

# Y W A M IN TOUCH

ENCOURAGING WORDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED

by Bruce & Barbara Thompson

In Nahum 1:3 there's a very challenging statement for our lives—*God has His way in the whirlwind and the storm.*

Sometimes we get the impression that the spirit-led and spirit-filled life should be spared from whirlwinds and storms. This is not so, for Scripture validates the fact that maturity of life emerges *through* those storms. Life cannot be divorced from its storms.

In recent editions of *InTouch*, we have been made aware of storms that some former YWAMers have experienced when they stepped out to serve God in missions. Relational storms; financial storms; health storms; leadership storms. YWAM is not unique in this respect. It is easy to be so caught up in the effects of a storm, and so overwhelmed by the trauma of that storm, that we lose sight of God and His way with us. Let's find God's hand at work, *in the very heart* of life's storms.

The media loves to luridly feature storms of any kind, but especially storms of moral failure or financial mis-management; and most especially storms about those in ministry. When a storm or a whirlwind blows up in the course of *your* life, what is your reaction? How do you handle it? Or do you let it 'manhandle' you?

Do you remember Hannah's storm—the painful storm of barrenness or childlessness? This true story is in I Samuel 1. Barrenness can express itself in other areas of life besides the womb; in our relationship with God; with others; and

even with ourselves—we can feel empty, lonely and cut off. Relational barrenness can depress and devastate us. In Hannah's day, to be barren was to be humiliated. Her husband Elkanah had a second wife Peninnah, and what made things even worse, was that Peninnah *did* have children, and took every opportunity to ridicule and provoke Hannah.

Elkanah didn't understand the anguish that Hannah was

find some other outfit."

The 'ministry' of these three to Hannah only added to her storm: **Penninah**, her co-wife, ministered in judgment and condemnation, shaming Hannah.

**Elkanah**, her husband, ministered as a *peace-keeper*, not a *peace-maker*. He just wanted to smooth things over. If successful, he would have kept Hannah from her destiny. **Eli**, her spiritual leader, totally misunderstood and misjudged her.

Hannah might easily have become bitter, hardening her heart toward Eli—and even toward God.

How did Hannah handle the negative ministry of these three significant people, each of whom added to the turbulence of the storm in her life? She *did not* react or retaliate; She *did* utilize the energy of her 'life storm' to take her deeper into God.

She travailed in grief, in fastings and in prayer before Him.

Oftentimes when storms hit us, we waste their energy with our attempts at vindication and retaliation. But not Hannah. Her barrenness brought her into a deep place of brokenness before God. Barrenness surfaced her deep need, just as barrenness in *our* relationships, surfaces *our* need.

We spend a lot of time these days, looking for blessings, often turning our back on brokenness and the cross that puts the old self to death. We reach out for the person and power of Jesus, but refuse to fellowship in His sufferings (I Peter 4:13). Hannah by contrast, energized by the storm of barrenness, embraced the whole process. Her

## DON'T WASTE YOUR STORMS

going through.

His reaction to her tears and agony of heart, was to try and smooth things over; his *uncomforting* words only added to the pain, (*There, there*), *Hannah, don't cry! Aren't I better to you than ten sons?*

Peninnah and Elkanah were Hannah's family. Their response to her barrenness was bad enough, but when Eli the priest, Hannah's spiritual leader, heard and saw her anguished prayers in the temple, he jumped to conclusions; "What do you mean coming to church drunk! How dare you?" To be misjudged by spiritual leaders is both painful and devastating. They should know better! They should be mature, discerning and understanding!

Many of us would have the following kind of reaction, "Well, if that's what they think of me, I'm outta here! I'll

**Don't Waste Your Storms** continued on page 4



# YWAM *inside*

## Victory Ahead

*I have been on staff for five years... and like many of your readers, have experienced some disappointment with leadership in YWAM. However I have come to the conclusion that some things are simply not going to change and that God requires of me that if I am to go on, it will be necessary for me to change.*

*I believe that it is easier to be a 'solid' Christian if you sit on the bench. My experience is that when the crunch comes—as often happens in cross-cultural pioneer ministry, which is where I am now—the flesh is discovered again. This is the state in which I find myself: stress, sleeplessness and chronic tiredness. Need I go on? And, because of my lack of intimacy with God, I find it difficult to find direction (for my life), and seem to be locked into a vicious circle.*

*I could tell you about lack of pastoral care here, but I am certain that you have heard it all before. It would be nice, I believe as Floyd (McClung) has said, that we would stop being Parachurch, and start being the Body of Christ to one another.*

*I might add that my home church has split and then split again. What was once a thriving group of nearly 1,000 is now less than a hundred. If my pastor had little time for me then, imagine now. In addition, being away for so long has caused many of my close spiritual ties to dwindle; many I feel, I have simply outgrown. It's like when I came home from DTS—they are in another world and just don't understand.*

*I am however, still determined not to be chased out of missions. My hope is to get the victory in all this and let God lead on, wherever!*

## A Love Story

*It was a romance. This is what Floyd (McClung) called it when I was able to relate my view of outreach as our Kyrgyzstan team debriefed in India. I fell in love; with a people, a place, a vision, a church and a graveyard where I would like to be buried.*

*Several months before leaving on this outreach, a friend assured me that one day before my life on earth was over, God would give me a people and a nation to love for Him. This happened in the capital of the land that captured my heart.*

*We were a 'dream team,' living in joyful harmony, with many laughs and a lot of good food! We loved being together, living in the city for seven weeks, with a long-term mentality. We lived no differently than if we were going to stay for the duration! I think that it is this that made it difficult for all of us to leave, and for more than half the team being open to returning long-term.*

*We left behind, one believer and about 40 souls wanting to know more of God.*  
Cindy Patrick

## A Hole In My Heart

*It all started when my parents (YWAM leaders) moved to another base. They played a big part in my life and I was not used to living without them, but I didn't want to move and figured I could make it on my own. Working three jobs to keep up with the bills, I went crazy, partying and sleeping with my boyfriend of two and a half years. I thought I was having lots of fun, but deep down I knew that I wasn't doing what I should.*

*It only took two months of this until I found myself sitting on the bathroom floor, my life flashing before my eyes as my girlfriend intently watched the pregnancy test for its dreaded answer. Positive? How could it be? I mean, those things are never accurate. Please God, don't let it be true. My heart sank and I began to feel that my life was over.*

*Two weeks later, I was standing in my parent's bedroom, confessing to them my sin and my pregnancy. I hated that night. I can still see the pain in their eyes. I left with their forgiveness, but carried a hole in my heart because I knew I had hurt them deeply. What could I do to ease the pain I had caused them? Soon I returned to live with my parents because I felt I really needed them during this difficult time in my life.*

*My baby was born in excruciating pain. My Mom and others comforted and helped me on the way to the hospital as I took out my aggressions on the baby's*

*dad. After four short hours of agony, I was holding my gorgeous baby—and the pain of child-bearing was forgotten in the joy of holding my child.*

*Soon after beginning the joyous trip of motherhood, I decided to add to the already hectic schedule of diapers, nursing and late night pacing, by doing a Discipleship Training School. I felt like I needed God to restore what I had lost, but I found much more than that. I found His forgiveness and love again.*

*Now as I look at my child, I can't believe that I once saw this innocent thing as a curse on my life. I thank God for this blessing every day now. As for my family, God has worked wonderfully to bring healing and restoration to our relationships.*

Visit Our Web Site...

Drop us an email and we'll send you special announcements about Renewal Camps and other news in between editions of *InTouch*. And we'll let you know about our new Web Page when it's up and running in late February. Email us at [ywamhop@direct.ca](mailto:ywamhop@direct.ca)



## The Righteous Seed

At our January New Zealand Renewal Camp, Bryan Pollard, who spent 10 years with YWAM in Germany, Hawaii & Canada, made a statement that witnessed to my spirit. He said, "Everyone who has ever been in YWAM, has a righteous seed sown into their hearts. That seed was sown into Loren Cunningham's heart by God."



I believe the seed is that we can hear God's voice today. This has become a part of our inheritance, and was a major theme of Loren's first book, *Is That Really You, God?* God wants us to preserve that righteous seed, and sow it into the lives of others.

Pondering on the parable of the four soils in Matt 13:10-23, I wonder how many of us have nurtured and watered that seed. It was good seed, but has it sprouted in good soil and been fruitful?... or has the evil one come and snatched it away and said to you, "Did God REALLY say?"... or, did you receive this truth with joy in your DTS, and then trouble and persecution came, and you started to listen to the voice of others—or even your own voice?... or, has unbelief come in (2 Cor 11:1-3), have the worries of life, the deceitfulness of wealth (1 Tim 6:6-10), choked the voice of God out, making the seed unfruitful? Have any of these happened to you?

The vast majority of those who have served in YWAM, testify to having received much through that righteous seed of learning to hear God's voice. It is a tremendous inheritance. Let's water that seed with faith, love and the Word of God, living in obedience to what the Lord is saying. Remember, His righteous ones live by faith (Heb 10:35-39), faith in who God is, what His Word says and what He speaks to us personally by His Spirit.

So, water that righteous seed, and let it flourish. It's part of your inheritance.

Donna



it

## How can we thank you? Let us count the ways...

*InTouch* is the cooperative ministry of many people. It is not just us producing a magazine and distributing it; it is you that has enabled us to continue publishing for almost ten years. So thank you for your personal words of encouragement; thank you for the hundreds of letters and e-mails we love to receive (only a few of which get printed); and thank you for the many gifts that allow us to continue this ministry. We endeavor to personally thank every donor, no matter how small or large the gift may be; however there are some kind folks in Singapore who make anonymous deposits in our bank account there. Thank you!

And finally, thank you to Sound House, one of the largest pro audio distributors in Japan, and owned by a former YWAMer. Their most generous gift enabled us to end the year with all bills paid—a condition we have not experienced for several years! And we might add, a condition we would very much like to be sustained!

it

# PROFOUND & PITHY

Knowledge is the facts. Wisdom is living out the facts in a loving way.

Korea has been invaded 937 times in 5000 years. Is it any wonder that they pray?

16% of Americans believe there is absolute truth. 25% of the church believes there is absolute truth. 30% of women who have abortions are evangelical Christians.

All the flowers of tomorrow are in the seeds of today.

## 1998 INTOUCH RENEWAL CAMPS

Kona 25th Anniversary Reunion -  
March 15-21

(with Tamara Winslow & others)

Suva, Fiji - May 6-10

Heidebeek, Holland - June 18-21

Restenas, Sweden - July 5-11

BC, Canada - July 19-25

(with Tamara Winslow)

Singapore/Malaysia - Week of  
August 6th (with Dan Sneed)

Peter & Donna Jor dan direct all  
camps.

Read what one camper said this year: "It is as though these camps water a seed within me that bursts into life whenever I come to them. I feel like I am back with my tribe. But it is more than that - giftings and ways of seeing and feeling things are affirmed and encouraged as we tell our stories and fellowship together.

I am convinced that YWAM is like a seed sown into us by God... these camps help to keep that seed watered, and I need to keep alive that which God has planted within me. I hope we continue to have these camps in New Zealand."

Bryan Pollard



brokenness allowed the old self within her to die (I Samuel 2:6).

When Eli had wrongly accused her of drunkenness, Hannah's response was respectful. As she explained her situation to this man of God, his eyes were opened. Leaders will fail us. They are not yet perfect. They have blind spots. The enlightened Eli then commands a blessing over the barren Hannah, who left the temple a changed woman, *her countenance no longer sad*.

Some time later Hannah conceived! God had opened her womb and released life. She proclaimed, *The Lord kills and makes alive*. The storms had 'killed' her, but now she was experiencing the joy of new life within. She was ecstatic. She was grieved over the brokenness that 'slew' her, but knew that it had all been

necessary in order for the blessings of the new life to be conceived within her.

Hannah challenges us to first, allow any barrenness to bring our need to the surface; then to embrace the brokenness that leads to our 'death'; so that finally we may experience the blessing that brings forth new life.

So what does Hannah do with this new life? Does she, in her new-found joy, possess it for her pleasure and satisfaction? Does she use it to put Penninah in her place and take her revenge? No!

She presented her blessing—his name was Samuel—to Eli the priest, to be nurtured and nourished in the temple. Any new life that God gives in exchange for death, must be nourished and nurtured in His presence. The blessing of new life didn't stop with Samuel. It was followed by the birth of five more children!

Any barrenness can be replaced with

fruitfulness by simply embracing life's storms. Hannah discovered this way of God in her life. Have you ?

Don't waste your storms!



*Bruce & Barbara Thompson direct the Chatel YW AM base in Switzerland. Dr. Bruce is International Dean of the College of Counseling & Health Care of University of the Nations.*

and finally... a word from your editor



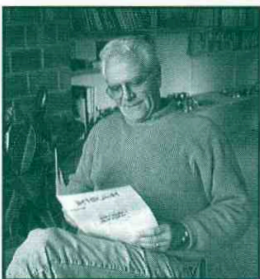
## Blessings & Curses

My early days in YWAM were spent in a pioneering situation. In order for our base to just survive, there never seemed to be enough housing, money or people. (To keep things in perspective, Jesus also had a problem with housing—nowhere to lay His head; and with people—the workers were few. It does seem as though He had adequate finances! Luke 8:2-3)

YWAM has always been a vehicle for short-term missionaries, and most who join the mission do so for a few weeks or months. (Currently there are 12,000 permanent staff.) Often, we long-termers—consciously or subconsciously—try to impose our 'forever' mentality upon those whom God sends to us for just a season. Jesus had twelve permanent staff and many hundreds of short-termers (Luke 6:17 & 1 Cor 15:6). There is no record of Him ever trying to persuade short-termers to join His dozen long-termers.

So, back in those early pioneering days, when someone would come to me and share that their guidance was to go home, or go back to school, or do something else than stay in the mission, my hackles would go up. In my misguided zeal, I was already prejudiced toward them staying with us, especially gifted people—people who could really help, people who could really make a difference. Though I never said these things, my spirit was shouting, "How can you desert us now?" or, "You're not ready to go home!" or, if I felt like putting a spiritual spin on it, "Don't you know that the fields are white unto harvest and the workers are few?"

Even though these remarks were not verbalized, I'm sure they were communicated in the spirit, or by my attitude, or my silence, or my offended expression. I am truly sorry for this, and if you are reading this and remember I did this to you, I ask your forgiveness. I was at the very least, placing condemnation on you; and at the worst placing a curse on you. It was a form of spiritual abuse.



Deep down, I feel that no matter what the reason; no matter how wrong it may seem; no matter that the leader can see nothing but disaster ahead; no matter that the one leaving is in full-on, outright rebellion against God and the leaders... In spite of all this, I firmly believe with all my heart, that we leaders have an obligation to bless departing members on their way.

By withholding that blessing, there is a grave danger of unintentionally placing a curse upon the one who leaves—a curse that will rebound upon us.

Bless and curse not. Romans 12:14(b)

*Peter*