**Hearing God's plan.**

If a tap drips water into a sink it may take time to notice, there may be little evidence other than the occasional drip should it catch your eye and perhaps a trail of water. It is not until the plug is put in the sink that you notice the water building up and the small drips soon build up to fill a sink. It is then that you wonder how much water has been wasted.

I have loved Jesus for as long as I can remember and asked Him into my life at a very young age. I often heard people talking about hearing from God and calling and I thought to myself, wow if I heard from God I’d be on top of the world, that would be it, we could go anywhere!

It took me a while to realise that he had been steadily speaking to me and leading me for a long time. He’d drop things into my spirit just like the gentle drip of the tap every now and again. It wasn’t until I said enough is enough and was really hungry to hear His voice that I began to notice these drips. I quickly put the plug in and began to collect these drips, as the water began to gather and I fed on the Word, I realised He was showing me a picture, giving me a context, teaching me, preparing me for something, my calling!

One of the first gentle drips of knowledge that I realised He put there was the word, ’Noah’ I heard it in my heart. The word “Noah’ came with an understanding in my heart, that, we were living in the days of. I later found this in the word, (Matthew 24:37), I was hearing from the lord! I was on top of the world!

Since then the drips have formed a pool and I haven’t looked back. God has a masterplan and it’s amazing!

No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)

I started asking more questions around my work at the time where I was using drama to reach the homeless, prisoners and the broken people I knew He loved, “Lord I give up! I don’t get it! You said you’d set captives free but all I’m seeing is the problems perpetuating, nothing’s changing!”

“I’m glad you asked”, I felt him say.

From there He started to give me revelation and spending time in the Word I began to map out what I felt He had planned for the future. It was amazing, but it was enormous! To be fair, I was reminded that He is the maker of the universe!

When I realised what He had planned I felt overwhelmed, “Lord How could I even think of doing that, it would take me several life times and I couldn’t do it on my own. Where on earth would I start?

“Gather like-minded believers, around a cross in a field and pray!” I felt Him say.

Around that time I also had a very vivid dream showing me How much the Father Loved the people of my Nation of UK but how his heart was being ripped out as they were walking out the door on him and about to commit adultery. Worst still they were acting as if this had all been agreed with him and that it was ok.\* I’d been reading Jeremiah 3 the night before and had asked him to give me understanding of all this talk of Adultery and Harlotry. Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband, So have you dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel,” says the Lord. Jeremiah ????

I was receiving pieces of a puzzle but struggling to put it together!

**10 Days of Prayer.**

I’d been praying to go on some kind of mission trip after training for mission with Flame International. As each trip came up with Flame I’d hear nothing from the Lord. Meanwhile I’d been working with a group of prophetic artists and we’d connected with an Artist and Musician called Christ John Otto from Boston in the States. An opportunity came up to join Him for a leaders gathering and then follow him for 2 weeks of his ministry. I felt a gentle nudge towards this trip and things just seemed to fall into place quite easily. Before I knew it I was joining him at 10 Days of Prayer led by his friend Jonathan Friz. I seemed to be having so many divine appointments with some great key people during this time and made some amazing connections followed by some significant conversations. God was doing something, I had no idea what, but as I abided in Him He was leading me through something and I was learning a lot of stuff on the way.

When I got back and was spending time praying I heard “Forbury Gardens” It came with the impulse to research it. I’d been there once before, it’s in Reading and has an old ruined Abbey. As I started to research I discovered that Forbury derived from For Borough, the borough before. It was considered the borough before all the Cities of England, a gateway used by all, often Pilgrims. I decided to visit it to see if the Lord would reveal more.

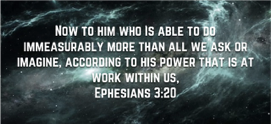
It dawned on me when I got there, “Lord, do you want to have 10 Days of Prayer here in this park?” I quickly dismissed the idea knowing that to have just a Christian event in a park was unlikely because it might be seen as not diverse enough, after all they chucked a theatre group out of Hyde Park just because they were telling the story of Noah’s Ark! “It would take a miracle to be allowed to pray here …Oh yeah… it would take a miracle! A miracle would be God's signature on it…so if I just push doors and they open, it will be a miracle, If they close, then I’m off the hook and I can reside in the fact that I just got it wrong!

I had heard about the Reading Abbey Revealed project and realised that this was a brilliant opportunity. I’d just been reading Haggai 1[[1]](#footnote-0) where the Lord had asked them to rebuild the temple but they had been distracted by building their own ‘panelled houses’

The former temple was being restored in the Hidden Abbey project but now it is us that are the temple, those that are called by His name. I wondered that if the physical temple was being restored, could 10 Days reflect this restoration in the spiritual?

About a week later, after the meeting I attend with many of the pastors and church leaders who unite for worship once a week, I felt the Lord leading me to Reading Museum. I would look at the information about the Abbey and perhaps the Lord would arrange a divine appointment with someone who’s involved with the Hidden Abbey project. On my way I passed a pub advertising a great deal on breakfast with quality coffee. “Go in, get one!” I heard. Ha! If there was ever a voice that was mine and not the Holy Spirit that must be it. A pub and a good coffee - a sure distraction. The Museum was only across the road so pleased with my discipline I extracted myself and sent my legs to the Museum. “You’ll be back’ was the voice I heard when I crossed the road. Low and behold the Museum wasn’t open for another half an hour! “I told you” were the knowing words that accompanied me back to the pub to order a coffee.

As I sat down I took out my bible and read Ephesians 3:20.



Wow I thought. Is Father trying to tell me something?

I immediately looked up to see on the wall opposite me a sign in neon red lights, THINK BIG!



I went to the Museum and learnt about the huge significance of the Abbey and the cloth trade surrounding it, but no divine appointment! I did chat to the only other person in there, a student from China which will probably means something one day but I left feeling a little baffled as to why the Lord wanted me there, if I wasn’t to meet anyone. Oh well at least I felt obedient and He did tell me to ‘Think BiG’ -that sounds fun!

A week later I was due to attend a culture meeting in Reading. It was a cold Tuesday night and my colleague had just called to say she couldn’t make it. It was my evening with the Gents for our study group, which I really love so I didn’t really want to drive to Reading. Something was telling me that I should and my lovely wife chipped in, “Go on you know you should” Grumpily I arrived at a bar on a backstreet with a small group of Artsy looking people. I reluctantly ordered a pint (It was Tuesday night!) and sat at the bar like Norman No Mates. “I’m don’t get it Lord, why am I here? What’s your plan> I feel a little bit out of the loop! I’m not going to network with the others, if you want me to speak to someone, you’ll need to bring them to me.” I went and sat in the corner and looked at my phone pretending that I’d chosen to be on my own! After a while someone started the meeting and recommended that we talk about ideas for Readings culture with the person next to us. I turned to see a man and a woman next to me who looked a bit more corporate than the others and to be honest, a little out of place. They turned out to be from Reading Museum, In fact he was the Museum Manager and in charge of the Hidden Abbey Project!

The Museum Manager agreed to meet me and I put forward my proposal. I was delighted that although he stated that history was his remit he could understand that the Abbey comes with a spiritual element. He was refreshingly positive and a week later he put me in contact with the person in the council who’s charge of the Reading Parks. There I was about to meet him in Forbury Gardens. However after waiting for an hour he didn’t turn up. Of course I began to question what I was doing and thought I was now off the hook. The gardener approached me just before I was about to leave.

Gardener: He’s not normally like this, he’s usually really good. Come with me and I’ll try and find a phone number for him.

My ears pricked up. From my experience of the Word, you always pay attention to the gardener, ha ha. We went to his hideout in the the park full of garden tools.

**Gardener**: What are you meeting him about

**Tim:** Oh, I want to run 10 Days of Prayer here in a Big Top tent

**Gardener:** What? Why would you want to do that!?

**Tim:** Well, I know that might sound strange but a few hundred years ago that would have been completely normal. Thousands of Pilgrims used to travel here from all over to pray”

**Gardener:** “Have you seen the Scallops shells in the park?”

**Tim:** “Sorry?”

**Gardener:** “The Scallop shells, there on the statue all over the park”

**Tim:** “Oh yeah, yeah I’ve seen those”

**Gardener:** “They mean, Pilgrims are Welcome!”

Wait a minute I thought…Note to self…The gardener told me, ‘Pilgrims are welcome!’

**Gardener:** “There’s also some Scallop Shells on the well at the top of the hill. Pilgrims used to go there for healing, it’s worth a look, I used to pass it on my way to work. Mate I’m really sorry I can’t get through to Luke.”

A week later I met a charming chap called Luke at the park who apologised for the previous week after a mix up in his diary. I told him about the idea of celebrating The Hidden Abbey project with 10 Days of Prayer.

**Luke:** “Yes that seems like a really good idea to me!”

Gulp another door opened. Hang on I thought..

**Tim:** ”What would this cost?” I said. I figured it would cost several thousand pounds.

Luke: “Yes there would be an administration fee, I’m afraid,”

**Tim:** “Ok…?”

**Luke:** If you’re not looking to make a profit it would be £141…Wanna do this every year? I’m in charge of the festivities for the Abbey re-opening too. I’ll put your dates in the diary!

Phew!

The doors had opened. I was ecstatic! This was a miracle!

I presented the whole story to the Pastors and leaders and they received it really well! They probably wondered who this new guy was but a lot of what I shared with them, seemed to resonate. They also seemed particularly interested in where God had led me. I was amazed to discover that why Forbury Gardens seem to mean a lot to so many people. Unbeknown to me I discovered Wesley had preached the Gospel in the very same park. I’m not sure Reading received Wesley well and from my understanding his presentation of the gospel didn’t go down so well. To my amazement the pastors had gathered in the same park in 2013 to pray that Reading would one day respond to the gospel positively. I was also super encouraged to hear that the very first boiler room of the 24/7 Prayer movement associated with Pete Greig was also started in that park. The boiler room was adjacent in an old pub but it was fundamentally made up of the young Goths who hung out in the bandstand and one day started playing around the cross that Malcolm Pierce and others took into the park to pray around.

Since then several people have told me about Godly connections to Forbury Gardens. It would seem that although the Abbey was now a ruin that the temple area still held a purpose in God's eyes.

More recently, a friend called Ian helping me with 10 Days texted me telling me about some miracles that were happening while he ministered with friends at St. James Church. One of two churches on the Abbey ground. This is amazing I thought. Then I was reminded of a play that had been performed by a secular company in the St.James Church about Henry I and the founding of Reading Abbey. My friends from Arts Mission had been gobsmacked by the final line of the play declared by Henry I himself. My colleague had created a textile image of it.

When I sent Ian the image with the excitement. Henry’s declaration that The Abbey would see people healed and become a ‘HOUSE OF MIRACLES’ was actually happening right now on Abbey grounds. As I sent it to him I noticed that I had always got excited by the punchline and had missed the first line which now jumped out at me,

‘It will become the centre of the country where every terrible curse can be reversed.’

Could this declaration be a prophecy? Could it have been the plan since the 12 Century? I guess we’re about to find out!

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Picture of Lion in Forbury.

Include Prophecy from Kathy.

Include dream about Nation walking out the door.

**Haggai 1**

Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?” 5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: “Consider your ways!

6 “You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes.”

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)