigrant groups** come to the town?
- How did they influence the town?
- Were there or are there any religious conflicts?
- What is the history like concerning **racial relationships**?
- Did the town or city experience an **economic decline, racial violence or earth quakes**?
- Are there any **legends** in connection with the town and surrounding areas?
- Was there a time of instant riches due to the discovery of precious metals or minerals?
- Did the town ever experience the birth of technology that transformed the social structure e.g. The Industrial Revolution?

CONTEMPORARY ACTIVITIES

Read newspapers, local newspapers, church pamphlets or congregational letters and tourist information to determine what is NOW going on in the area.

General questions:

- How many people are involved in church activities?
- What is the population of the black, coloured, white, etc. residential areas and how many people live there?
- The names of the VIP's and their activities.
- Make a list of the addresses of the MP's, mayors, school principles, rectors, presidents of clubs, etc.

- Read the **advertisements** to see what is happening in town. This will reveal to you **occultic centres, massage salons, escort agencies, martial arts centres, etc.** Remember the advertisement section is a mirror to tell you how sick or how healthy a society is.
- Which **industries** do you find and where are they situated?
- Which **political party** rules the constituency or city? Pay attention to signs, figures and writings on walls (graffiti) and buildings, like occultic designs etc. At one of the main entrances of Benoni we found satanic signs!

Take a tour around your city or town (Neh. 2: 11-18; Ps. 48: 12-13 Amp) and take note of the following:

- Where are the parks, church and market squares, etc. situated? Which names do they carry?
- What types of names do the buildings and streets carry?
- What type of **monuments** do you find there? How many of these are pyramids? Are there any occultic signs present, e.g. signs of the Zodiac, the “third eye” or as it is called in churches the “all seeing eye of God” (Isa. 57:8)?
- Who lives in the urban area and the city centre? Are there concentrations of certain peoples in a specific area?

ACTIVITIES

What's happening in the secular world?

- Which **sporting activities** are taking place?
- Which **conferences** are being held in your city?
- Which **concerts/entertainment** are taking place? What do these artists stand for, e.g. the Rolling Stones in S.A. What did they portray?
- Are any **abortion clinics** present in your area?
- What about new **sex shops**, etc.?

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

- Are there any seminars or special speakers? Are you undergirding their activities?

- Are you informed about prayer groups in your area? Or spiritual mappers? What are you going to do to bring unity about?

OCCULTIC ACTIVITIES

- Are occultists visiting your areas as speakers?
- Are there any occultic bookshops, music shops, night clubs etc. opening up in your area? The Odyssey magazine gives a lot of information on the activities of the New Agers.

PHYSICAL QUESTIONS

- Is there an area in the city where **accidents** always take place (e.g. certain stopping streets) or where the **drug addicts** gather, etc.? This must be shown on the map.

- Is your town or village known as one where **murders** take place, or were **racism** still prevails. Is your city or area perhaps known as a place where **homosexuals** always gather? Be very sensitive to declarations that are made about such communities/cities. Ventersdorp is called AWB-land. Imagine all the spiritual “goggas” that go with such declarations.

IT IS GOOD POLICY TO APPOINT SOMEBODY AS THE MEDIA WATCH. SUCH A PERSON WOULD KEEP PRESS CLIPPINGS OF ALL THE CONTEMPORARY ACTIVITIES THAT NEED PRAYER. ALSO KEEP A PRAYER JOURNAL OF ANSWERED PRAYER.

GOD’S PLAN

- Prophetic words and promises spoken over the area (Jer. 29:11).

In **Gen. 22:16** and **Gen. 24:60**, God promises Abraham and Rebecca that their descendants will **take possession of the Gates of the cities of their enemies** because it is **God’s plan that the gates should belong to the children of God.** Ask therefore the Holy Spirit what God’s plan was when the city was built, i.e. the spiritual purpose of the city.

In August 1991, God showed us that Bloemfontein was not only geographically but also spiritually the centre of South Africa. Remember the old saying: “If the Free State turns, the country turns”? That is, when Bloemfontein turns the country will turn.

We must ask God to watch over the city, Ps 127:1(b) Unless the Lord watches over the city the watchman stands guard in vain.

STATUS OF CHRISTIANITY

- Size and nature of the church.
- What percentage of the community considers itself Christian?
- What percentage of the community considers itself evangelical?
- How does this compare with surrounding areas?
- What is the estimated number of believers in the community?
- Which denominations (if any) predominate in the community?
- What is the average-size church (attendance-wise) in the area?
- Are there any ethnic churches in the community? If so, how many and what type?

- Is the church representative of all social classes in the community?

Additional Questions

- Are most Christians in the area affiliated with denominations?
- What is the ratio of old-line churches (Pentecostal or Evangelical) to newer, independent fellowships?
- How strong is the Roman Catholic Church in the area?

Health of the church

- Does there seem to be a genuine bond of unity among Christian churches in the community? How does that manifest itself?

- Are there recognised apostolic leaders in the area who have made public commitments to the land/ community?
- If community faith was strong in the past, has this fervour grown or has it given way to a permissive, lukewarm Christianity?
- Are most Christians in the community familiar with the basic truths of Scripture? If not, why?
- Do believers in the community gather for united prayer? If so, how often do these assemblies occur?

Additional questions

- What is the history of church splits in the community?
- What percentage of the Christian community attends church more than once a week?

- What percentage of the churches in the area have home-based nurture groups?

Community perception

- How visible is the church in the community? Have there been any recent public events like “March for Jesus”?
- Does the community have a sense that the Church is truly interested in its problems? If yes, what kind of programs would reinforce this idea?

These are but a few things to consider and pray into to realize where prayer is needed.

WHAT ARE STRONGHOLDS AND HOW DO WE DISCERN THEM IN SOCIETY?

Definition: a stronghold is a fortified place that Satan builds in order to exalt himself against the knowledge and plans of God.

Personal Strongholds

Personal strongholds are things that Satan builds to influence one's personal life: Personal sin, thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behaviour patterns. The Word of God warns us in Eph. 4:27 not to give the devil any foothold, but we do by allowing him to operate in our lives through things we love and do not want to get rid of. These strongholds are "holes in our armour" which can be closed by being humble and repentive. Watch out for things like bitterness, pride, etc. (Eph. 4:13). When these things persist in our lives, we are to go for counselling and sometimes even for deliverance.

Strongholds of the mind

Ed Silvano says that a stronghold of the mind is a mindset impregnated with hopelessness that causes the believer to accept as unchangeable something that he or she knows is contrary to the will of God. This can also be applied on a national level to nations.

From experience, I've found that many black people are of the opinion that they cannot achieve anything, but this is contrary to the Word of God in Phil. 4:13 that says that we can do "all things through Christ who strengthens us".

Occultic strongholds

Occultic strongholds refer to activities like witchcraft, satanism, new age religions, etc. which invite evil spirits to operate. They work as power boosters to the territorial spirits that rule over geographic regions.

In Acts 17: 21 & 32, it becomes clear that Diana at Ephesus influenced the whole of Asia, but her power was eventually broken by prayer, truth encounters and evangelism. In this case, the occult and a spirit of religion were very closely connected. In Africa, many of these occultic strongholds exist, e.g., in Venda, young girls are offered in the “Holy Lake” and on high mountains.

Social strongholds

A social stronghold refers to the oppression over a city or designated area in which social injustices, racism and poverty cause people to believe that God does not care about their needs.

To overcome these strongholds, it is imperative to reach out to the poor, shelter the homeless, be instrumental in the reconciliation process and clothe those in need. Love is a powerful weapon of offence to weaken the enemy!