

Occupied Territories: The Revolution of Love from Bethlehem to the Ends of the Earth

Available October 2014

\$16, 192 pages, paperback

978-0-8308-3670-3

Legendary musician calls for justice, reconciliation and “revolution of love”

Singer-songwriter, author, and human rights activist Garth Hewitt lays out a theology for justice and reconciliation, emerging from the story of Bethlehem and carrying through to modern activism, in his new book *Occupied Territories: The Revolution of Love from Bethlehem to the Ends of the Earth*.

The founder of Amos Trust, an organization which promotes justice and hope for forgotten communities, Hewitt brings his experiences from this work – global travel, aiding those on the margins of society, and working through international conflict in the Holy Land – to the illustrations used throughout the book, calling for the Prince of Peace to reign from Bethlehem to the ends of the earth.

“I have been struck for many years by the huge impact of the birth of Jesus, Prince of Peace, in Bethlehem: the style of the birth, the choice of the place itself says something about the values of God, namely the commitment to the poor, the weak, the forgotten and the refugees,” says Hewitt. “This book is to reflect the theology and the way of life that has come from Bethlehem and is still reflected in Bethlehem, and is the way of the community of Jesus – the Kingdom of God. I wanted to express the impact that this has had on me and its relevance across the world particularly to places of conflict or injustice.”

Showing that justice is an essential part of the biblical message, and specifically that the story of Jesus’ prophesied birth in Bethlehem dictates a call to justice executed in love, Hewitt wants the church to use this resource to tackle key issues facing our society today in a productive and practical manner. Readers will be equipped to practice the lifestyle of justice Hewitt outlines throughout the book and challenged to live out the “Bethlehem theology” he describes.

“This idea [of a Bethlehem theology] is rooted and made visible in action. I have seen it transform people’s lives through the work we have done in the Amos Trust,” says Hewitt. “The book shows that the challenge is a big one, to reflect the way of Jesus particularly in places of conflict or injustice. The nonviolence, the rejection of militarism, the equal value of every human being flows from the lifestyle and theology of the Prince of Peace and therefore has relevance from Bethlehem throughout the world.”

Occupied Territories includes numerous songs, liturgies and prayers to help readers connect this theology with their spiritual lives. Additionally, Hewitt provides appendixes with information about Amos Trust and the Kairos documents.

 INTERVARSITY PRESS

Visit ivpress.com/media



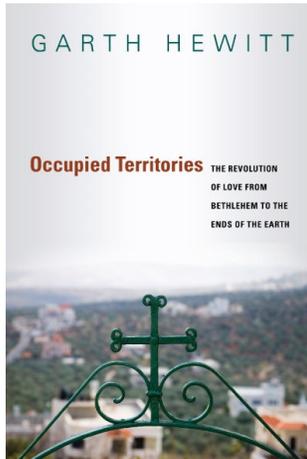
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW CONTACT:

Krista Carnet, broadcast publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kkcarnet@ivpress.com

Alisse Wissman, print publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or awissman@ivpress.com

Adrianna Wright, online publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4096 or awright@ivpress.com

ivpress.com/books



Occupied Territories: The Revolution of Love from Bethlehem to the Ends of the Earth

Available October 2014
\$16, 192 pages, paperback
978-0-8308-3670-3

God is Waiting for You

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in an article in the *Sunday Telegraph* one Easter Sunday, said,

There will be peace on earth. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ puts it beyond doubt: ultimately, goodness and laughter and peace and compassion and joyfulness and forgiveness will have the last word.

Jesus says, “And when I am lifted up from the Earth I shall draw everyone to myself,” as He hangs from His cross with out-flung arms, thrown out to clasp all, everyone and everything, in a cosmic embrace, so that all—everyone, everything—belongs.

Then in an extraordinary little section at the end the Archbishop talks personally to Gyles Brandreth, the interviewer, who does not claim to have faith—and it is very moving. Brandreth then says:

A final explosion of laughter and the Archbishop pushes back his chair and says “Come, we will go outside and watch the sun falling on Table Mountain and smell the flowers together. God is good, man, and he is waiting for you.”

I love those words: “God is good and he is waiting for you.” God is waiting for us, waiting for our response, waiting for us to journey together in the community of love—the way of Jesus and justice.

After the crucifixion and the resurrection the disciples are told that Jesus has gone ahead of them. He is waiting for them. He has gone on into Galilee. Wherever we are, where we are called to be disciples is our Galilee; we are called to keep walking and we will always find that Christ has gone before us—a peacemaker in a world that has no peace. A healer in a world that is broken. A savior in a world that needs to be saved from its selfishness, its pride, its violence and its greed. A liberator who walks with us toward our wholeness, our humanity and our dignity, and though we may at times walk through valleys of despair and through times of crucifixion, we are never without this resurrection hope. We are part of the community of hope, the community of love, the community of Jesus.

Conversion is turning from the values of our world to the values of Jesus—in so doing we meet the one who forgives the past and provides motivation for the future. Conversion is saying yes to Jesus, yes to the ways of Jesus, yes to the values of Jesus, yes to the community of Jesus. We follow Jesus in baptism, remembering he was baptized by a radical political figure. Baptism is a sign of membership in the community of God, which takes part in and draws strength from the community meal. Saying yes to Jesus is saying no to our prejudices



BOOK EXCERPT

and the emphases that we have wrong. It is saying no to selfishness and to violence. It is putting the way of Jesus first, and loving others as Jesus would. It is saying no to the love of money. It is a commitment to what theologian Walter Wink calls “the myth of redemptive violence,” the view that violence can solve problems, which is common both to politics and Hollywood films. As Walter Wink says,

The belief that violence “saves” is so successful because it doesn’t seem to be mythic in the least. Violence simply appears to be the nature of things. It’s what works. It seems inevitable, the last and, often, the first resort in conflicts. If a god is what you turn to when all else fails, violence certainly functions as a god. What people overlook, then, is the religious character of violence. It demands from its devotees an absolute obedience-unto-death.

This myth of redemptive violence is the real myth of the modern world. It, and not Judaism or Christianity or Islam, is the dominant religion in our society today.

A couple of years ago I was with Ernesto Cardinal in Nicaragua. Ernesto is one of the most significant poets in the world. He is a Catholic priest and was part of the Sandinista government in the 1980s. I asked him whether he liked the term *liberation theology*, and he said, “I prefer the term *theology of revolution*.” We chatted about that, and I thought in particular that the theology of the Sermon on the Mount is revolutionary.

It reflects a gospel that genuinely brings good news; it shows us how to live “do unto others as you would have them do to you.” Therefore, we are not passive people; we are those who act, reflecting the values of God’s community to bring change, to bring hope, to bring justice, and to be an active part of God’s revolution of love, humility, compassion and the peace of Christ.

– Taken from chapter three, “Be the Hands of Jesus: The Community of Love”

“Therefore, we are not passive people; we are those who act, reflecting the values of God’s community to bring change, to bring hope, to bring justice, and to be an active part of God’s revolution of love, humility, compassion and the peace of Christ.”



Musician, Human Rights Activist, Author

As a troubadour, gospel singer and protest singer, Garth Hewitt has released nearly forty albums in his storied forty-year music career while championing social justice worldwide through his human rights organization, the Amos Trust.

Garth is the author of ten books on spirituality, social justice and the arts, including *Making Holy Dreams Come True*, *Holy Dreams to Feed the Soul* and *Bethlehem Speaks*. As demonstrated in his most recent book, *Occupied Territories: The Revolution of Love from Bethlehem to the Ends of the Earth*, Garth passionately believes that it is time for people of all faiths to speak up and call for justice, especially for communities in developing or volatile nations.

First and foremost a “troubadour”, Garth has performed in such diverse venues as Nashville’s Grand Ole Opry in Tennessee, rural village Gomathimuthupuram in Tamil Nadu, India, and Changi Prison in Singapore. He has been joined on his records by a wide variety of artists: Bryn Haworth, B J Cole, Jessy Dixon, Sir Cliff Richard, Martyn Joseph, Randy Stonehill, Ben Okafor, Reem Kelani, Penny Cave, Mark Heard, Paul Field, Paul Pilot, Duke Special, Denise Ogbeide and many more.

In 1985, Garth founded the Amos Trust, which promotes justice and hope for forgotten communities by partnering with local projects around the world to provide support, raise awareness and lobby for change. These projects include work with street children in South Africa, promotion of human rights and sustainable communities for Dalits in India, community development and education provision in Nicaragua, and working toward peace and reconciliation in Palestine and Israel.

In addition to touring for his musical career and international advocacy for the underprivileged, for over twenty-five years Garth served on the board of directors for the Greenbelt Festival, a British arts festival with a commitment to social justice that is now attended annually by over twenty-five thousand people. He is an honorary canon of St. George’s Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, and associate priest of St. Clement Eastcheap in London. He is also a patron of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and a regular contributor to BBC Radio 2's *Pause for Thought*.

www.amostrust.org
www.garthhewitt.org

Garth Hewitt, author of *Occupied Territories: The Revolution of Love from Bethlehem to the Ends of the Earth*
Available October 2014
 \$16, 192 pages, paperback
 978-0-8308-3670-3

“I remember when I was a kid seeing Garth Hewitt on stage. He was banging on about Christians having a heart for the poor and saving the world and frankly I didn't get any of it. Garth has always been ahead of his time and we are all catching up with what God has been saying through Garth for the last thirty years. I wish I had listened closer, but it sometimes takes a lifetime to recognize a true prophet. It is people like Garth who make us look at the world differently and realize what it is to be a true Christian.”

– Martin Smith (Delirious?)

 **INTERVARSITY PRESS**
 Visit ivpress.com/media



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW CONTACT:

Krista Carnet, broadcast publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kkcarnet@ivpress.com
 Alisse Wissman, print publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or awissman@ivpress.com
 Adrianna Wright, online publicity, at 800.843.4587 ext. 4096 or awright@ivpress.com
ivpress.com/books