

A Booth on the Roof

by David Wilkerson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of revival, highlighting the five absolute evidences of revival: a great desire to hear and obey the Word of the Lord, a heart-breaking repentance, an incredible spirit of joy, a prepared people, and the presence of the Lord in the house.

Duration: 1:04:44

Scripture: Nehemiah 8:6, Nehemiah 8:9, Psalm 134:2, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Renewal"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the danger of becoming too attached to worldly possessions and material wealth. He warns that the more blessed we are, the more we tend to desire even more, which can lead to being tied down and distracted from our spiritual journey. The preacher also highlights the importance of discernment and understanding the word of God, as well as the evidence of revival in a church or city, which includes a strong desire to hear and obey the Lord's teachings. The sermon references various biblical passages, such as Nehemiah 8, to support these points and encourage the audience to prioritize their relationship with God over worldly pursuits.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing to World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771 or calling 214-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. One of the greatest revival books in the Bible, Nehemiah. And I want you to keep it open on the 8th chapter, 8th chapter of Nehemiah.

I'm going to show you the five great evidences of revival when it comes. And it's all in this 8th and 9th chapter. And we're going to get into that.

I'm going to pray and ask God's blessing on the preaching tonight. Aren't you glad you're here tonight? Not because I'm preaching, but because the Holy Ghost is preaching here tonight. The Holy Ghost preached this morning.

The Holy Spirit came forth in a powerful word and we're asking Him again. In fact, let's bow our heads right now and ask the Holy Spirit to come and make the word very, very real. Father, send the Holy Spirit tonight to minister truth to our hearts.

Lord, I step aside, I acknowledge my need. Come Holy Spirit, mightily I pray. Touch my lips with fire from the altar of God.

Lord, minister your life and truth to us. The letter killeth, but the Spirit gives life. We take your authority, Jesus, over every principality and power of darkness, over every lying spirit, over everything that would hinder people from receiving the word of God.

Lord, minister, let the power and the might of the Holy Spirit be upon me tonight. Lord Jesus, let us not forget what we hear. Do something deep in our hearts tonight.

Don't let anybody walk out the way they came in. Change us by your word tonight. Change us, oh God.

Folks, if you want to be changed by the word, ask Him to do it. Lord, change us by your word tonight. Let the word change our hearts.

Let the word come and burn in us and change us, we pray. In the name of the Lord. We don't want a sermon, Lord, we want to hear from heaven.

Amen. Amen. Now, if your baby starts crying, you just go to the hallway and the ushers will show you where to go for the nursery.

Thank you very much. Now, here at Times Square Church, we've designated 1988's whole year as a year of prayer. And what we're looking for is revival.

And I'm not talking, when I say revival, about an emotional stirring, where people come from miles around to see something emotional. Even though when revival comes, people do come from miles around and from other countries to see the fire of the Holy Spirit burn. But what I'm talking about tonight is a prepared people.

A people so prepared in their hearts, so walking before God, that they are ready to receive the presence of the Lord Jesus in its fullness. Because it's the presence of the Lord in the house that brings revival. Do you believe that? We want a revival of the Lord's holy presence, where everything is so pleasing to the Lord, He can come down to meet every need, and He can reveal His glory.

Because there's nothing that hinders the flow of the Spirit. There's no mouse in the pipeline, in other words. It's all cleared out.

There's nothing that's contrary to the Lord Jesus Christ, so He can move. Now, in Nehemiah, the 8th chapter, this is what I call the revival chapter, there are five absolute evidences of revival, and you'll find them in the 8th and 9th chapter of Nehemiah. Now, this is the story of 42,360 Jews.

42,600 Jews who returned from Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls, to set up the gates, to build their houses and come back to the worship of God. They're leaving Babylon and going to Jerusalem as a type of believers leaving dead, cold, compromising churches and coming with a holy remnant to a place that God has prepared and seeking God for restoration and revival. How many of you have left Babylon already? Can you raise your hand? How many have left Babylon? Now, some people thought I'd call New

York City Babylon.

No, New York City is the epitome of the Babylonian spirit. There are backslidden churches everywhere. There are people into greed, and it represents the spirit of Babylon.

And many of you went to a Babylonian church. You sit in front of a Babylonian idiot box. Television.

Now, I'm going to stop right there before I start preaching on that, and that's not my message tonight. This holy remnant left Babylon, went to Jerusalem, rolled up their sleeves and began to work in unity. And the Bible said they removed all the rubbish.

All the rubbish that had built up. In fact, when the prophet of God took a ride on his horse, he could hardly believe the rubbish and the filth that had built up. And that's what we've been doing for seven months in Times Square Church.

We've been removing the rubbish. The rubbish of false doctrine. The rubbish of filth and lust and all of these things that have built up in those who were called backslidden and hurting in their hearts.

And I say that in Greek Christian love. This false filth, this filth of materialism, the rubbish of compromise both in the pulpit and in the pew. We're rebuilding walls that have come crumbling down.

And friends, we rejoice when we hear people, almost every service, before and after, just put their arms around us and say, Pastor, or Pastors, we have five Pastors in this church, five co-equal Pastors. There are no stars here. Nobody shines here but Jesus.

And please, to have people come up to us and put their arms around us and say, Oh, we're growing, my life is changing. I can't begin to tell you how I'm changing. There's nothing you could say that is more encouraging than that.

We are changing. The Holy Spirit's changing my home, my marriage. But see, we're rebuilding walls now and setting up the gates.

But God has chosen to gather together a holy remnant. My, it's marvelous to see week after week more and more people coming. Brother Phillips talked about churches that have rejected the Holy Spirit.

I'm telling you now, and I say it in great love, if you're going to a church that has rejected the Holy Ghost, get out of it. And more than that, you should pray that the Lord send revival to the Pastor and the Deacons, and if they don't want that, pray God shut it down. You know, the prayer of my heart is that God will, by the Holy Ghost, will take a lantern and go all through the city, New Jersey, Long Island, Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, and search out every block, every home, and find every hungry Christian.

And create such a hunger and such a thirst, they themselves will seek out, whether it's this church or any other church where the Word is being preached, they will seek it out. And when there's a Holy Ghost revival, you don't have to have a lot of advertising, you don't have to be on radio or television or anything else. The Holy Ghost does His own advertising.

Yes, He does. But there are five absolute evidences when revival comes. They're absolutes.

First of all, when there's a revival in a church or in a city, it always begins with a great desire to hear and obey the Word of the Lord. Nehemiah 8 chapter, let's read the first three verses. Let me show it to you.

Nehemiah 8 verse 1. And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate. Have you ever heard of water gate before? And they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law. Who spake? They spake.

The people said, we want to hear the Word of God. Bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had commanded Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, both the men and women, and all that could hear with understanding upon the first day of the seventh month.

And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from morning until midday, six hours, before the men and the women and those that could understand and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. Look at verse 5. Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people. For he was above all the people.

They built a wooden platform. He was standing in this wooden platform. And they bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

The cry of the people, look at me now. The cry of this people was, bring us the true word of the Lord. And here's Ezra standing on this raised platform and he's reading the Word of God for six hours.

They're standing, they're attentive. There are thirteen shepherds, seven on one side, six on the other. These are either scribes or ministers or Levites.

We're not sure who they all are, but they are explaining. Ezra's reading it and they're taking their turn explaining and they're standing there for six hours. In fact, I believe it's six hours where he's just reading the Word alone.

I don't know how many hours they stood then to listen to the exhortation and the explanation. They were so hungry for the Word of God. And they were learning why they were suffering.

They were being told from Deuteronomy why they had gone to Babylon. They were reading from the Law, hearing the promises and the blessings and the curses of the Law. And they were understanding things that they'd never understood before.

Listen to me please. The sure sign of revival in your heart or in a church or a city is a great hunger for the Word of God. A hunger, a thirst for the Word of God.

Backslidden Christians do not want to hear the Word of God. Backslidden churches do not preach the Word of God. Bob was talking about that this morning.

I have heard people say, Look, our church is so much into worship, we're looking for... I heard somebody say, we're looking for the time that there'll be two hours of worship and ten minutes of preaching. That was actually said to me. Ten minutes of preaching.

In fact, one said, the time will come the glory of the Lord through worship will be so great, no one will be able to stand and minister the Word. Well, folks, that is a sign of a backslidden people. You see, a man who's not walking with God does not preach to you the truth of God's Word.

He may take a text and run with it. I had a minister friend who never did study. He'd go in a half hour before the service and get the song book.

And he'd preach from the song book. Especially those with six verses. That is the gospel truth.

He preached from the song book. He never studied. The people knew it.

But the trouble was, they didn't want any more than that. They had a shepherd after their own heart. And I'm going to tell you something.

If you have revival in your soul, you cannot sit in a church where the Word of God is not being preached. I don't care what it takes, you're going to go and go until you find the Word. And if you have a hunger, it won't take you long to find it.

God will take you to it. And I tell you something else. And I say it humbly before God.

Because I know these men standing with me here are on their face before God. Some of you have told us that you went for weeks and weeks looking for the Word of God. In fact, we have thousands.

In fact, hundreds of thousands of people on our mailing list. You ought to listen or you ought to read these letters. Thousands of people, heartbroken letters, write to us and say, Brother Wilkerson, can't find the Word of God anywhere.

Our church is not preaching the Word of God. Our church is full of entertainment. Our church is not giving, there's nothing that hits you, there's nothing that convicts you.

It's a sweet, soft, candy-cotton gospel. Do you know what I'm talking about? But the sure sign of revival is that God creates a hunger and a thirst for the true Word of the Lord. In France, it may be reproof.

In fact, when you're really walking in holiness, you learn to love reproof. You can't find a message too hard for you. There is no such thing as a hard message when you're walking with God.

No such thing. But how sad in so many charismatic churches now, the preaching is merely endured. They can't wait to get it over with, to get back to the praise and worship.

But when the Holy Ghost comes down, Bob said it so well this morning, there are no star evangelists or teachers in center stage. The Word of God becomes center stage. The Word of the Lord.

And secondly, one of the absolutes of revival when it comes is a heart-breaking repentance. And you'll find that in verse 6, beginning to read verse 6. You're still with me in the 8th chapter. Verse 6. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up, what? Lifting up their hands.

We have some people come to Times Square Church, maybe you're here tonight, and you've never been to a church where they lift their hands. It's in the Bible there, isn't it? Did you just see it? Amen, Amen. With lifting up their hands.

And they bowed their heads and they worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also, Jethro and Bana. And look at the end of that verse.

The Levites caused the people to understand the law and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book of the law of God distinctly and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading. And Nehemiah, which is the Tershoth and Ezra, the priest, the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God, For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.

All the people, how many of the people? All the people wept when they heard the reading. You know, by the way, there are five or six scriptures about lifting up your hands in church. One of them is Psalms 134.2. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary to bless the Lord.

If you want the others, call my office, I'll get you five or six other verses. Can't go through them all right now. But you see, the word soon brought the people to their faces.

This is true repentance. They bowed low and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law.

This is called trembling at the word of God. In other words, they took it to heart. When a Holy Ghost revival comes to a city or to a church, Christians do not hold grudges.

They cannot hold grudges. They don't gossip. They don't get on the telephone and say, Do you know about sister so-and-so or brother so-and-so? They don't find fault.

They're not trying to straighten out the church or the pastors or anybody else. They don't know it all. They don't sit around like couch potatoes in front of television.

They don't backbite. Why? Because they're on their face. Dealing with the work of the Holy Ghost because the word of God is being applied to their own hearts.

Anybody that comes to me, you know, anybody comes to me with a tail, I know what's happening. They're not applying the word. They're just letting it skip right over them.

See, they say, Amen, Amen with their hands raised. But those people, there came a time they put their hands down. They weren't saying, Amen, Amen.

They were on their face before God. They were weeping. The word brought them to their faces.

Boy, you know it's so easy to get used to the word of God. It's so easy to get so accustomed to it. And you just don't let it take effect anymore.

I don't ever want to come to that place where I can sit in church and hear a man of God preach under the authority and anointing of God's Holy Ghost and let it go in one ear and out the other. I want it to find its mark and I want to repent. I want it to drive me to my face.

I want to go home and pray. See, you don't have time to look at others, do you? None of us do. When I hear any of these men preach, I'm moved.

I say, Oh Lord, I'm not thinking of somebody else in the church, even though I'm a pastor. I'm not saying, Well, Brother Bob, what you said this morning, I know exactly who that's good for. Have you ever done that? Come on, wives, husbands.

We should not be doing that. We should say, Oh Lord, it's me. It's me.

Even when Penny talks about this and the brokenness we need, it should not be someone else. Folks, tonight while I'm preaching and all this whole stuff, we've got two young pastors right underneath me here seeking God. They're praying.

And we're going to have it in every service. And if you want to be a part of that, let us know. Every service, somebody down in the basement right under this platform praying, seeking God.

That there'd be an anointing. That this wouldn't be just a church service. That you'll hear the Word of God and you'll move and your life is changed.

When you hear about lust and sin, you accept it and you say, God, burn it out of me. Thirdly, there's an incredible spirit of joy that breaks out when there's true repentance. This is the third absolute of revival.

The tenth verse. Tenth verse. Then you say, where's that roof on the... booth on the roof? I can't even say it.

I'm getting there. An incredible spirit of joy and rejoicing. Look at verse 10.

Read with me. Let me read to you. And then he said unto them, go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.

For this day is holy unto the Lord. Neither be you sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength. So the Levites stilled all the people saying, hold your peace for the day is holy.

Neither be you grieved. And all the people went their way to eat and to drink and to send portions and to make great mirth, great happiness. Because they had understood the words that had been declared unto them.

If you look at the Hebrew, it says they obeyed the word. They'd made a commitment. They'd made a commitment in their repentance that there would be a change.

In other words, you're going to find out later in verse 9, if you read it in 10, some of them had married strange wives and they were going to have to break away from the world. But they hadn't done it yet, but the commitment had been made. The commitment of repentance had been made.

Now listen very close to me please. Wherever the love of God's word has been restored, and people are hungry and thirsting for the word, and friends, believe me, I have never in my whole ministry, I started preaching when I was just about 14, 15 years of age, in all my lifetime, I've never seen such hunger for the word of God as I see here at Times Square and in New York. I've never seen, I've been in this city, started in this city over 30 years ago, and there's a hunger and a thirst that I've never seen before.

Some of you people are like little birds. I mean, feed me and it's there, there's a hunger, there's a thirst. It's wonderful to preach to people like that.

And it is glorious. It just draws it out of you. And when that's been restored, and repentance has been the result, and there's been a commitment to walking with the Lord, even though you may not be yet where you want to be, you say, Lord, every time you turn the light on, you show me something I'm going to deal with it.

And some of you are going to be dealt with things that you don't even know you're going to be dealt with yet. God's going to get to it. He knows you can't handle it yet.

But when you can handle it, He's going to come. He's going to show it to you, and when He does, many of you are ready to repent and say, Lord, I'm going all the way with you. I'm not going to hold back anything.

Listen, when you've been in a dead, dry church, and you've been justified in your sins, you don't want to go back to that game plan anymore. That ought to get a bigger amen than that. But you see, when the Word of the Lord has been restored, there's been repentance.

Inevitably, there's an outbreak of incredible joy. There's joy beyond comprehension. Is it not... Do you remember... Oh, listen.

Bob hit it so beautifully this morning, and when he was preaching it, knowing what God had laid in my heart, I'm just going to put an exclamation mark on what he said about deserting the right kind of worship, the right kind of music, the right kind of singing. Do you remember when Moses and Joshua came down off the mountain? They heard singing in the camp, and Joshua said, It is not the shout of victory, it is not the cry of defeat, but the noise of them that sing. Joshua could not distinguish what was happening.

Moses had been shut in with the Lord, and he knew. He'd been told, but in his heart, he knew. There was singing.

There was shouting. There was dancing. But it was idolatry behind it.

Idolatry. Folks, when you come off the mountain with the Lord, you'd better have discernment. You'd better learn what's in the shout.

There are people that go to conventions, charismatic conventions. I've been to a charismatic convention with over 10,000 people, and I know Jesus is standing outside the door. He wasn't even there.

I mean, they were moving, and I am charismatic. I don't even like that word. It sounds like asthmatic, like a disease or something.

Anyhow, I'm one of them. Pentecostal, yes. But I've been in those meetings where I've seen people just waving back and forth and dancing and singing.

Then after, you see them going out into their cars and open up their trunks and have a beer bash. And you know that there's adultery. You can sense it.

There's an evil spirit. There's no soberness. There's no sense of awe.

There's no respect for the holiness of God whatsoever. I'm not saying that's general, but I've been in a few meetings like that. And you know, I get letters from people who are now walking in discernment.

They're into the Word of God now. They've laid down their idols, and when you hear the true Word of God and lay down your idols, the first thing God restores is your discernment. You begin to see and hear things you couldn't see and hear before.

And you can sit in a meeting, and there may be 10,000, and there may be only five there, and they say there's something wrong here. I don't know what it is, but it's wrong. And then you look at yourself and say,

well, how could I... Lord, could 5,000 be wrong, and I be right? Yes! Absolutely yes! If you are walking in the Spirit, and you have pulverized your idols, and God's given you true discernment, you can sit before ministries that are walking in idolatry.

You can sit in churches, and the Holy Ghost will let you know. You won't be able to put your finger on it right away, but everybody will be rejoicing and singing, and you'll say, well, what's wrong with me? Why can't I get in on this? Why am I not shouting? Why don't I feel the Spirit of God here? And you'll start crying, for everybody around you is laughing, and you'll say, I don't understand it. I've been in meetings like that, and I've seen it, and I said, oh Lord, I can't put my finger.

There's something wrong. And you go back one or two times, and it gets stronger and stronger, and a year later you find out the man's in adultery. You find out there's false doctrine.

You better understand the shout. You better understand what's behind it. Now, I want to tell you something.

There's a way. Bob gave us some wonderful Holy Ghost helps this morning, but there are ways to tell the difference. There can be singing and shouting and dancing, but there can be behind it sensuality for an occasion.

And let me tell you, if there's no preaching of the law of God against sin, if there's no... Now listen, the law doesn't save anybody. We're not saved by the law. But the law shows us the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

And if you're not hearing the commandments of the Lord Jesus, which are stronger than the law of the Old Testament, because the law said if you commit adultery, remember what the Scriptures say, I said I committed adultery. Jesus said, but I say, if you look with lust, you've committed adultery. And if you're not hearing these commands of the Lord Jesus and they're so strong that you're confronted in your sins and you can't sit there comfortable.

I don't want to go to church if I had sin in my life and be comfortable. I want somebody to come as a prophet of God and stick a bony Nathan finger in my face and say, you're the man. You're the man.

I had a well-known evangelist tell me that recently. He said he wished someone had done it. Don't you want that? Someone to convict you of your sin? Or do you want somebody to just pat you on the back and tell you how good you are? We could pat you back all the way to hell.

And flatter you right into the kingdom of darkness. Be careful you don't get caught in a song of idolatry. Why was there such great happiness? Why such a festive spirit of joy? Because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

They understood it. God gave them discernment. They understood it.

Now I'm going to get to the booth on the roof. This is number four. Are you ready? Verse 13.

Don't go there yet. Look here for just a minute. Bob, we were talking.

There's so much preaching about the Feast of Tabernacles now. About God restoring worship and praise to the church. That the oil and the wine has been restored.

And the Word of God is come. And now there's time for great rejoicing. That's only half the story.

The rest of the story is the booth on the roof. And there can be no revival without the booth on the roof. Well, let's look at it.

Verse 13. And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests and the Levites under Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. Now don't read any further, but look this way for a minute.

Here's what they were doing. They were so hungry for God. The Word is being restored.

They've repented. They've wept. There's a festive spirit of rejoicing.

And the Feast of Tabernacles is in full steam. And they're so hungry. They get together with Ezra and say, is there anything more? Have we missed something? And they had missed something.

They had missed something that the church has missed in these last days. And the whole teaching of the Feast of Tabernacles is missed. And we dare not miss it.

There was. Look at verse 14. And they found.

Do you know where they found it? They found it. I'm going to tell you where they found it. We're going to go to it in Leviticus.

And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses that the children of Israel should dwell in booths. Now, I'm reading from King James. I don't know what it says.

They use a covered shelter or whatever. Booths in the Feast of the seventh month. And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities in a Jerusalem saying, Go forth unto the mount and fetch olive branches and pine branches and myrtle branches and palm branches and branches of thick trees to make booths as it is written.

So the people went forth and brought them and made themselves booths. Everyone where? On the roof. Now, in Texas, nobody would understand that because they don't have any flat roofs in Texas.

We do here in New York City. We understand. They did that in oriental areas.

In Jerusalem, there were flat rooftops. And in their courts and in the courts of the house of God and in the street of the water gate and the street of the gate of Aphraim and all the congregation of them that come together out of the captivity made booths and sat under the booths. In fact, they did it for seven days.

For since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, that's Joshua, unto that day had not the children of Israel done so and there was very great gladness. Now go with me please to Leviticus 23 and you'll find out where they were. This is where they got it.

This is where I'm getting it. This is where you're going to get it. Leviticus 23.

Now I'm not talking about Spanky. I'm talking about the word of the Lord. Leviticus 23, verse 40.

You say we're not under the law anymore. You know what the Bible says? These, all these things happen to them as examples to us upon whom the ends of the world have come. All of it.

Listen to verse 40. I'm going to read on. And ye shall take you take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook.

And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord seven days in the year. This is the feast of tabernacles.

It shall be a statue what? Forever in your generations ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days. All that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths.

That your children may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God. Now go back to Nehemiah 8 and just leave it open on your lap there for just a moment please.

Now, look this way. I want you to understand this. This is so important.

It's a great spiritual truth. When the Lord showed it to me I began to see how we've neglected this. And God made it so clear to me that we need to understand it in this church.

We can't have revival unless we get this booth on our roof. I'm talking about a spiritual application to it. Listen closely.

God's people were to go up to the mountains and they were to take olive branches, myrtle branches all the branches that were listed here palm branches and they were to make these little shelters on the rooftops before the water gate and the east gate of the temple there was a great big square like a city square. There were people visiting from all over Israel. The city was filled for the Feast of Tabernacles.

They said we have missed something all these years and no one's done it since the days of Joshua but it's a commandment of the Lord. Go up in the hills and get those branches. They brought can you imagine what a scene that was.

Thousands of people going up to the hills bringing these branches back. There's a joyful spirit because they're going to fulfill the word of the Lord. And they start building these little huts these little booths some on the flat rooftops.

Now folks Orthodox Jews in New York City in the United States still do it. It's called the sukkah S-U-K-K-A-H the sukkah. In fact a month ago the New York Times had a whole section with a picture of how to build a sukkah.

A sukkah. Jewish. Some of you are Jewish you know what I'm talking about.

They put them on their little balconies. They put them on the flat rooftops. In fact the last of September and the first week of October if you're up on the 21st floor like I am look out you can see the sukkahs.

Especially up on Upper West Side and a high Jewish community element there. And of the 613 commandments in the Torah 613 the most important is the keeping of the sukkah. In fact it's so holy if you even take a toothpick I mean if you take a piece of branch and using your tooth to make a toothpick out of it you have made it abominable you can't go into it again.

You can't put it in a bathroom you can't put it near your kitchen unless an odor would make it abominable. It's one of the most holy things that an Orthodox Jew can do and he's to eat under this little sukkah for 7

days. In fact he goes in and he quotes this to his family these very words we are just passing through this world we're just spending the night so we must not be concerned with its pleasures and its vanities.

The children learn to say that. They learn to look on it and the father says as you see these leaves fade and lose their color and their life that is your life. 7 days represents 70 years lifespan and so your heart is supposed to stay in the sukkah.

Your heart is supposed to be detached from the world and its spirit. You're supposed to have a heart that's in eternity a new Jerusalem state of mind. Even the Orthodox Jew even though he doesn't he doesn't understand the spiritual significance of it.

But you see God understood. He said I have blessed you in fact this was a harvest time the feast of tabernacles they were bringing in the harvest the oil the wine God had blessed and prospered them in the middle of it. He sends the whole nation into sukkahs a whole nation they're not even to live in their house.

Can you imagine if there were airplanes in those days flying over the city of Jerusalem and looking down and the whole city moved out of their homes and they're eating in these sukkahs it must have been wonderful for the children. The children loved it I'm sure. But they were being taught a lesson.

God was saying something. You see we're so thick. Everything God did in the New Testament is God saying hey ah I don't want to say dummy God wouldn't say that.

But listen I'm trying to teach you something these were illustrated lessons illustrated sermons because we're so bent on backsliding we're so thick and God is trying to say something through this whole thing. He said in all your rejoicing in all of your thanksgiving in all of your praise there should be in you a sense that I don't live here. In fact I want to show you three things the sukkah represents as far as the Holy Spirit has shown me.

First of all it signifies that we're strangers and aliens here on earth. We're strangers. We're not yet home.

Now I thank God for America but this is not my country. It should not be your country according to the word of God. You are an alien here.

Now some of you really are. Do you know that that's exactly what the scripture teaches? That's exactly what the scripture teaches. That we are aliens.

That we are strangers. You know what these when Nehemiah saw all these Jews for seven days they eat there they had to sleep there. They look up and what they're saying this is my body look how frail it is.

It's going to pass away. Don't get attached to this world. There's never been a revival in this nation or on the face of the earth where that spirit did not come.

There has to be that spirit of detachment from the world and that strikes against this doctrine of prosperity. It strikes it down. The gospel of prosperity has no succor to it.

It has no boot on the roof. David loved the city of Zion. Oh he wrote poetry.

He wrote psalms about it. He said beautiful for situation. The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion the city of the great king.

But I want to tell you something. David made a profound statement and I read it the other day and it struck like a knife to my heart. And he didn't say it when he's hiding in a cave.

He didn't say it when he's running from Absalom. He didn't say it when he was just starting to build Zion. Zion had been built.

David's now in his later years. Israel's prospered. David is bringing cartloads of gold and silver.

In fact, he brought 100,000 talents of gold, 1,000,000 talents of silver and brass and iron without weight along with timber and stone. David's a wealthy man now. God's blessed and prospered him.

And he's setting aside all of this wealth. They bring the silver and gold by cartloads. David's own wealth he's given and the wealth of the nation.

Preparing it for his son. He looks at all of this. He looks at Zion, this beautiful city for situation.

You know what David said in his last years? For I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner as all my fathers were. I'm a stranger. A stranger means a resident alien.

It means one who's just passing through. A sojourner means a foreigner, a guest. In fact, the root Hebrew word for sojourner is to shrink back with fear as in a strange place.

I shrink back with fear that I could get attached to this place because this is not home. Go to Hebrews, the 11th chapter. Let me show you something.

Hebrews, the 11th chapter. I'm not being sacrilegious about America. I thank God for America.

I thank God for this country. But we are citizens of a better country, the scripture says. A better country.

Hebrews 11, look at verse 8. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out to a place which he should have to receive for inheritance, obeyed. And he went out not knowing whether he went. By faith he sojourned.

You know what that means? He was there by fear lest he become attached. He's just passing through in the land of promise as in a strange country. Now this is the country God gave him.

That's his inheritance. But he said it's a strange country dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city who have foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Look at verse 13. These all died in faith not having received the promises but having seen them afar off and were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were what? Strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

And truly if they had been mindful of the country in which they came out they might have had opportunity to go back. But now they desire a better country that is a heavenly one whereby God is not ashamed to be called their God for he has prepared for them a city. Hallelujah.

Now you can get tied down here if you want but folks I'm just passing through. I'm passing through. I stopped in New York on my way to heaven.

I just stopped in New York on my way. Why does God put a whole nation under a tent under this sukkah for seven days to teach them that so they won't pamper themselves so they won't become ensnared with the things of this life so they won't become earthbound because God knows what happens when He prospers us. When He prospers us we start going lusting after things.

We get loose. And God has to come with an ax and He says go up in the roof go sit in that tent and get this idea of how frail life is how short it is. The scripture says but Jezreel which is Jerusalem God's people wax fat in other words they got prosperous and kicked.

That means they become unmanageable. Thou art waxen fat thou art grown thick thou art covered with fatness then He forsook God which made Him and He lightly esteemed the rock of His salvation. And that's why God says thank Me for all that I've done for you I've blessed you I've prospered you but you better hold it lightly.

This is the end of side one you may now turn the tape over to side two. I'm going to burn. Hey ten seconds into eternity what does it matter? What matter is it? All of you dear folks worried about your furniture? Anybody here want a Honda? You can have it when I'm gone you can have everything I've got but God doesn't matter? Doesn't matter? Now this is not a message just to wealthy people it's to all of us.

Because the more we're blessed the more we tend to want more. We dig into this world we take roots we buy and we spend and everything we buy is another rope to tie us down. How about an amen or two here? Every husband who has a shopping wife said amen.

No, believe me listen there's nothing wrong with shopping but I know some people who just live for that that's all they live for. And God says hold it lightly hold it lightly I'm not trying to put a guilt trip on you I'm trying to tell you hold it lightly. Your heart should be in the hut.

In the sukkah. You ought to be saying I'm an alien I'm passing through no roots here for me. I'm going to a better country.

Hallelujah. The second thing about this booth is that the Lord's trying to teach us that we don't own anything here on earth. We don't own anything.

We're just caretakers. We hear much about the promised land but you know they didn't own the promised land? The Jew really didn't get anything but a lease hold on it? I'll read it to you from the scripture. The land shall not be sold forever for the land is mine saith the Lord for you are strangers and sojourners here with me.

The land is mine. In fact, all they could sell was the crop rights. And even on the 70th year the year of Jubilee it was released it went back to the owner so that there could be no big landowners.

And all that you owned were the crop rights. Now this really strikes hard at the new gospel that's in the land called Dominion Kingdom Teaching. Oh, does this strike hard at it.

See, if God owns everything already and we hear people saying well, I'm going to give this back to the Lord or I'm going to take it back. How do you take dominion over something He already owns? God owns everything we have for, listen to what the scripture says for every beast of the forest is mine and all the cattle upon a thousand hills are mine the wild beast of the field are mine for the whole world is mine and the fullness thereof. Psalms 50, 10 to 11.

God says go up to the roof and crawl in the booth and examine your heart and find out if you're a good steward of the property that I've given you. Are you a good steward of the finances that I've given to you? In light of eternity how much are you spending for yourself compared to what you're giving to God? Now folks, we don't preach about money here and I'm not after your money. But if you're not releasing what belongs to God you've never been to the booth on the roof.

You haven't seen between the leaves and seen how frail life really is. Remember the man who had barns and he tore them down? He said, I'm going to build bigger barns because I don't have room to contain all that I've accumulated. God said unto him, Thou fool, this very night thy soul shall be required of thee then who shall these things be which you have provided? So is he that layeth up treasures for himself but he's not generous toward God.

The Times Square Church has got a lot of needs coming up to help feed and house and clothe and meet the needs of many people and God's going to have to trust many of you. You've been a very generous church here and we're not after your money. But God's going to hold us accountable, isn't He? We don't own it anyhow.

You don't own your bank account. You don't own your house. You don't own your car.

You don't even own yourself. We don't own ourselves. The scripture says, You are not your own for you're bought with a price.

Therefore glorify God in your body. You know, the devil came to Jesus and said, If you'll worship me, I'll give you all the kingdoms of the world. You know what he was? He was lying.

He was giving him kingdoms that were squatting on God's land. God owned all the land. He owns the whole earth and they're squatting there.

They're squatters. And you know, we've got people saying, We're going to take dominion over the earth and all the kingdoms, the arts and the science. They're squatters, folks.

You know what? You know, all the kingdoms of the world, all the kingdoms, all the leaders of the world, you know that they're nothing but a drop in a bucket to the Lord? He said, Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket. They're counted as a small dust of the balance. Behold, He taketh up the isles as a very light thing.

All nations are before Him as nothing and they are counted to Him as less than nothing and vanity. The Lord says, You can look at all the kingdoms of the world. You can look at all of the arts and sciences.

They're little specks of dust in the bottom of a bucket and I can go poof and blow them all away. And I'm not going to take dominion over dust. It's already His.

He owns it all, folks. The real effect of this teaching that Nehemiah and Ezra were trying to get through to the people was the laying aside of everything that would hinder people from being ready to go. The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.

Neither said any of them that art of the things he possessed was his own but they all had things in common. That's not from Nehemiah, that's from the book of Acts. They said, nothing I have is my own.

Now, finally, and then I'm going to close in just a moment. The booth is a reminder to abstain from all fleshly lust. Dearly beloved, this is Peter speaking, 1 Peter 2.11, just listen.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and sojourners, pilgrims, He said, I'm telling you now because you're just an alien just passing through, I'm telling you because life is so short, abstain from all fleshly lust which war against your soul. Now, that's the real purpose of the sukkah. It's to look at this thing that's in your life, this war against your soul and measuring it against eternity and saying, is the little moment of pleasure I get worth giving up my eternal life? Is this paltry little pleasure that the devil is always enticing me with, is it worth? You know what the scripture says? Jesus endured in view of the glory, the joy that was set before Him.

And those that are bound by lust have never seen the glory that's ahead of them. You know it's hard to tell anybody under 50 years of age that life is short. Because they get to thinking I've got so many years ahead of me, mostly in the 30s and 40s.

20? I can't imagine anybody being that young anymore. You know, you talk to young people and you say, think about eternal things. Measure these pleasures against eternal joys with Jesus.

Measure them. Is it worth it? They can't figure that out. Now when you're in your 60s and 70s, nature teaches you.

Time is short because you've moved into the Zucca. I mean, you're under the tent and you see the leaves fading on all sides. The eyes are going blind.

The hearing is going blind. Hearing going blind. And the mind goes... Moses said he'd rather suffer with God's people than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

He began to measure that short season. For what is your life? It's even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Do you know that most lust is a result of anger against God? It's like an alcoholic.

Almost everyone who's bound by lust has this one thing in common. Do you ever think of an alcoholic? He uses every excuse he can get to take a drink. Everything.

If somebody looks at him cross-eyed, he's got to go get a drink. He's got a perfect excuse. Somebody looked at him wrong.

You know, the alcoholics looking for somebody, they toast everything. They toast the weather. They toast the time.

They toast somebody's haircut. Any excuse to indulge. And there's an anger against God.

And it comes from pride. It comes from ambition. And those things can drive you.

And when you're not... Listen, God was speaking to me this afternoon so clear. When you set a goal for your life and you fail to reach that goal, and you set it by ambition, that's an open door to lust and sins of all kind. Because if you don't reach it, you say, well, I'll never amount to anything.

It'll never happen. And it's almost an anger at yourself and of God. And behind all lust there's some kind of anger.

And the Lord says, I want you to see how short life is. I'm going to close in just a minute, but this was made so clear to me. When I was still living in Texas, my business manager, Ron Porsche, was 33 years old.

And for about five months, I would meet with that precious young man every day for about two hours. And I don't know why. I thought the Lord told me that I was going to die.

And so, in fact, I told my wife, I said, honey, I can't help it. I'm getting messages about preparing for eternity. And I'd wake up singing every morning, this world is not my home.

And I put my wife under terrible bondage. I thought I was going to die. And I went to my business manager, Ron, and said, Ron, I believe I've had a word from the Lord that I've heard like Paul and Peter that God had told him the time of his departure.

And I wasn't afraid or anything, but the Lord was taking me through books and through the Word. And I'd sit there and just share with Ron not knowing that he was the one who was going to die. And he would sit there for days and his face would light up.

He'd say, oh brother, it's wonderful to see that. He said, God's doing something in my heart and I could see the change coming in him. And one day, my wife looked at him and said, Ron, you look thin.

You've lost five or six pounds. Please, tomorrow, go to the doctor. So I went to our family doctor, wonderful man of God, and I called Jack that next day about two o'clock.

And I stopped the car along the road. Gwen was in the car and she saw my face turn white. Jack said, Brother Dave, Ron's here in my office.

I've just had to tell him he's full of cancer. He's absolutely hopeless outside of a miracle. Ron never shed a tear.

He was going around cheering up everybody and the nurses said, we've never seen anything like it. You see, the Holy Spirit had been doing something in his heart detaching him from the world. I'll tell you what, the next two months that he lived, they were the most glorious times.

I would go over there every day and Ron would say to me, Brother Dave, please don't pray for me. I don't want to be... He said, I want the ultimate healing. I'd written a chapter about the ultimate healing.

Because, folks, if getting a new body isn't an ultimate healing, I don't know what is an ultimate healing. A brand new body. And I would go in there to his room and he's in bed already and he was going down so fast, he said, I feel that magnetic pool.

And every day I'd go in there, he said, I love my wife and my two little sweetheart girls, but he said, they're not mine anymore. He said, the Lord has so possessed me. Brother Dave, I'm in that magnetic pool, I'm already moving to glory.

And he said, I wish I had known this before. And you know, the last two months, in fact, his name is Ron Porsche and he drove a little Porsche. One of those cheaper Porsches.

And it was in his car, that little blue Porsche, and he said, Brother Dave, it's a piece of junk. It's a piece of junk. He said, all those clothes in this closet, they're junk.

He said, it's nothing. He said, even though I love my wife, he said, I don't feel any human love. I respect you, but my heart's with Jesus.

My heart's in heaven already. I'm with Him. He said, I'm already there.

It's glorious. It's wonderful. He said, Brother Dave, you should be living your life like this from now on.

We should all be living our life like this. Everything we have is junk. It's all going to pass away.

Our hearts should be with Him. Oh, that boy was in glory. He blessed my heart.

He blessed everybody that came around. And the last day, I just couldn't even get there in time, even though his house was just a few hundred feet from mine. His wife called and said, Please, Ron wants to see you quickly.

I went in and he'd already folded his hands and he was already home with the Lord. And I miss him. What a wonderful man of God.

But what a lesson I learned. He moved into the sukkah. Hallelujah.

He said, this body doesn't mean anything. Folks, Paul said, I have a desire to depart and be with the Lord. If you're not sitting here now with a desire to depart this world and be with Jesus, something is terribly, terribly wrong.

And Paul said, it's better for you that I stay here. Yes, it's better for us to be here so we can save babies. It's good for us to be here to save our families and fast and pray and seek God.

We're not here just to make money, folks. We're not here just to keep a job. It's all passing away.

Now, I gave you four absolutes. The fifth one, of course, is in the ninth chapter, and I'll just mention it. And that's separation from the world.

They went from the sukkah after this experience and so convinced the time was short, they separated themselves from every idol and from their strange wives and there was a great separation in the land. And there can't be revival without separation from the world and everything that's in the world. All its places, total separation from it.

God's people are a separated holy people. Amen. They don't look like the world.

They don't smell like the world. They don't talk like the world. They don't live like the world.

Half the Christians anymore, you can't tell the difference. If they didn't have a Bible in their hand, you wouldn't know it. And even then, you don't know it.

They should be able to tell a difference because you don't go where they go, you're separated unto Jesus. Hallelujah. Now, when I talk about a booth on the roof, I'm talking about your heart.

I'm talking about a New Jerusalem state of mind where your heart is no longer here except to evangelize, to love your family, your wife. But folks, it's not a sad time. Those seven days under the sukkah, those seven days where time, the Lord said, rejoice and be glad in the Lord.

Hallelujah. Yes, we weep. And I'll tell you something.

And Penny Lee has learned it. I've learned it. If you don't learn it, you can't survive.

Those who know how to rejoice are those who've known the grief of God. Paul said sorrowing yet rejoicing. The joy of the Lord is your strength.

There has to be joy in the Lord. I know what it is to weep for hours and then get up and just dance in the Spirit with joy because I had shared the burden of the Lord. I'd shared His grief.

I'd shared His tears. I'd shared His joy. We should all share His tears and His joy.

Hallelujah. Lord, thank You that we can have a New Jerusalem state of mind, that we can be weaned from this world. We don't belong here, Lord.

We're passing through. We are aliens and strangers on our way to be with You in glory. Lord, break the spirit of lust that still lingers.

He said, beloved, brethren, sojourners, pilgrims, strangers, because you're strangers, abstain from the lust of war against your soul. It's a war. It's a war.

Satan's out to destroy you. It's a war, and it'll be a war till Jesus comes. The war will never be over.

But you must stand and war in spirit and by faith believing that God will deliver you and set you free and give you victory in His name for God is not a liar. God cannot lie to His people. He will give victory and glory.

Hallelujah. Stand, please. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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