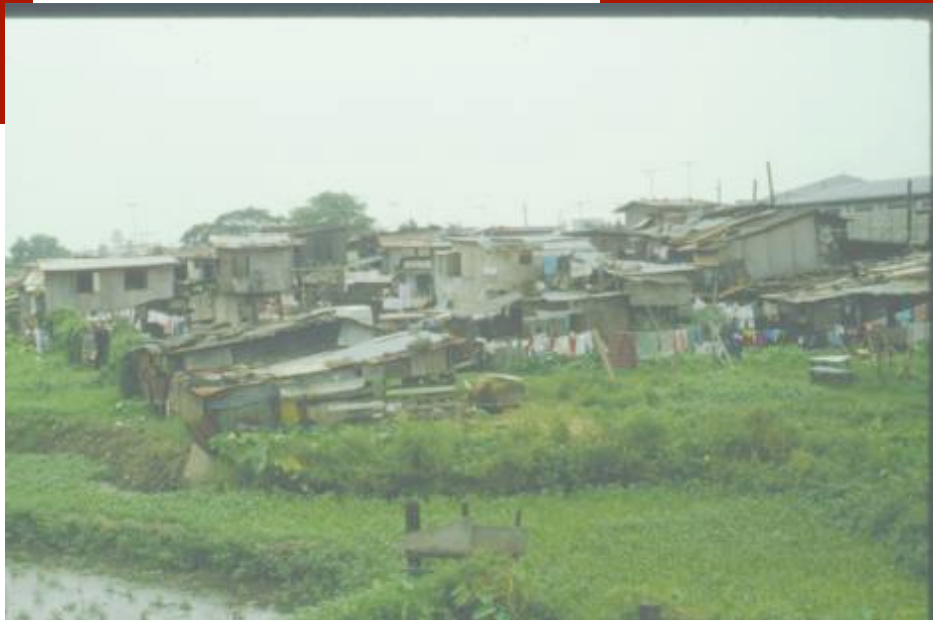


The Kingdom of God, Land and Land Rights

International Perspectives



Kenya Jubilee
Sound the Trumpet
Nairobi, May 10, 2012
Viv Grigg,
1982, 93, 2004, 12

Half the world has become dispossessed of land for their own home

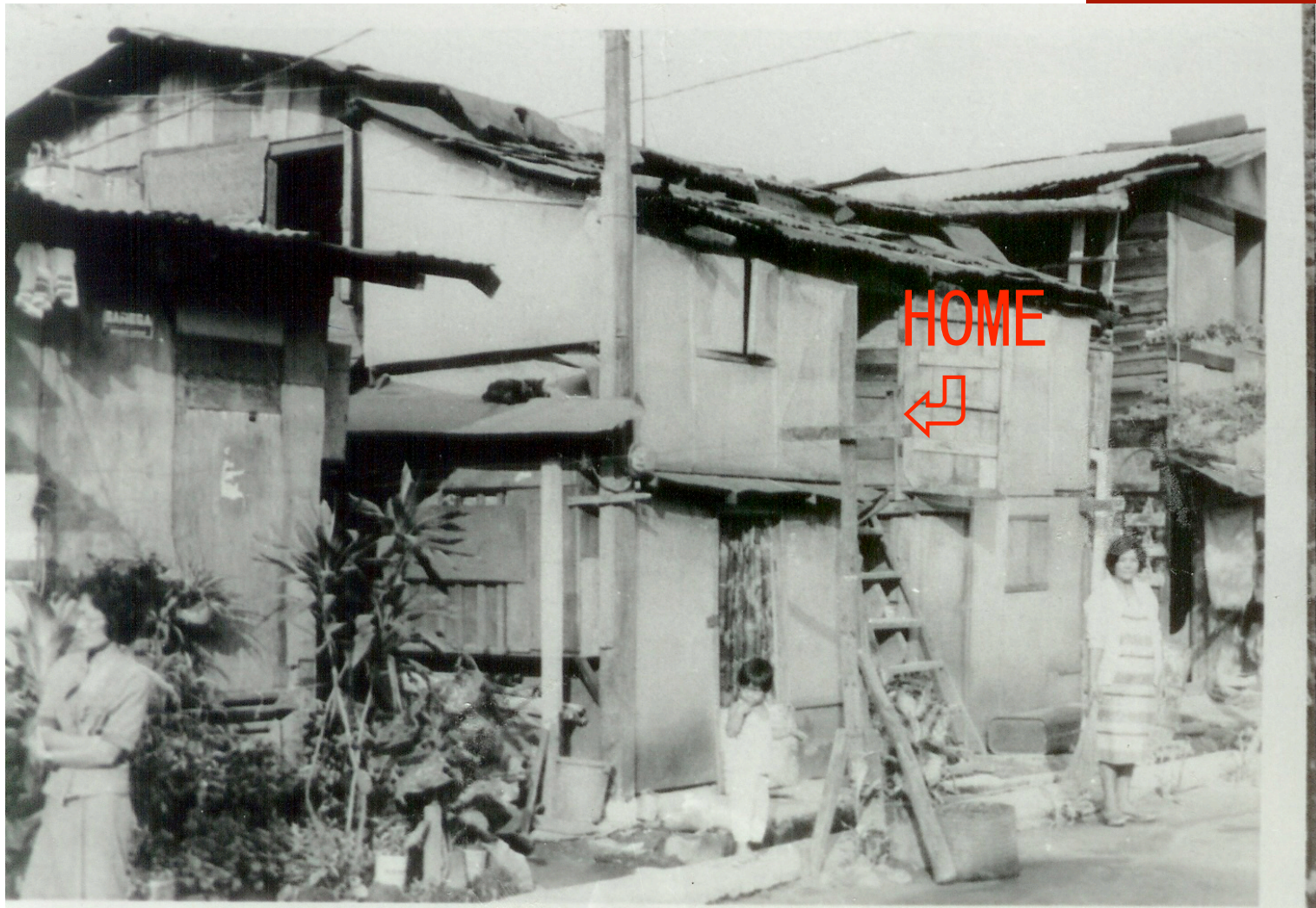
Bring greetings from your brothers
and sisters involved in the struggle
for land rights in the slums of

- Manila, Philippines
- Bangkok, Thailand
- Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Delhi, Nagpur, Mumbai, Kolkata,
India
- Lima, Peru
- Mexico City, Mexico
- New Zealand
and....

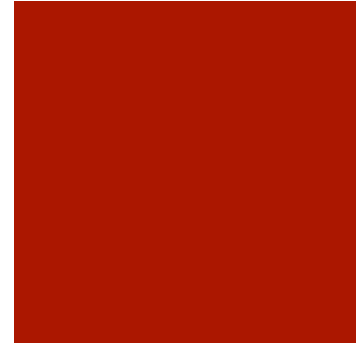
**THE FUTURE OF NAIROBI IS THE
WARFARE OF RIO DE JANEIRO**



Peacemaking begins in being one of the people



Urban Hermeneutic Approach



- Transformational Conversations
- Grigg, Viv, (2010). *The Spirit of Christ and the Postmodern City*. Auckland: Urban Leadership Foundation, ch 2.
- Let me converse back and forth between the scriptures and the battle for land rights in the slums

Global Dispossession

- Slum-dwellers come and just need a piece of land, but none was prepared for them
- This is not just a Kenyan problem
- It is a problem of global urban in-migration
- It is a problem of global capitalism which depends on expropriation of land and a class of dependent unemployed
- Since 1978 The UN has clearly defined ways that cities can facilitate the upgrading of existing poor areas. Cities can prepare land and services ahead of time.
- **THERE IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT TO OWN LAND FOR A HOUSE IN ONE'S OWN COUNTRY & CITY**



A Story from Manila's Slums



Of violence and dispossession based on unjust laws

■ Conclusions

- ??? Is there a universal right for a people to have a piece of land for their own home
- ??? Before the conflict is there a public place for negotiation. **IS THERE A PUBLIC SPACE BETWEEN ETHICS AND LAW?**
- ??? Beneath the law are there universal moral principles?
- Does law define reality or follow reality?
- **IS IT RIGHT THAT THERE ARE UNJUST LAWS?**
- **THE GOOD NEWS: THERE ARE WAYS OF ORGANISING THE POWER OF THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE POWER OF THE OPPRESSORS**

Global Urban Conversation: Context of Dispossession

- Land - a crucial *pastoral issue*
 - 25% of the world are urban poor
 - Half the world are dispossessed
- Illegal Squatters
 - They don't exist but their teeth hurt



City Conversation: Global Capitalism

- Expropriation of land was and is the foundation of capitalism
- The emergence of a dispossessed largely unemployed sector in the city is essential for Capitalist productivity
- My people were dispossessed of land enclosures of England. We migrated to New Zealand to create a nation without an aristocracy
- This British process of expropriation was the same way of stealing the land of Kenya



Story 2: Land - A Crucial Issue for Revival



- Land - a crucial *issue for revival*
- New Zealand treaty, a covenant about the land.
- The violated covenant lead to the turning of the Maori people movement away from God
- The battle for the soul of the Maori people is based on reconciliation.
 - Reconciliation requires restitution.
 - Economic Revival leads to spiritual revival



Theological Conversation: The Nature of Land

Land =
Dirt + History +
Emotion

Four movements
in the scriptures
from
landlessness to
landedness



Biblical Conversation: Three Movements in Scriptures

From Landlessness

- Abraham looked for a city
- Exile
- Jesus with no place to lay his head

To Landedness

- Gifted the promised land
- Return to the Land
- The Promised City

LAND AS A GIFT

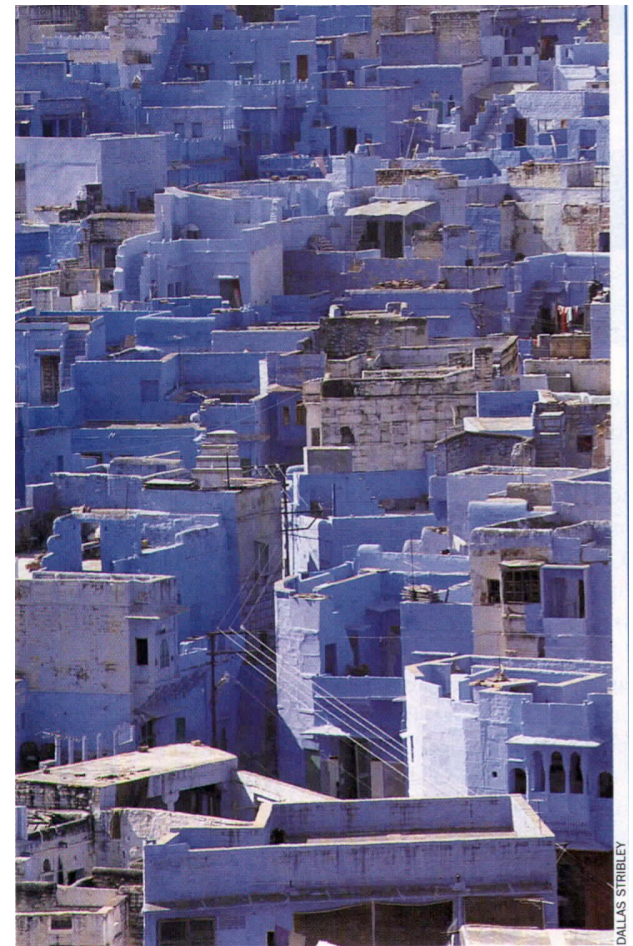
EXODUS (Egypt- a hard land)	MONARCHY (milk & honey)
EXILE (Babylon - silent land)	REPOSSESSION
MESSIAH (Pilgrims - no possessions)	CITY OF GOD

Movement 1

The King, the Land and ...

(Genesis 1-3)

- The King owns the land
 - Creators own their creation by right
 - We manage it on his behalf
 - tenderly tend it
- Fruitfulness is related to man's obedience
 - Our soul is connected to the land
 - From dust we came, to dust we return
 - A spiritual dimension to the land – we all need a *turangawaewae*



Movement 1

... and the Curse

(Genesis 1-3)

- The Land Becomes Cursed
 - Disordered, but still good
 - Work is hard – but still good

At a national level:

WORK + RIGHTEOUSNESS = BLESSING + WEALTH

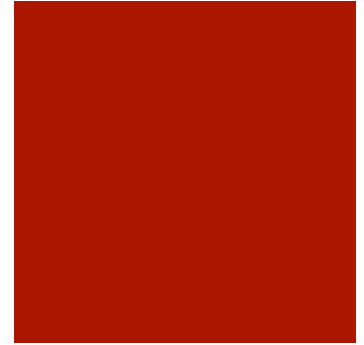
WORK – RIGHTEOUSNESS = CURSE + POVERTY



Leviticus 26

Movement 2

from Egypt & Pharaoh
to the Promised Land & Kingdom



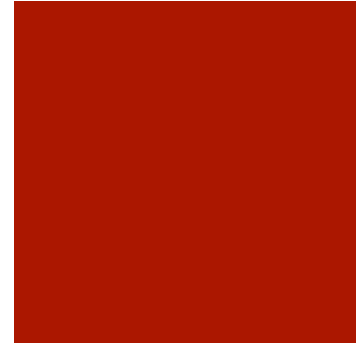
- ...to a land of rest
- Possessed by degrees
 - Gifted (39 times)
- The initiative is with God
- Yet Joshua was to make specific plans for taking the land

Ownership & Management Jubilee (Leviticus 25)

- God owns the land
 - Private ownership affirmed
 - Clan/Communal ownership
- Honour Legal Boundaries
 - Not unlimited ownership
 - Not absolute
 - Social responsibility
- Stewardship not exploitation
- A restful land
- Priests were to own their own home



Ownership & Management



■ Periodic Land Reform

- Continuous Economic Growth without planned periodic redistribution is not part of God's program for society

■ Urban Land

- Meaning of the land changes from the basis of agricultural production to land as a commodity
- Legality \neq Morality
- The level of injustice in a city is related to the % who are renters
- The city of God is not stratified

Movement 3

Broken Land Covenants

- Harlotry and the shedding of blood defile the land
- Breaking the covenant of rest brings judgement

From guaranteed milk and honey	To a forgotten covenant
From freedom	To oppression and slavery
From victory over enemies	To subjection to foreigners

A BROKEN COVENANT LEADS TO A LOST, CURSED LAND

Story 3: Repentance: Reconnecting to the Environment

- From dust we came, to dust we return
- The soul cannot respond to God independent of its environment
 - e.g. death of Maori elders
 - AFC Wallace – four responses to cultural dislocation
 - Anomie, gangs, redefinition of the mazes, assimilation
- All covenants in Scriptures (except one) are given in terms of the land.
- When people are reconnected to the land, there is an immediate spiritual responsiveness
 - e.g. land rights in Manila



Turangawaewae



Cultural Repentance

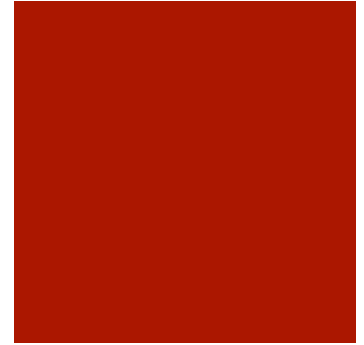


- The foundation of the nation in the treaty of Waitangi - about land and sovereignty
- Violation of the treaty meant loss of economic base and cultural integration for Maori – and hence Christianity
- Reconciliation releases the work of the Spirit
- There is no reconciliation without repentance.
- Repentance includes identification of the sins of the oppressor culture against the damaged culture.
- There is no repentance without restitution

Basis of Land Rights

- *Papitipu* – right of discovery
- *Take tuku* - a gift - God is the giver of the land.
- *Rapatu* – right of conquest
- *Ahi-ka roa* – long occupation
- *Take tupuna* – kinship ties

- Not bound by unjust laws – that is not anarchy, that is a reading of historical process.



Alternatives to Eviction

- Infrastructure and Services, upgrading, maintaining the community relationships
 - E.g. Tatalon now six stories high
- Survey, land apportioned, squatters buy the land over 25 years





Story 4: Repentance and Reconciliation as the Basis of Revival

- e.g. The battle of Tuapekapeka
 - Rectifying the sins against the first peoples creates a basis for multiracial unity
 - e.g. ethnic leaders hui
 - e.g. Maori University
- In the centre of the Holy City a river runs. The trees that grow beside it bring healing to the nations. The river in the scriptures speaks of the Holy Spirit
 - Let the river run through your life, unblock the dams.
 - Then you may be part of the great revival across the face of the earth.

Movement 3

Jesus & the Gospel of Land

- He declared the Jubilee come eternally (Luke 4:18)
- So we are to preach eternally (Acts 2,4).
- We may fail here, but he goes to prepare a mansion for us there.
- Thus we have an eternal hope of land and rest for our souls



Land is ~~not~~ the Issue

- Some say jobs are the issue, upgrading the slums, education....
- No, Land is the issue!
- If a prophet does not speak to the issue of the times he is not a prophet
- While an economic base is the equivalent of the land in rural areas
- Yet, with ownership of the land there is capital formation. This is the basis of survival.



Further Study

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