

# Elijah and Elisha 05 ~ Keswick Conference 1970

by Harold Wildish

---

*The sermon explores the faith and actions of the Shunammite woman, emphasizing the significance of hospitality and God's miraculous power in our lives.*

**Duration:** 1:07:25

**Scripture:** 2 Kings 4:8-12, 2 Kings 4:30-35, 2 Kings 4:38-44

**Topics:** "Keswick"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of hospitality and welcoming others in the name of God. He shares personal experiences of being welcomed into homes as a missionary and expresses gratitude for such acts of kindness. The preacher then references the story of Paul in Acts 20, where he confidently faces a storm on a ship, highlighting the importance of trusting in God's promises. The sermon concludes with a reading from 2 Kings 4, focusing on the story of a great woman who provides a room for the prophet Elisha, demonstrating the value of creating a space for God's servants.

---

## Transcript

Mr. Caldwell asked me if I had brought any books with me, and I said no. Travelling on a plane from Jamaica, it's quite impossible to do that, and so he phoned Chicago to see if they could send any books down from there, and on the way, at the present moment, are copies of these three books. These are the only ones published in the United States.

I'll take them one by one. This one was born in the big windy city of Chicago. It was a series of talks given over dear old WNBI, and there was such a demand for it that they put it into print, and it's gone out and out and out, and it's still going out.

It's called The Glorious Secret. It was first published under the title, Did You Receive the Holy Spirit?, but this is an adjusted and digested copy, and it sells for 50 cents in the one-evening condensed library produced by good news publishers in Chicago. I love to think that this is going out in India and Africa and in several other towns.

Then, this one was born at Canadian Cheswick. I don't know if you know Muskoka Lakes, but it's a week of talks on the life story of David and Jonathan. It's called The Mastery of Love, and that was the second

one in America, and this one, would you believe it, was really born at Southern Cheswick right here.

I was here the last time I gave a talk on, or rather a series of talks on the great boys and girls of the school of faith, and this is now in print, and there it is. These sell at 50 cents each, and if you say, well, I won't be here to pick them up, they would gladly take orders and see that they're mailed to you direct. That is, if you wanted a set of three, 150, they would mail them right to your home address if you wished.

But we have every hope that the parcel of books will arrive, God willing, tomorrow if not today. Now, will you turn to the second book of Kings, please? 2 Kings chapter 4, and for our reading, we are starting at verse 8, just where we left off last night. 2 Kings chapter 4, verse 8, And it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman, and she constrained him to eat bread.

So it was that as often as he passed by, he turned in dither to eat bread. She said unto her husband, Behold, now I perceive that this is a holy man of God which passes by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall, and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.

And it shall be when he cometh to us that he shall turn in thither. It fell on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber and lay there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunemite.

When he had called her, she stood before him. He said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care. What is to be done for thee? Wouldest thou be spoken of to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among my own people.

And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

He said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thy handmaid. And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season.

But Elisha said unto her, According to the time of life. When the child was grown, it fell on a day that he went out to his father, to the reaper. And he said to his father, My head, my head.

And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. When he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out.

And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God. Now, we're going to leave out some of the story. Verse thirty-three, verse thirty-two.

When Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them, and prayed unto the Lord. He went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth unto his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands.

And he stretched himself upon the child. The child's flesh waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro, and went up, and stretched himself upon him.

And the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called to Hazi, and said, Call Isunamite. So he called her, and when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.

And she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out. God will bless to our heart the reading of his precious word, for his namesake. Just a word of prayer now.

Loving Lord, wilt thou lead us into thy truth? You know so well whether we need comfort, or exhortation, or teaching. Graciously minister to us from thy word, by thy spirit, that some mark may be left upon our lives this morning, for thy glory, for our good, for thy dear namesake. Amen.

Now, I know many of you are taking some interest in the little panels that we have taken, and the titles over those panels. I'll just remind you of them. Chapter 1, Man of God.

Chapter 2, Take the Mantle. Chapter 3, now where was it? Chapter 3, Dig the Ditches. Chapter 4, Pour the Oil.

Now, what are we going to write over this little story that we've read together this morning? Well, this is Ladies' Day, and it's going to be all about the womenfolk. You know, too often we are talking about Abraham, and Elijah, and Elisha, and the men, but you ladies, it's your day. You men can go to sleep this morning.

I'll tell you when the meeting's over. It's Ladies' Day. We're going to talk about the only woman in the Bible who's called a great woman.

I believe there are many great women in the Bible, but this one is actually called a great woman, verse 8, and it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem where was a great woman. Great woman. You say, well, that's the title of the chapter.

No, it isn't. The title to our talk this morning is, It Fell on a Day, and you'll find that little phrase three times in the reading this morning. It's found in verse 8, it's found in verse 11, and it's found in verse 18.

It fell on a day. Now, most of you have great days in your life. I suppose every one of you, if I asked your birthday, you could tell me your birthday, and as the anniversary comes round, the candles increase on the cake, don't they? A jolly good job when we get up into the 60s, 70s, 80s, they don't put 60 or 70 or 80 candles for us to blow out.

That's reserved for the little ones. But, you know, then comes your wedding day, and if you're happily married, you'll never forget that precious day that began that union of heart with heart and life with life. And I suppose, as I look round, that some of you have beaten me hollow, you've reached not only the silver, but the golden wedding day, and you say, Mom.

Mr. Caldwell asked me if I had brought any books with me, and I said, No, traveling on a plane from Jamaica, it's quite impossible to do that. And so he phoned Chicago to see if they could send any books down from there, and on the way at the present moment are copies of these three books. These are the only ones published in the United States.

I'll take them one by one. This one was born in the big windy city of Chicago. It was a series of talks given over dear old WNB, and there was such a demand for it that they put it into print, and it's gone out and out and out, and it's still going out.

It's called The Glorious Secret. It was first published under the title Did You Receive the Holy Spirit?, but this is an adjusted and digested copy, and it sells for 50 cents in the one evening condensed library produced by Good News Publishers in Chicago. I love to think that this is going out in India and Africa and in several other towns.

Then this one was born at Canadian Keswick. I don't know if you know Muskoka Lakes, but it's a week of talks on the life story of David and Jonathan. It's called The Mastery of Nah, and that was the second one in America, and this one, would you believe it, was really born at Southern Keswick right here.

I was here the last time I gave a talk on, or rather a series of talks, on the great boys and girls of the School of Faith, and this is now in print, and there it is. These sell at 50 cents each, and if you say, well, I won't be here to pick them up, they would gladly take orders and see that they're mailed to you direct. That is, if you wanted a set of three, 1.50, they would mail them right to your home address if you wished.

But we have every hope that the parcel of books will arrive, God willing, tomorrow, if not today. Now, will you turn to the second book of Kings, please, 2 Kings chapter 4, and for our reading we are starting at verse 8, just where we left off last night. 2 Kings chapter 4, verse 8, And it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman, and she constrained him to eat bread.

And so it was that as often as she passed by, he turned in dither to eat bread. She said unto her husband, Behold, now I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall, and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.

And it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in dither. It fell on a day that he came dither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call thee Shunemite.

When he had called her, she stood before him. He said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care. What is to be done for thee? Wouldst thou be spoken of to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among my own people.

And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. When he had called her, she stood in the door.

And he said about this season, According to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thy handmaid. And the woman conceived, and there a son of that season.

But Elisha said unto her, According to the time of life, When the child was grown, it come on a day that he went up to his father, to the reaper. And he said to his father, My head, my head. And he said to Elisha, Carry him to his mother.

When he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God.

Now, we're going to leave out some of the story. Verse thirty-three, verse thirty-two. When Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them, prayed unto the Lord. He went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth unto his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon the child. The child's flesh waxed warm.

Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro, and went up, and stretched himself upon him. And the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eye. He called to Hazi, and said, Call Isunamite.

So he called her, and when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. And she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out. God will bless to our heart the reading of his precious word, for his namesake.

Just a word of prayer now. Loving Lord, wilt thou lead us into thy truth? You know so well whether we need comfort, or exhortation, or teaching. Graciously minister to us from thy word, by thy Spirit, that some mark may be left upon our lives this morning, for thy glory, for our good, for thy dear namesake.

Amen. Now, I know many of you are taking some interest in the little panels that we have taken, and the titles over those panels. I'll just remind you of them.

Chapter One, Man of God. Chapter Two, Take the Mantle. Chapter Three, now where was it? Chapter Three, Dig the Ditches.

Chapter Four, Pour the Oil. Now, what are we going to write over this little story that we've read together this morning? Well, this is Ladies' Day, and it's going to be all about the womenfolk. You know, too often we are talking about Abraham, and Elijah, and Elisha, and the men, but you ladies, it's your day.

You men can go to sleep this morning. I'll tell you when the meeting's over. It's Ladies' Day.

We're going to talk about the only woman in the Bible who's called a great woman. I believe there are many great women in the Bible. Now, this one is actually called a great woman, verse eight, and it fell on a day that Elisha passed to Shunem where was a great woman.

Great woman. You say, well, that's the title of the chapter. No, it isn't.

The title to our talk this morning is It Fell on a Day, and you will find that little phrase three times in the reading this morning. It's found in verse eight, it's found in verse 11, and it's found in verse 18. It fell on a day.

Now, most of you have great days in your life. I suppose every one of you, if I asked your birthday, you could tell me your birthday, and as the anniversary comes round, the candles increase on the cake, don't they? A jolly good job when we get up into the 60s, 70s, 80s, they don't put 60, or 70, or 80 candles for us to blow out. That's reserved for the little ones.

But, you know, then comes your wedding day, and if you're happily married, you'll never forget that precious day that began that union of heart with heart, and life with life. And, I suppose, as I look round that some of you have beaten me hollow, you've reached not only the silver, but the golden wedding day, and you say, my word, 50 years together. Yes, these are great days, happy days that we remember in life, but spiritually, how many of you could pinpoint the day and say, that's the day when Jesus met me as Satan? Frankly, I can't.

I know I was about 12 and a half years of age, but I can't pinpoint the day. And, let me tell you, I think that preachers are quite wrong, absolutely wrong, when they tell you that you must know the day of your salvation, because thousands, hundreds of thousands of Christians don't. When I first went out to the South American coast, I used to meet very, very aged Negroes with white hair, and little white beards, and wrinkled, leathery faces, and I would say to them, how old are you? And they would say, me, no, no, Martha.

You don't know how old you are? No, Martha. So, you don't know when you were born? No, Martha. And if I had looked into their face and said, well, of course, if you don't know the day of your birth and how old you are, you were never born at all.

I'm the fool. The very fact that there's a living man in front of me proves that there must have been a birthday, even though they don't know the day and the timings on it. And it doesn't worry me a tiny bit if a Christian looks into my face and says, well, I don't remember the day when I was born again.

The great thing is, have you got spiritual life? Because that spiritual life must have had a beginning in a new birth when Jesus Christ was received and made real by the Holy Spirit within your heart, and you could whisper, I know Him as my Savior. For this is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Now, there are great days in our lives.

May I say to some of you older ones, don't worry too much about the future. It's in His loving hands. It was a wise doctor who, looking down into the face of a patient who was troubled, said, uh, she said, doctor, how long have I got to lie here on this bed? He said, only a day at a time, madam.

Wise man. A day at a time. And we, as Christians, must live our lives a day at a time.

I used the illustration of the potter taking the clay yesterday and putting it upon the round wheel, and the round wheel is spinning, and his hands are slowly beginning to shape and produce something. I don't know if you've watched the potter with all his skill at work, but you know, you're in the potter's hands, and the old wheel is going round 365 days every year, and his loving hands are upon you, and there may come in the month of March a little bit restriction like this, and a little bit of up-drawing, a little bit of pressure, and then he goes on with his work. But it's round and round and round and round and round and round, and it's a day at a time.

And so often we can look back and see in his dealings with us certain experiences. It fell on a day. There was an outstanding day in our Lord's dealings with us and our dealings with him.

It fell on a day. Now, whether these three days are the same day or different days in the life of this woman, I'm going to leave you to judge. But there in verse 8 and verse 11 and verse 18, you get the little phrase, you might like to underline it or note it, it fell on a day.

Three great days, or one great day, we almost judge by the setting when a tremendous thing happened in her life. It fell on a day. Now, strangely enough, this scripture passes by her girlhood and her marriage, and we are introduced to a precious woman who's a farmer's wife.

And I should think in those days, I should think it's the same today, a busy farmer with the acres all around the farmhouse was a busy woman. Plenty of work to do from morning till night, and this precious woman is called a great woman. I don't want to dwell on this much, although I'd like to spend a whole morning on it.

As I look down these verses, 8, 9, 10, 13, right on through the story to verses 22, 23, 26, and on, I think I could pick out seven things that mark her greatness. A great woman. She was great in her hospitality.

This is great in a woman. You see, the woman is the builder of the home. The man goes out after breakfast, he's out on the open fields, he's minding the cows, he's looking after the crops.

He may not be back till hunger brings him in at the midday hour, but she's got the running of the home. And this woman was great in her hospitality. It followed a day that Elisha passed to Shunem, and there was a great woman, and she constrained him to eat bread.

It was so that as often as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. You see, she did what all women do. She looked out of the farmhouse windows, and she watched the passers-by, and on this big road from Shunem, right away through to Samaria and Carmel, late possibly somewhere between, she saw this tramping preacher, this man of God, moving along the highway.

She thought he looked tired, and she knew he was going from school of the prophet to school of the prophet, and possibly in a day he would be tramping 22 miles and serving the Lord in this wonderful ministry. She said, well, we've got a lovely home here, a farmhouse. I'd like him to come in and take a meal and eat bread.

And he seemed to enjoy it, and she said, come back again as often as you pass by here. And she was just great in her hospitality. But, you know, I think she was great in her discernment.

She said to her husband, this is a man of God that passes by our house continually. She somehow read the character of this man, and, you know, I know some of you men won't agree with me, but there we are. We men reason things out.

Is he a man of ability? What status has he got in the business world? And so on, and so on. But women don't do that. They look at a man, and oh, so often that strange intuition tells them he's a good man or a bad man.

I could trust him, or I can't trust him, and they weigh up, not mentally so much, but impulsively they weigh up, and so often they're right. And she discerned this man of God. And she looked at him, and the next thing in verse 10 was her great kindness.

She thought to herself, he needs rest, he needs food, he needs a little bit of motherly care. And so she said, won't you come in and share what we've got? And her great kindness was a very wonderful thing. Then, when she was offered reward in verse 13, I'm amazed at her great contentment.

You see, I'm meeting so many discontented people today, and the women are no exceptions. They wish that they were like Mrs. Jones, or they wish they had what Mrs. Brown had, or they are discontented, but she wasn't. She was happy in her home, and when they said, would you like to be spoken after the king? Would you like one of the generals to hear about you? Would you like some favor to come from high places? She said, I dwell among my own people.

All I ask is my husband and my loved ones around me, and home, sweet home, it's everything to me. I think that's a gracious contentment, and never forget, godliness with contentment is great gain, great gain. Then, when it comes to verse 22, I'm amazed at her faith, her great faith.

This woman, she submits to the will of God. She calls her husband and says, send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys. I may run to the man of God and come again.

When she went, is it well? Yes, she said, it's all well. Everything's right. Everything's well.

Yet, the little laddie was a dying in the home. Great faith. When it came to verse 26, run now, I pray thee, and meet her and say to her, is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? She answers, it is well.

A faith that produced a peace. It is well. All is well.

I'm at peace. Yet, there's a natural anxiety of a mother heart, a longing for her little one, and I tell you, when I turn the page to chapter 8. Now, where is it? Chapter 8, I think it is, and verse 4. There's a great testimony. And the king of Israel talked with Gehazi, the servant of God, saying, tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.

And it came to pass, as he was telling the king, yes, the story of this woman's being told in the palace before the throne, telling the king how he had restored the dead body to life. Behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house, for her land. And Gehazi said, my lord, oh king, this is the woman, this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.

And when the king asked the woman, she told him, a woman with a living experience, who has a testimony. And so, I have linked the seven things that made her great. Great hospitality, great discernment, great kindness, great contentment, great faith, great peace, great testimony.

She was a great woman. And in the woman's life, there are three days, it fell on a day, it fell on a day, it fell on a day, that there came to this great woman a deepening of experience, which we will call, in New Testament language, spiritual experience. Now, what were these three things that she learned? Now, let's take them one by one.

Verse 8, verse 8, it fell on a day. Well, what happened that day? Was it a happy day when Jesus washed her sins away? Was it a day of consecration when she said, Lord, take my body, a living sacrifice? It fell on a day. What happened in this woman's life that can speak to us in 1970, that could make something an outstanding experience in my life that I would never forget? Wouldn't it be wonderful if someone looked back and said it was on that Wednesday morning at Keswick, there in St. Petersburg, in Florida, that that day, somehow, a never-to-be-forgotten day, a transforming day, it fell on a day in my life.

Out of all the 365 days of experience as they whirl around, after all the 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 years of my life, it fell on a day, and that Wednesday morning, I learned something as a Christian that I shall never forget for eternity. Now, what did she learn? I'm going to put against this, she learned that his presence, she was conscious of the presence of this Elisha man of God that had moved up and down past her, farm day after day, week after week, perhaps for 10 years he has been trampling that road, going from school of the prophet to school of the prophet, but she's looking through the windows, and she says to her husband, husband, I perceive that the holy man of God is passing by continually. I'd like to ask him in, give him bread, and make him a tomb, make a little chamber for him to rest off, the prophet's chamber.

Now, who was she conscious of? A man who revealed God to her. And, of course, this is where Elisha becomes a picture of Jesus. You'll never know Jesus, whether, I'm sorry, you'll never know God without knowing Jesus.

This is like eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, he was sent to reveal God to us, and if you know Jesus, you know God, and the more you know the Lord Jesus, the more you know God, for he is God manifest. And, she learned to know the presence of this man of God, and she wanted a permanent place in her home for him to abide. Now, is this ringing a bell? Do you want to know Jesus, his presence in your life, a permanent place where he'll be at home restfully in your life? This is victory, to have Jesus, the great master, God's man, made real in your life.

He's passed by your life continually. He may have showered mercies upon your life so freely. You may say, I never doubt the person of Jesus Christ, but do you know him as the one you've invited in his presence, moment by moment? It fell on a day.

A day has 24 hours, and let's see, sometimes we take our songbook and we sing. I wonder if it's in this. I haven't looked up.

I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord. But, you know, it was Major Whittle who sat in a congregation like this, singing, I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord, and something seemed to say within him, Lord, I need you every minute. He went back home and shut himself in his room.

He wrote that hymn that they sing so often at the Kazakh conventions. Moment by moment, moment by moment, I'm kept in his love. Moment by moment, light from above looking to Jesus till glory shall shine, and the thought is that we have a moment by moment risen Christ, made real by the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives.

And, I tell you, moment by moment, faith can rest there. I want the Lord Jesus to be at home. This is his chamber.

This is his house. He can abide here. All our assaults are his.

You say, what does this mean? It just means that lovely verse in Peter, sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready at any moment to give a testament into the world for your lovely Lord. Make your heart a sanctuary in which he dwells, Lord of your life, and your mind and your affections and your will will bow down to his lordship, and he's atoned there, and he's present, consciously present with you. This is a secret that you will never forget if you enter by faith into it, and you will say it fell on a day, and it will never be forgotten that day.

Now, I'm so glad, looking at verse 10 carefully, that this woman who said, I perceive that this is a holy man, who suggested making a little chamber, and putting in it a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick. She spoke to her husband about it, and they brought it to pass. I believe she was one of those precious women who had a tremendous influence on her husband.

I'm so often meeting men who've been made by the women they marry, that I know that this isn't a bit out of date. Largely, we men live up to the standards set by our women folk, and so often you'll find married men, if they love and admire their wife, will say her standards shall be my standards. And it was so in this case.

Whether the farmer was older than his wife, I sometimes think he was older in years, and she was younger, but she said, we must have this little chamber, this little prophet's chamber. Now, I wonder if any of you have got prophet's chambers. I can look around this audience, you know, and I can think of Chicagoland and Detroit, and I can move around and remember homes I've lived in as a stranger in your

great country, where they've opened the door and said, come in now, and there's a room, and make yourself at home, and what's ours is yours.

And I wish there was more of this hospitality, this loving, open welcome to poor missionaries, to traveling preachers, to tired saints, to weary people in the hour of their need on their pilgrimage. It's worthwhile, it's a gracious ministry. May I pause in saying this, that you should always furnish the prophet's chamber with four things.

Did you know that? A bed, a table, a chair, and a candlestick. Or you may get a modern, and have electric side lights, and all the rest of it, but these are the four essentials. There must be a bed that the poor fellow wants rest.

There must be a chair. Well, he must sit down to eat, and to study, and all the rest of it. A stool, they call it here.

I think it was a stool without a back in those bad old days. Perhaps they had stiffer spines than we have today, and a little less back trouble, simply because they sat on a stool. And then there was the candle, the light for illumination, and there was a table.

And this is the one thing they leave out of modern prophet's chambers. Oh, how often I've been shown into a lovely bedroom, and there's the bed, and there's the lights, and there's the chairs. But, you know, preachers love to put their Bible down, and their books out, and their notes, and get on with their correspondence, and you often have to sit on a stool or chair, and use the bed as your table.

Just remember that. Slip a little corner in with a table. It's so essential.

It makes the prophet's chamber, for many, a traveling creature anyhow. And so, she constrained him to come in, and she knew now that he was in her home. And she sacrificed to keep this man of God comfortable in his long journeys as he turned into her home, and she said, it fell on a day.

It was the happiest day when that man of God came to abide in me. Now, I want to ask you very simply, do you know the Lord Jesus as the abiding Lord? Now, strangely enough, I'm turning things right upside down. Most Bible teachers will begin to talk about you abiding in Christ, and except the branch abides in the vine, the life of the vine cannot sow to the branch and bear the fruit.

When I'm turning it upside down, I'm talking about Christ's presence abiding in you. Oh, what a day it is when it dawns upon us. Harold Wildish, you're not alone.

Christ, the lovely Lord Jesus, who lives! Where? Oh, there may be a million Christians who will shout the answer around the world, but nothing can steal this from me. Christ's living in me. Come to abide.

It's here. And faith enters into it and says, that's what I want, Lord. I want you to abide, your abiding presence, your indwelling presence.

I will never leave you, so that we can boldly say, the Lord is my helper. Some of you who are lonely, you've lost your partners in life, and somehow those grim experiences that you never dreamt you'd ever have to face when you were a growing laughing girl or boy are upon you now. It's all in the education of God in your life, but listen, sometimes when you're alone and look round those walls and say, oh dear, whisper, sing it if you can.

No, never alone. He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone. Only yesterday, I got a telephone call to go and see a woman who's desperately ill in the hospital not more than three miles away from Keswick, the new lovely St. Petersburg General.

And as I sat by her side, I found her, an old friend I've known in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. She's possibly dying, her years are numbered, her days are numbered. I don't know about that for sure, but she's desperately ill.

Sitting by her side was her husband, an old Cayman sea captain, a man I've coveted for Christ, a man I've prayed for, a man I've pleaded with in days gone by, a man who said to me, come on my boats and you can go from Jamaica to British Honduras on a timber boat. Oh, what a tossing we get, but the four days' journey is free and you live on the boat with the captain and the chief mate. And this man has showed us great kindness, and I've coveted that old sea captain for the Lord for years, with hard nails wrapped up in his business materialism.

But yesterday, after leaving his wife's side with him, I chatted and prayed and saw the tears rolling down his cheeks and heard him say, thank you Jesus for dying for me. Now whatever it means, I don't know. A man of 72 says, thank you Jesus for dying for me.

I don't know what it means. I have to leave it. He'll never be a disciple.

He'll never take up his cross and step out in his young manhood to follow Christ and serve Christ, and maybe become a worshipper of Christ. But in the evening of life, the tears are there, and it's the hard knocks of life, a dying one, bottled up with tears on those old rugged cheeks. Yes, do you know his presence? Do you know the presence of the Lord when Paul reaches that place in Philippians 4 and says, he says, the Lord is at hand.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

The Lord is at hand. He's not referring to the second coming. I believe in it.

I preach it. I can find a thousand verses in the Bible to preach from if I want to talk about the second coming. When he says the Lord is at hand, it isn't the second coming he's talking about.

As a dear old countryman put it in all his glory of simplicity, he said, the Lord is at hand in Philippians 4 means, the Lord is always handy. Always handy. I will never leave you, though I am with you all the days, even to the end of the age, and we can count upon the present companionship with us and in us of our living Lord.

I tell you it's a great day when the soul by faith enters into this and whispers, no, never alone. He promised never to leave me. Now look at verse 11 with me.

Verse 11. And it fell on a day, here's the second day, that he came thither and turned into the chamber and lay there, and he said to Gehazi his servant, call the Shunammite. Say unto her, behold now thou hast been careful for us.

Shall I speak to the king for you or to the captain? And she answered, I dwell among my own people. Well, what shall be done for her? Gehazi, I said, well she hasn't got a son. She hasn't? Well, at the time of life,

next year, she'll have a son.

Oh, the woman's hands go up and she says, dear man of God, no, don't tell lies to your handmaid. Well, this is what he said, and it came true, and I feel that we can put against this verse, the second it fell on a day, his promise, and I wonder how we Christians are really entering in by faith to the promises of our Lord. Do you realize that any promise in this book can be taken by the child of God and can be brought in the name of Jesus to the throne, and the promises of God in Christ are in him, yea, and amen, and they can be banked in at the throne of God, and how are we using them? Now, come, how are we using the promises? Do you ever do business with your Lord and say, you said it, Lord, you said it? And faith, this is the victory that's overcome if the world, even your faith, steps out on the seeming void.

Not because I see it, Lord, but you promised. Finds the rock beneath. Oh, there flashes into my mind many illustrations of, you know, when Paul steps out on that sinking ship in Acts 20, and this land lover, this Hebrew Pharisee who's converted and is now a missionary, who's a passenger and prisoner on the boat to Rome, he steps out and there's the hurricane raging all around him.

Do you know what a hurricane is? Mountainous waves, tremendous winds, creeping ship. If he looked at the captain and said, Captain, do you think we're going to get to shore? The captain says, there's not a gust of a chance. And he turns to the master of ships, do you think you'll ever get to land? No, we're doomed.

And he turns to experienced sailors and he says, sailors, do you think we're ever going to get through this storm? And they said, no, we've never had one like this. We're all going down into David's locker. And Paul says, well, now listen, listen, I'm going to look at my own feelings.

Do I feel happy? No, I feel seasick. Do I feel that I'm never going to get to land? No, I'm down in the dumps if everyone was. Every feeling and every opinion around me is against it.

Yet he stands up on the deck. Gentlemen, we shall all reach land in safety. Be of good cheer.

And how do you know, Paul? The angel of the Lord stood by me, whose I am and whom I serve, and he told me so. Never tell a lie. He promised we'll all get to land in safety.

But how? I don't know how. All I know, he promised. And I say rest on that promise, and it shall come to pass.

That's the living faith in the promises of God. It's come on the day, yes, does your day come when you are resting on the promises? Now I know that there's some very precious Mississippi ladies right here, and they're going to take me up on this illustration. But do you know, high up the Mississippi, in the old days when it froze right over, they tell me that there was a traveler who went down to the banks of the Mississippi and found that all the ferrymen and boatmen at the crossing had gone home, and their boats were embedded in the ice.

And he had to get across, because it was evening time. Wondered however he could cross the river. At last he thought, I must risk it, I must try before darkness comes.

And he went out on the ice, expecting every moment the creak and the crash. He went out a little further, and he got so nervous that he went down on his hands and knees, and there he was, pushing out a hand and drawing up a knee and crawling over the ice. When he got right in the middle of the river, all of a

sudden he heard a noise.

It wasn't the creaking of the ice, he heard a noise. He heard a whistling noise, and he heard the rumbling noise of cartwheels. And as he was there on the ice in the middle of the Mississippi, he looked back to see what it was.

And it was a Negro driving a team of horses in a great big wagon, right down the bank and onto the ice, and across the ice to the other side. The ice was about two foot six thick. And I didn't ask you, do you think he completed the rest of his journey on his knees? No, if it's strong enough to take a wagon and horses, it's strong enough for little me.

And he got up with confidence and walked. And do you realize that there are saints of God for 1900 years, and they're alive today, and you can find them in Nigeria and Vietnam, and in Korea, and in the islands of the sea, who have bigger problems than you have of them. Stepping out on the promises of God, and they say God says, thank you to the world.

It's a great day, and this is what makes great men and women. When you can say, not only his presence, but his promises are real to me. And I can do business with God on the ground of his promises.

Bank them in at the throne. Oh, if only we realized that I often have to go in the bank to do transactions in our service for the Lord, and for other people too. Again and again they take my check, and they look at it, and all they look for is the signature at the bottom.

Whose is it? Is it someone trustworthy and worthwhile? And do business with me. If I could take the promises and bring them to the throne and say, God, in the name of the Lord Jesus, I'm banking in this promise. I don't know how you'll work it out.

I don't know how you'll supply the need. I don't know how you'll show me the way, but you take me by surprise every time. You promised.

Be a great day, wouldn't it? A day never to be forgotten. If not only his presence with you, indwelling you, but his promises. And now look at the last one, and we have only a moment.

Verse 18. When the child was grown, it fell on a day. But the little child, the son, went out to the father, to the reapers, in the hot burning midday sun, and all of a sudden the little fellow running around cries, my head, my head, and whether it was sunstroke or what it was, we don't know, but it sounds like this.

The father says, take him in to the mother, and he's taken in, and she said, put him on the prophet's bed. Instinctively her eyes turn to her master, the man of God. May I pause here and say this, there's not the slightest sign in this story of disloyalty to her precious farmer husband.

There's not the slightest sign in this story of sex attraction or anything like that toward the man of God. It's above board. She realized that this man, Elisha, was a man of God, and a woman's soul goes out in longing for all that he has, and this was his ministry to pass on to others what he knew of the power and love and presence of God.

So she said, saddle the ass, I'm going to him. And I tell you, it was a long journey. I would ask some of you perhaps to work it out.

I think perhaps it was over 20 miles she went to find him. And when she found him, as we shall see in a later study perhaps tonight, she found out Gehazi before even Elisha found out Gehazi. Her womanly intuition knew that there was something unsound in Gehazi's character, and he wasn't to be trusted.

And she said, no, I'm saying that the man of God, you can send Gehazi, he can take his instruments, the prophet's rod, he can go with all his paraphernalia and ritual, but I'm staying with you, sir. Gehazi went, and it's one of the saddest things I know in illustrative preaching. He went with his rod and put it on the child's face, and nothing happened.

The saddest things today in our religious world is in the great churches today, there's the form and the ceremony and the sprinkling and all these things, but nothing happens. I have to fight this all the time as a visionary in the West, indeed. Are you a Christian? Oh, yes, sir.

How did you become a Christian? Baptized, sir. When? Take a child. Made a child of God and heritage of the kingdom of heaven.

Rubbish! Here they are, an unregenerate soul. Thank God the spirit of God is producing some conviction and you can lead them to Christ. Oh, so much of the ritual of modern Christendom today is so powerless and puny, often administered in the hands of men who are not men of God.

This is the day of your living. Gehazi has a solemn warning, we must take it up sometime. So, Elisha comes, he walks into that prophet's chamber and he shuts the door.

Stretches himself upon the child. Mouth to mouth, hands to hand, eyes to eyes, he embraces the child. All he can do is to warm the child's flesh, and that's all we can do.

I've been in camp in years gone by, and I've seen the precious children, and I've played cricket with them, and baseball with them, and swam with them, and climbed mountains with them, until they look up with warm eyes, and they, they treat you as a great big friend. That's all you can do, to warm a child's flesh, and make them friendly. But warmed flesh is just as desperately in need as cold flesh.

Elijah climbed off the child, and paces up and down that room in utter dependence. Oh God, you're the author of life, and the giver of life. All I can do is to warm a child's dead body.

Oh God sent life. Goes back and stretches himself upon the child, and something happens, a miracle. I can never explain it, this miracle of the coming of life.

The child sneezed seven times, and sits up and steps off the couch. Now, I don't know how many doctors are here, and I know you're going to be critics of me in saying this, you can spank a child to make it cry, and you can tickle a child to make it laugh, but how do you make it sneeze? Or you say, a good old pepper pot. Well, I don't know.

A doctor told me this, and so I'm passing on the medical verdict. Whether he's right or wrong, he said, do you know that when that spasm of sneezing hits you, it's the whole system trying to get rid of something, and the spasm reaches its crescendo just in that second. He said, you're nearer death at that moment than at any time in your life, because if you didn't come through that sneeze and come out of it, the heart would stop beating, and you would just fall down dead.

And here is a soul, a precious little soul, between life and death, and it sneezes seven times. Why, I don't know. Seven times.

But, the child's alive, restored to the mother, and she said, it fell on a day, a day when I learned his power. Ah, and these are the three keys to these three days. It fell on a day, first his presence, second his promises, thirdly his power.

And oh, if we only could say there was a day in my life's history when I entered in by faith to the abiding, constant presence of my Lord Jesus in my life. I entered in, it fell on a day in my life when I could bank in the promises of God at the throne, and they were answered. It fell on a day when I learned his power, his ability to do things that are inexplicable.

The world laughs at miracles and the supernatural, but do we Christians laugh with them and say, well, of course, we are living in days when we don't see it, or do we expect God to do the life-giving miracle, raising dead people out of death in sin to newness of life in Christ? These miracles abound in the world today, and we should be in on it. It fell on a day. Shall we bow together in prayer? Loving Lord, our hour has slipped away so quickly.

We pray that this precious woman, the only woman in the Bible who's called great, may stand out before us, the farmer's wife, a mother heart, as one who learned to know the man of God, Elijah, his presence, his promises, his power. May we in 1970 enter into this relationship with our lovely Lord. Lord, it could be if we will go to our room, or we will go to a quiet place and ponder these things, that we'll ever look back to that Wednesday morning in Keswick, Southern Keswick, when these things became real by faith to us, and we shall say it fell on that day.

May it be so, for thy glory and for our good. Dismiss us with divine blessing, in thy precious name. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24482.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/harold-wildish/elijah-and-elisha-05-keswick-conference-1970/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**