

# God's Normal Order - Called to Be Priests

by Devern Fromke

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*God's normal order is a state of being where His people are a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation, characterized by openness, fellowship, and divine teaching.*

**Duration:** 1:07:32

**Scripture:** Exodus 32:20-21, 2 Chronicles 20:17, 2 Chronicles 20:22, Matthew 6:33, Acts 13:2

**Topics:** "Priests"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a good product that doesn't require excessive promotion. He reflects on the past advertising strategies used in youth for Christ's days, which often resulted in disappointment for attendees. The speaker then discusses the ways of the Lord, highlighting the need to trust in God's guidance and not worry about the next steps. He also addresses the story of the golden calf, pointing out the rationalizing and excusing behavior of the people involved. The sermon concludes with a focus on worshiping and adoring God for who He is, rather than just for what He has done.

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## Transcript

Lord, that in the midst of thy people there is a song welling up and there is a new day coming in which thou art really bringing forth a priesthood unto thyself. Oh, how we thank thee. We praise thee this morning for bringing each sister, each brother together that we might just worship and we might sit before thee and claim that thou wilt teach, that thou wilt instruct.

Help yourself to us this morning, Lord. Take away any strangeness. Take away anything that would hinder the full flow of thy own revealing and we'll be sure to give thee the praise, the honor, and the glory.

We ask it in Jesus' name, amen, amen. We were saying last evening in our first time with you that God is responding to the church, the real spirit of praise, the spirit of joy, rejoicing, of thanksgiving. Everybody gets there and then we get into the message.

And it's hard for them to worship the Lord if the Lord has not really done a new thing in their heart, to fill up the well and to bring them in to see that we are really called to be a priesthood unto the Lord. I've been quite impressed in recent months with the fact that God's way of selling things is so different from ours. I have some friends who are sales conscious, representatives of the business world.

And they tell me today that you can sell anything if you advertise it enough. I'd like to believe that some of the stuff that's being produced today, it just really isn't worth production. But the amount of promotion and the amount of advertising, you see a thing, you hear about it enough, pretty soon you push your cart down the supermarket, what do you do? You just automatically reach for it.

In case you hadn't realized that, watch yourself. Everything is promotion today. It's promotion.

You know, God doesn't spend much time promoting. He puts all this energy and effort on the product. How many of you realize, how many of you know that if the product is what it ought to be, you don't have to promote? Satisfied people do what? They talk, they promote.

You know, it's interesting in our hard-fell approach of the gospel today, in our hard-fell approach of trying to get people interested, we've had to really promote. I look back, I was speaking of our Youth for Christ days last night, and some of the advertising that we had to use, it was always stupendous, colossal, gigantic, enormous. It was always overselling.

And then folk would get there, and they had the big letdown. The big letdown. But the ways of the Lord are so different.

He always puts on the pedestal, He always produces the product. And the product has its own peculiar way of selling. That's what He did with Israel.

He called His people out and unto Himself. They were to be a people, we read over in Exodus. If you'd like to turn there for a moment.

Exodus chapter 19, beginning to read with verse 4, chapter 19. You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people, for all the earth is Mine.

And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests and of holy nations. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. We were saying last evening, and I feel the Lord would have us carry along a little further, that God's normal order of things, God's normal order has been so missed, it's been so misunderstood, we have come short so long in our mentality.

We highly fail to see what God's way in His normal order was. We've had all this declension that God would use a means by which to bring things back to His normal order. We said last evening, and I want to repeat it again, that when God brought this people out of Egypt, and He brought them unto Himself, I believe He gives them something of the normal order of His expectation.

A peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. And that which God works into and through His people will always have, excuse me if I go back to the chalk, it will always have some of these characteristics. That will be evident.

Any departure, declension, or defection from the normal order of things, God sometimes uses down here what we call some emergency means. We've had so much declension, we've had mostly emergency. We can't get the emergency distinguished from His normal order of things.

This is my burden in these hours with us, that somehow the Lord will help us to hold clearly what I believe is the normal order that He's after. A people who are a treasure. Now you look at yourself and say, not much treasure in me.

But I believe that the treasure is the Lord Himself in an earthen vessel. The earthen vessel, well, it isn't so much, but it's the treasure. The peculiar treasure.

It's the deposit, the increase of the Lord Himself in the lives of His people that become the treasure. And of course that makes them different. I don't believe in being peculiar for peculiarity's sake.

You don't really have to try. Just praise the Lord. Just walk with the Lord, and you'll be different enough without having to take on any eccentricities.

It's a wonderful thing when you can get distinguished your natural eccentricities from that which God has wrought of divine treasure. We see far more vessel, far more of the earthen vessel than we need to. It's the treasure, the increase of the Lord Himself that is sufficient to make us different from the rest.

So the first mark then, we say, is that of being a peculiar treasure because of the increasing measure of the Lord Himself, the jewel that He works out in our life by the Spirit. The next thing that we notice was a kingdom of priests. And this priesthood, these who know the life of the altar, as we were saying last night, the life of the altar and giving unto the Lord the spiritual sacrifices, it's a blessed thing.

I don't know how high we will get these days, but I'd like to emphasize that it's not just a priesthood, it's a kingdom of priests. And where do I get the picture of a kingdom? I get that which has an orderly arrangement of priesthood. By the orderly arrangement I mean the priests have learned their function.

They have learned their order in relatedness. And I believe, beloved, that an hour is coming when our hearts will delight to see men coming into the order, the order of priesthood. A delightful thing.

I can't go into it any more than just to say that we are a kingdom of priests and there is the loveliness of his order. When the Holy Spirit takes the baton to direct the choir, he brings the crescendo and the diminuendo, the legato, the staccato, all of this, because he has produced, he has produced a kingdom. And there you have the government of the Spirit producing the order of priesthood, giving the sacrifice, the praise, and all that this represents.

So this is a part of the normal order that God will bring in. He's bringing it. And then finally he says, a holy nation.

I cannot get away from the fact that the order of things, when God is really, really in it, is that there's a holiness of life. We've all reacted in past days. I grew up in holiness churches.

It was so legal. It was so outward. But I thank God that there's been some imprints that have been left indelibly.

That is that God is a holy God. And he wants a people. Not in the stiff, rigid, legal sort of a way, but a people who know the Lord himself as their holiness, their righteousness.

This will be a mark. And I thank God that I see this beginning to take place. Because wherever the Holy Spirit is working to bring us into the normal order, God is doing it.

Haley said last night, we'll repeat for someone who may not have been here, whenever things fall below this, God has to use some emergency measures to bring man back. We were saying that the normal, the life of the church is that of bringing forth praise. And I believe that in this kind of life, you see three things that are very operative.

You see an openness and an honesty before the Lord continually. You see a people who know a fellowship with him. Real fellowship, real participation with the Lord in their rejoicing and in their praise.

And in turn you see that God gives them a knowing, a teaching. He instructs them in his ways. Because this is the function in our spirit.

What are the three functions in our spirit? Conscience, which really represents an open way to the Lord. Man in his beginning, as he was fellowshiping in the garden with God, there was a doorway. Not a door, but a doorway.

An openness. He talked in his fellowship with God in the very beginning. And it was only when sin came, that consciousness or conscience came to work.

And so the blood has always been applied where? At the doorpost, the lintel. To make access. To produce openness again.

Having therefore boldness to enter in by the what? The blood of Jesus. A cleansed conscience who is producing once again a people who know entrance, openness, back into the very presence of the Lord. We are not so conscious of a conscience as we are conscious of the Holy Spirit producing an openness.

That's the first, it's the leading part of our spirit, taking us back in. Then in our spirit we have fellowship. The capacity to worship.

The fellowship. God is spirit. And our spirit joins his spirit in fellowship, you see.

Worship. And out of this, God takes the initiative to lead, to instruct, to bring his people into divine seeing. So, in the order back there, if it was in its proper way, the priesthood and the teaching, the divine way in which God would share.

If we get into some of the real pipes in the sanctuary, it comes out. But I don't want us to spend our time there this morning. Simply to say, now look, this is the normal order.

Some came last night afterwards and said, my, I guess I don't know how I'd get along without preaching in a meeting. Or the prophethood, so to speak. Well, the prophethood is the call back to the normal order where God brings the people into life in the spirit.

Openness. Honesty. Fellowshiping with him.

Giving to the Lord. Ministering unto him. The church at Antioch, it says, as they ministered unto the Lord, the Holy Spirit said, separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereon I have called them.

Our primary function, the normal order, is a ministering to the Lord. And who does the ministering to thee? The Lord himself has a ministry to the people. We've had so many folk coming into our fellowship and the church life in Indianapolis the last few weeks.

And it's poor. But I guess it's a little better than the average. And one of the things that's been rather interesting to hear the testimony, we had a young fellow from seminary who came down for the weekend.

I've known Butch for 10, 12 years, I guess. Watched him grow up. And not much was said.

He's a fellowship. But when he sat in the morning service as we gathered in remembrance around the Lord's table, there was a real spirit of praise, real thanksgiving, real openness. I didn't think it was anything special, but the Lord was surely honored and glorified.

It was a free flow. But for about an hour we just sat and sang, gave praise, thanksgiving, and worship to the Lord. And then followed that our ministry.

And just at the close when we were ready to go and he was getting in his car to go back, he got up and he said, Well, I've been in lots of communion services before but never something living like this. And he said, I came to be preached at, but I have found the Lord's way of ministering to my heart. Tears coursing, he said, Thank you.

I've seen something new. God's way is a way of what? The church ministering. Well, I didn't say very much.

It was kind of restrained. He was with us then for a little while that afternoon and he went on home and I got a letter from him a couple of days ago. It said, Would you mind if I, I don't think I can stay in seminary anymore.

It's one of the better seminaries if there is such a thing. I'm sorry. But he wrote back and he said, I just can't fit into homiletics and the old order of things.

I think God's calling me to the life of the church. Can I come and get a job and help support and work and do whatever? Well, this is happening all the time. God is working.

How did I get off on that? Well, anyway, we've so long lived below par. You know, it's possible to study abnormal psychology so long you don't know what's normal. I've really, I've really gotten perplexed with some of this educational stuff.

I've met so many people who know what's abnormal, they don't know what's normal. Do any of us? What's the new order of things? Oh, Lord, give us eyes to see. And all of the Lord's ways now of really meeting man's awful declension to bring us back.

So don't be surprised when you get into meetings where there is God depositing a fuller measure of himself into the lives of his people. Through the daily crucibles. And he begins to bring about a people who are more alive to praise and worship.

The best meeting of the week is the meeting in which we gather to remember and to lift up and exalt the Lord. But there's an order in it that God is producing. And then finally, a true holiness of life is after this.

So when I look at what the Lord was after here in calling this people out, then you get some glimpse of how they missed it. But before we see how they missed it, I'd like to just take you through one little picture of what I'd call normality. Turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 20.

You will know this, know immediately the story, don't you? 2 Chronicles chapter 20. King Jehoshaphat was one of the better kings. God was able to restore the order of worship.

Jerusalem. And he was bringing the people back to the filling of the Lord and walking them with a perfect heart. And you get a little bit better picture of the moral order of God's way in the reign of Jehoshaphat.

And just as surely, ah, listen, just as surely as a people reach anything of divine normal order, you can count on the enemy to make attack. He is to hinder, he's going to thwart. He will move in to hinder.

He cannot stand the praises. The old song we used to sing says, Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise. You go around with a moaning, poor me, groaning spirit.

There's no quivering in hell at that. It's when God's people come to life and praise. And the enemy makes his attack upon a people who are fulfilling something of divine normal.

All right, let's see. Chapter 20. Came to pass after this also that the children of Moab and the children of Ammon and with their mother beside the Ammonites came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

They were making the charge. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea, on this side Syria. And behold, there be an Adon-tamar which is in Amgedi.

Jehoshaphat feared that it be reverent and set himself to seek the Lord and proclaimed the facts throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together to ask help of the Lord. Even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord.

And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the Lord before the new court and said, O Lord God of our fathers, art thou not God in heaven? And weariest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? And in thine hand is there not power and might so that none is able to withstand thee? Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel and gavest it to the seed of Abraham, thy friend forever? And they dwelt therein and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name's sake. If for evil cometh upon us as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house and in thy presence for thy name is in this house and cry unto thee in affliction, then thou wilt hear and help. And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom thou didst not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and destroyed them not.

Behold, I say, how they reward us to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit." He's fulfilling the remembrance of the Lord. Lord, we're your people. We're identified with you.

You've given the land. We're your possession. This is your possession.

Reminding the Lord all of this. And then he said, verse 12, O our God, wilt thou not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do. And our eyes are upon the awful multitude who are about to swallow us up, the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the children of Seir.

What? Is that the way it reads? No. Our eyes are upon thee. They looked unto him, and their faces were lightened.

Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee, is the normal order. And all of Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives and their children, because they were ministering to the Lord. And here was the seeking of the Lord, and here was the giving to him.

In an hour of crisis, the enemy was making an attack. I think we do well to remember now that the Lord has won the battle. And the simple word for us, first of all, is as we believe, God begins to work.

As we believe. I'd like to just say it's our first foundation here. As we believe, God begins to work.

The next principle, as we stand for what we believe, God begins to work mightily. But sometimes at this first point where in believing we get weak, begin to turn our eyes again to the multitude, or to the challenge. But it's the standing, just a little longer.

Not that we have to win, but that the Lord who has won is saying, just stand. We were reading this morning in Devotion of the Table, the thought for today, this is not a marching order to go out and invade. The word means, stand.

Just take what has already been yours. The privilege. We're such fighters.

We're so quick to pick up and assume that something really depends on us. And the peculiar, delightful way the Lord is to just bring us into a dependence in his way. Well, you'll see as we go along now.

Verse 14. Now because we've been ministering unto the Lord, the Lord is going to teach them what needs to be done. Then upon Jehaziel, the son of Zechariah, the son of Denariah, the son of Jeorah, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation.

Oh! And we seek the Lord. Just for him and reminding him, then the Lord begins to speak. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon this young man Jehaziel.

And he said, How can ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and our king Jehoshaphat, thus say the Lord unto you, be not afraid, nor dismayed, by reason of this great multitude, for the body is not yours, but God's. For Nile bear ye down against them. Behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz, and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the earliness of Jeruel.

And ye shall not need to fight in this battle. Set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed, for Nile will be out against them, for the Lord will be with you. Here is the Lord giving the insight.

Now, I want you to see a good minister. He says, this is where they're coming. They're out by the cliff.

And you see this high cliff that looks down, and they're going to sneak up through this passageway. I hope you get the picture now. Because as they go out there, he has just given them one step at a time.

That's the hardest thing for us. They're out by the cliff of Ziz. So what am I going to do when I get out there? What next? That's not your problem.

As we believe, God begins to work. As we stand for what he has said, he begins to work by the way. The Lord, I can only see, we've had a brother the last few weeks with us at the farm, and he's been emphasizing over and over again how the Lord shines his light on one footstone.

He says, take a step. Then there may be darkness between, and he shines the light on the next one. You take the next step.

Not the whole path. Step by step as he orders it. So here they are.

The word has come, go out by the cliff of Ziz. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. They should have been preparing for battle, shouldn't they? Should have been devising means to win.

Foolishness. They're called to what? A peculiar people, worshipping the Lord when they ought to be doing something else in the eyes of the people. You see? See the foolishness of man's reasoning? And the Levites, and the children of the Korahites, and then the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

And they rose early in the morning and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established.

Believe his prophets, so shall you prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord. And they should praise the beauty of holiness as they went out before the army and to say, Praise the Lord, for his mercy endures forever.

Now I want you to see what this means. The day before, he said, They go out by the Cliff of Goods because they're going to be sneaking up through that passage. They get out there, they're praying, they're worshipping the Lord.

The king gets another word. He forms a choir. Wouldn't you like to be in this choir? I want you to see, really.

I set a picture in my own mind of where are the people all back here? Maybe they were moving like a phalanx, somewhat prepared, you know, phalanx, with the sharp point of the enemy. I mean the sharp, the best men out at the very point. They're right in the very front of everything.

In full exposure at the cliff, the choir. No arms, no guns, no swords. What are they doing? The foolishness of God is wiser than men.

All man in his wisdom thinks he knows how. But even the foolishness, the foolish things that God does are wiser than man's greatest wisdom. How many volunteers for this choir? Did you notice what they're doing now? It says as they go out singing, praising the beauty of holiness, God is a holy God.

And when he works in the midst of his people, he will always produce a holiness, a righteousness. Praise the Lord for his mercy endures forever. Verse 22.

And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah. I can just hear them down hidden in the valley, looking up at that peculiar thing up there. And I can hear one of the commanders say, careful now, these people always trick you.

This is just a trick. And so the Moabites began to argue with the Ammonites. And the Scituses, they flew one another in the midst of all their... They devoured, they flew one another.

And all these peculiar people, the treasure the Lord did was what? Stand singing, worshiping, praising, announcing the Lord and his goodness. Where is the battle? Where is the real battle? Do you not see, beloved, that the real battle is up here? There are two thrones that are at war. The throne of God is being challenged by the enemy.

You see it all the way through Scripture. The throne of God is being challenged. And we were just sort of, I don't like to say puppets, but we just sat down here.

And when God can bring a people, when God can get a people who will look to him, be alive to him, all he has to do is just one little simple thing. The enemy said it not. And the real issue is this.

When Satan challenged God about Job, remember what he said? Ah, does Job serve God for naught? Look how you blessed him. Look how you put a funnel over Job. Anybody would serve you if you blessed him like you blessed Job.

And so the Lord removes the heads and he allows all of the possessions of Job to be taken away. But Job remains his integrity. The enemy comes back again and says, well, maybe things don't mean so much.

But look, he's still strong and healthy. He's got good physical. And he removes another head.

He can't take his life. But Job goes into the crucible in which there is some physical suffering, terrible boils, the smell and the stench. He's out of the edge of the city, scraping the pus with a piece of pocklard.

And what's the battle that's going on up here? Can God get someone to love him, praise him, serve him, worship him without being bribed? That's the issue. Does God bribe people? Is it pie in the sky? Is it all he offers? Is he worthy enough himself? Is it just what he gives? And what he does for us? It causes us to praise and worship him? Do you see the battle? Oh, when circumstances are nice, everything is going good, we give a sacrifice, praise, thanksgiving. Thank you, Lord, for all you've done.

Thank you, Lord, for that God, I believe, is able to stop the mouths of all of the enemy. He's able in the challenge to say, all I really need to do is to give them a glimpse of myself. Not what I do.

They can find within in knowing the Lord. You see, it's all wrapped up in knowing the Lord. Knowing him and his worthiness.

And I believe that the final choir sings. As we do in revelation, the psalm will be, he is worthy. Utterly worthy.

This is worship. He is worthy. Of course, he's done all of this, and we sing and we give thanks because of what he's done.

But oh, we come to see who he is, and we love him because of who he is. We praise, we worship, we adore. This is the worthiness of the Lord that gives.

And so, in that arena, when Job is, so to speak, put in the test, it's then that the real warfare, the real battle is up here. And the same battle exists today. Can God get a people? Can God get a people who will learn to hear, listen, put away their odds, as it were, and take up the real issue, and it is the acknowledging that he is Lord.

He is the head of this kingdom. It's all in order, and we are praising. And I believe in just that moment, he set up ambushments, and the struggle and the quarrel that went on between them, and they killed one another.

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. Now, beloved, this is not getting a hold of a little technique.

It's not getting a hold of a method. This is my concern. I'll tone this.

We're so technique. We're so method conscious. And we read, and then we read the testimony of someone else who praised his way through.

Maybe we've all been through the techniques and the methods. God's way is working from the inside out. The sacrifice of God is a what? Starts inward, like a broken heart, a broken and a contrite spirit.

Anytime I just try to mouse the technique, you know what I mean by that, don't you? The technique. We've all been locked up. We've all tried different ways of prayer.

It's reduced here, and Adam was placed as the first ruling king, the first one for whom God was going to accomplish something. Now, there'd been a revolt in the heavenlies. One of those that he had created had already revolted.

I can't go into all the story, but in this regard, because we have an openness and an honesty and a fellowship with himself. So, this way of a people who move in the divine order, the normal order that God is after, it has another mind to it all the way through. Here they were, shut up to the Lord, looking unto him, not the multitude.

And the word the Lord gave me some years ago was this. We want to always be delivered through understanding. Lord, if I knew what you were going to do when I got out by the cliff, I could see the next step.

But he seemed to say to me, we are delivered into dependence. Delivered into dependence. Cut loose, utterly, utterly cut loose from our knowing how.

What's going to happen when we get out there? Not your worry. Just depend on me. It's a way of continuing dependence upon the Lord.

And you see, what we always do is to develop the mark of getting away from the order of God, the normal order thing, is to develop all our capabilities, all our methods, just in case God fails. And we come to a situation where, and it's the danger of all the books, all the things that we know. Because what we experienced last time was a wonderful victory.

So I try to use it the next time. Children of Israel had to learn this continually. They were delivered into dependence.

Oh, if I could just get an experience at the altar, that would really fix me up. If I could just, once and for all, put on, really, the dependency of the flesh. If I could just arrive at that something, whatever it is, I could be independent.

I wouldn't need to really be cast totally, helplessly, left upon God all the time. The power of whatever it is. Now, we don't minimize whatever experience has reality in it, thank God, but if it doesn't deliver you into dependence, it comes short.

Delivering us into dependence upon Him. Well, we don't need to go on here anymore than just to simply say that as we believe God works, as we stand for what we believe, God works mightily, as we, I think we read it down here a little bit further, as we praise, it says, God sets up ambition, and they're all hidden to our natural eye, and then finally, as we rejoice to be with the Lord. And while He is away, Aaron and the people begin to murmur, and they begin to complain.

They look around at their circumstances. Where is this man Moses, who's brought us out? Where is he? Moses is inquiring, waiting before the Lord. And while they are, and while he is away, they're complaining, they come to Aaron.

You can always find someone who will be sympathetic with your heart, sometimes even someone in the service of the Lord. And Aaron goes soft, and he allows them to build a golden calf. Imagine a people who had come out of Egypt with such miraculous power demonstrated.

Across the Red Sea, the enemy had been swallowed up. Not many days after, now, is their camp at the foot of Mount Sinai. Here, with Moses away, they plead, make us gods who shall go before us, for we know not what has become of this man Moses that brought us out.

They thought it was Moses. They'd forgotten. And so Aaron told them to bring all the golden earrings, and they make a golden calf, and then they start to worship.

They have their feasts around it. Dancing, drinking, playing, nakedness, all that goes with it. While Moses is away, God speaks to him and reminds him what he sees, he sees what the people have been doing.

And he goes down into their midst. Now, I want us to get another little glimpse of something that takes place. When a people have come short, the people that should have been the priesthood people, who should have fulfilled the thing that God was wanting in the line of his purpose.

One of the things that God uses as a means to bring his people back in line is this we call intercession. The spirit of intercession begins to manifest itself. There will be prayer, praise, thanksgiving, worship.

But it says God looks for a man to stand in the breach. He looks for someone by which he can bring man back when his people have missed. And I believe we do well to expect that the spirit of travail and intercession will be the means by which God will burden and exercise hearts in order that they can be brought back once again, lifted to the normal order of things.

Just as surely as his people miss, there has to be the spirit of travail, intercession. Here is Moses. We pick it up with verse 7. They're called to be a kingdom.

They're not just professing like a big tree that's become abnormal and missed it, you see. And this brings us then to see that what God is doing today, back where we were this morning, God, now up in the mount it says, And the Lord said unto Moses, Go get thee down for thy people. First thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, which hath corrupted themselves.

They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them, and they have made a molten calf and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed their unto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, that you have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great nation.

I believe Moses is on the spot in this moment. Does Moses have a heart for the purpose of God, or does he have a private ambition? Not one of us will ever get by the testing someplace down the road. Are we really, are we really concerned for what the Lord is after, or would we carve out a little kingdom, a little place, to demonstrate my ministry or my own ability? I believe it's the most, it's the most crucial thing that's happening in the religious realm today.

The minute someone begins to manifest gifts and the blessing of the Lord, and the ministry begins to function, it is so easy to build up something around himself and for himself. I weep over it, and I know the danger, and I keep asking, oh dear Lord, awaken your people, your servants. The day will be lost to the larger purpose, the thing you really want.

It's not building some little thing. It seems so difficult in some of the cities where we go to bring people into the full line of his purpose, and I believe the divine order of things, because every man's doing his little thing. Anything less, anything less than a dedication and a devotion to the building of the church, the Lord one, the house that he wants will be to build a little pool of my own.

And it's the most subtle, it's the most difficult thing. The Lord says to Moses, Moses, I'll blot all these people out, and I'll start over. Instead of Abraham being the founding father, it'll be Moses.

Well, the book would have ran differently, wouldn't it? But I love this, because Moses turned, and I believe that God has wrought something in his life. Private ambition has to be done. Building something, as it were, for himself, he refuses, and he begins to intercede before the Lord, a real spirit of claiming that God will bring his people back to the order of things.

It's an intercession. I'm afraid, after I have dealt with a people like this, my tendency so often would have been to say, well, praise the Lord, let's blot them out, Lord. I've had a lot of trouble with them.

But that's not the spirit of the Lord. And Moses pleads before God. We see what happens now.

I love this. Verse 11. So then Moses besought the Lord as God and said, Lord, why dost thy wrath wax hot against thy people? When God had spoken to Moses back here in verse 7, the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee down for thy people.

Moses turns and he says, Oh no, Lord, thy people. Now whose people are they? Doesn't anybody want to know? If there's anything sticky in Moses, anything of personal ambition, that sounds good to an ear, my congregation, my following. What did he say? Thy people.

Yes, Lord. I brought them out of Egypt. You see? But he refuses.

Oh no, Lord. Thy people. You're the one who brought them out.

He refuses to take a position other than that which God has given. No, we're not start over with Moses as the founding father. Thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power

and with a mighty hand.

Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did he bring them out to slay them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth. Lord, your integrity is at stake. You brought them out.

He's the one to look on and say, He brought them out to slay them, not to fulfill his purpose. Turn from thy fierce wrath and repent of this evil against thy people. And then he, I think this is interesting.

He reminds the Lord of the promise and the covenant that's been made. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. Thy servants, to whom thou swearest by thine own self and said unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven.

And all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed and they shall inherit it forever. Lord, you've made some promises. And you don't go back on your promises.

You've promised these people. You don't go back on it. We're called the Lord's Remembrances, standing with him for his full purpose.

Oh, it's in the midst. It's in the midst of seeing others in their declension and their missing. God burdens our hearts.

We're standing then with him for the real order of things, what he wants. And he uses Moses. And this means, while Moses goes down from the mount, and you know he takes the tables of stone that God had graven upon, and he breaks them up, grinds them to powder, puts it in the water and the people drink of it.

It's a bitter pill, bitter drinking. And then he speaks to Aaron. You know the story.

Well, we pick it up. Verse 21. And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people do unto thee? Did thou have brought so great a sin upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord rise hot.

Thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us. For as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him.

And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me. Then I cast it into the fire.

And this calf jumped out. Have you ever discovered your rationalizing, excusing capabilities? Coloring, picturing the story. The people, they wanted.

The people, they brought. The people, I cast it in. Out it jumped.

Was that the whole story? No. Because he tells us back here in verse 4. He says, And he received it at their hands, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf. Things just don't jump out.

Every one of us have a fashioning room. Your fashioning room. Right down here.

The fashioning room. You know it, don't you? All the reasoning and the rationalizing of this fashioning room. But when we go to explain it, well, the people.

And the excusing. Oh, how God. How God needs to deal with our heart and the deep motives, the exposure of it.

Why do we do the things that we do? Well, we come quickly to the next thing we want. And when Moses saw that the people, verse 25, were naked, for Aaron had made them naked under their shame among their enemies, then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

I love this. Moses is saying, I stand with the Lord in his full purpose. Come and stand by me.

And that day was a crucial hour in Israel. The whole of the people were to be a priesthood people. But because of their declension and their failure, he is now giving some priests to the should-be priesthood people.

The tribe of Levi is separated out. Separated out to stand with the Lord for the full purpose of God. This is a principle in God's working.

I won't go into it much more than to say this morning. The principle of God's working, when something is down here, and the people who should be up here, God separates. The Levites were separated out.

As a means by which, not for themselves, not for anything that they themselves would get, but that God, looking upon the whole, now he could see this group within that would stand. And thus, I believe, he can accept the rest. Years ago, when the Lord began to first deal with my heart about this, I saw what I think we call the principle of the overcomer.

The normal course has been missed. God uses. God uses.

These who will stand with him for something they get. Oh no, it wasn't an easy thing for them, because when they had to take the sword and kill, as it were, 3,000 fell that day. That's a two-edged sword.

The sword never cuts this way, but what it has first cut, this way. I have never let the sword touch my boy unless it has first touched my own wife. It's a two-edged sword.

Where I spare myself, I what? Spare him. This is true in our relationships in the home. Mothers, fathers, they're sparing.

We were speaking of last night. God will have a people in whom the knife is cut, separate, work a deep thing. The only reason they could separate themselves, notice, unto the Lord, was that God through them, I realize, is full of purpose.

I used to be so upset with the overcomer when I first ran into it about 20 years ago. And I'd meet little nucleuses of people who were interested in overcoming. You know for who? It had so much self in it.

Well, let what happened to the rest of the world, we're going to overcome. We're going to escape. We're going to make it through.

And there's something in my heart that reacted toward it all the time. That's not the end. That's not God's way.

The separating is unto the Lord that it might be for the rest of them. Do you see the difference? It puts God's note into it. It gets it in right perspective.

Because God is using them, as it were, to bring back the normal order of things that he wants. No exclusive set, just so I escape, so I get something. The spirit of it is, Dear Lord, I choose not to.

The knife is cut. The separating works. The sword is working, you see.

In the midst of it then, God has someone in whom he can trust his heart and his purposes. So, maybe we'll go on to it. I'm not so sure.

And the normal order of things is this. That down here, another of the things that God introduces, as you see it in this tribe of Levi, is a people who are separated unto him. This is for the priesthood.

He's brought them unto himself that he might work through them for the accepting or the meeting of the needs of the whole. We must quit. I've taken too long.

Lord, oh, how we thank thee and we praise thee that in thy wonderful provision and in thy working, your orders, your plan, your design, things are going through. We could get our eyes on the awful state of religious things. We could want to escape as it were for ourselves.

Take away the escapism. Give us the spirit that we see in Moses. When he finally comes back again to meet you, and there once again he speaks and he cries out, Oh, God, if it would be possible, blot me out.

But somehow bring your people. Bring your people back into the line of your purpose and the normal order of things. Oh, we would have the Calvary heart.

We would have this spirit prevail. Prevade our being this morning, dear Lord. We thank thee.

Oh, how we thank thee, Lord, that little by little as we learn to worship and walk in fellowship and live unto thee and minister to thee. You do speak. You work your own separating work.

We hear the call, Who is on the Lord's side? Who is on the Lord's side? Come and stand. Oh, we stand with thee for righteousness, for the true holiness of things. And I believe you this morning, and my brothers and sisters, to help them to see what you are doing in our hearts, in our lives, as we learn to stand with thee, that somehow you might bring in, you might accomplish the full order.

Thank you, Lord. We praise you. In Jesus' name we ask it with thanksgiving.

Amen. Amen.

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