

The Bride Prepared

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for genuine revival and the deep preparation required to encounter God's transformative power.

Duration: 1:08:11

Scripture: 1 Kings 17:1, Hebrews 11:33

Topics: "Bride"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Elijah and how God commanded him to hide himself. The preacher emphasizes the importance of knowing when to show oneself and when to hide, using Elijah's example. He also highlights the power of God by recounting the story of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal and how God sent fire to consume the sacrifice. The preacher then shifts to discussing the state of the church, describing it as poor, wretched, naked, and blind. He identifies evangelism and easy-believe-ism as hindrances to revival and emphasizes the need for repentance and commitment to God.

Transcript

My prayer is that from now until the final consummation, the devil will regret this meeting we've ever had. Audience laughs. It's too late to play games.

Even to play church. It's the most critical hour in human history, I'm sure of that. Jack Taylor's always been one of my heroes.

And he's a gifted preacher, I know that. You could say his sermons are models of, what, homiletical perfection, exegetical exactitude, and anything else you want to say about them. But he cheered me up tonight, he said, he's thrown all that away, so I feel free.

Audience laughs. Okay, the first book of Kings, and the 17th chapter. I believe there's only one hope for our generation, and that's the divine intervention.

We talk about revival. It's a safe guess not one of us here has ever been in one. We've been in good meetings, but not in revival.

Revival is the most chaotic thing, the most destructive thing, the most terrifying thing that you can imagine. Two of the great, I was going to say something, I'll change it. Two of the great preachers in the country in

the last year have said, the whole of America is seething in revival.

It's easy to say that on TV. Then my phone rings from one end of the country to the other, and letters come. I live in St. Louis, there's no revival here.

I live in Kansas City, there's no revival here. I live so-and-so, there's no revival here. So where is it? It just isn't there.

You see, Dr. Toews used to say, Leonard, keep this in mind, true revival changes the moral climate, what shall I say, the moral climate of a district. You can't have an invasion of divine power and things be ordinary any more than you can have an earthquake and things be ordinary. So I want to talk to you about a little while, and I'm going to preach, I'm going to give you some exhortation.

From the first book of Kings, again, chapter 17. Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be no dew or rain these years according to God's word. No, according to my word.

You see, they thought God had gone away altogether. There'd be no great demonstrations of miraculous power. They knew that God divided the Red Sea.

They knew he sent manna from heaven. But they figured that God was out of the picture. And Elijah says these two very, very stirring, challenging things to them.

The God of Israel is living. He's not only living before whom I stand. You don't sit in the presence of an authority.

You stand to wait for directions. And he says there's going to be no dew or rain according to my word. So he took out the key of faith and locked up heaven.

I want to ask Brother Rick afterwards, and Brother Paul, why isn't Elijah in Hebrews 11? I preached on Hebrew. I like that chapter. I'll tell you why.

Every time I read Hebrews 11, I finish up on the floor. Why? Because men and women subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of liars. In other words, they shook whole kingdoms.

And not one of them ever had a Bible. Dear God, where are we? God has nothing to add. He doesn't scratch his head and say, I was going to tell Paul, Saul, John something on the Isle of Patmos.

I forgot. It's everything that we need for revival and holiness is here in the word of God. And Elijah is not in Hebrews 11.

Well, I mentioned this in a church. And you know, that significant little old lady that turns up everywhere came to me after the meeting. I can tell you why he isn't in the chapter.

So tell me. She said, because he didn't die in the faith. So as I was going out, she said to the pastor, he's teaching the Bible.

I taught him something this morning. I said, you sure did. Could you teach me something else? Well, you said he's not in the chapter because he didn't die by faith.

What about the second man in the, in Hebrews 11? What about him? Well, who was it? I said, Enoch. He didn't, he didn't die. He didn't die by faith.

She said, it just shows you the Bible contradicts itself. I've quit arguing with women ever since then. They've always got an answer, whether it's right or wrong.

They'll say, isn't this the greatest thing? This side of heaven, the word of the Lord came to me. What did Jesus do? And he was tempted it through the book of the devil. You have a vision.

Work by the vision. It doesn't do me any good. I must have the word of God.

I can face the world, the flesh, the devil, everything. As long as God has said it, his word abides forever. God is still on the throne, but he's not sitting there nervously, waiting for a letter to come up from Dallas to say that the men in the seminary have decided the Bible's infallible.

Forget it. The book says thy word, O God, is forever and ever. The word of God is settled in heaven.

Dear old Dr. Criswell, he can't be wrong, he's a Baptist. Criswell says there's an exact copy of this book in heaven. Sure there is.

It's the King James Version. What else could it be? The word of the Lord came. This is a command that God says to him.

Look at verse three. The word of the Lord came in, Get thee hence and turn thy face outward and hide thyself by the book. Carith.

Hold that a moment. What does God say to this superman? Hide thyself. Read the next chapter and verse two.

What does he say? Elijah went, find verse one. Go show thyself. It's wrong to show yourself when you should hide yourself.

It's wrong to hide yourself when you should show yourself. You see, we're afraid of the dark. We're afraid to be alone.

I love the Lord. How much time have you spent with him today? I love my precious wife. We've been married almost 50 years.

You see, grace can last to live with a guy like me. And now you start to go over the mountains in England in a car. You could stick in the trunk of your big car like Jack Bryce.

Why did I go through the snow and the blizzard? Because I love her. I still love her. She's gorgeous.

Been a wonderful wife. Raised three wonderful sons. Dear Lord, talk about money.

Money talks. All it says to me is goodbye. Go hide thyself.

Where did he go? In an air-conditioned room? No, a prayer-conditioned room. A lousy place. You wouldn't put a dog in in these days.

But listen. Was it Madam Gein said? Could I be cast where thou art not? That were indeed a dreadful spot. But with thee, my God, to guide the way, it is equal joy to go or stay.

When Rutherford was shut up in that prison off the coast of Scotland, a man came to see him and said, well, what are you doing here? You love God. You're the most saintly preacher in Scotland. And look at the slime on the walls.

Look at the rats running around. Does God leave you here? He said, friend, when you're not here, every one of those stones shines like a ruby. And I have his presence here more than anywhere in the world.

Where Jesus is, heaven there. Go hide thyself in a lonely place. We don't like that.

Oh, how many times you say when the children have gone. I don't like to call them kids. People ask me, do you have any kids? I say, no, I'm not a ghost.

I have some children. But often you say, oh, these children. If only I could be quiet.

And as soon as you go to school, you turn the stupid TV on to shout at you all day. I'm glad PJ was off the air. All he meant was pity the listeners.

Go hide thyself. Yes, I guess somebody this week has mentioned the fact that John Knox, that terrific Scottish character, the Queen of Scotland, Bloody Mary, as we call her, said, I fear the prayers of John Knox more than all the armies of England. Wait a minute.

That's not a story. John Knox was banished to France for 12 years. When he came out of France, he was made a slave on the galleyship.

He pulled on the galleys, on the oars, until his hands were blistered and torn. But when he got to Scotland, England at that time was in fighting condition with Scotland. And there's a man called Randolph, who was the British ambassador in Scotland.

And he sent a message on the coach. He wrote a note and said, deliver this in London. Send it to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Send it to the Prime Minister of England. What did he write on the note? He wrote this. John Knox has come back to Scotland.

His voice is worth 500 trumpets. We need a man like that today in the nation. A man with authority.

You don't question his credentials. Dear God, what does he do? The Holy Ghost anointing doesn't come with degrees or diplomas. It's by hiding away in the secret place of the Most High.

And here this man stays for about three years, not three days. You see, that's the university of silence. A woman asked me one day, what university did you go to? I said, Bush.

She said, Bush? Do I know anybody that went there? I said, Moses. She said, Moses who? But you see, it's the quietness we don't like. What did Jesus do? He went into the quietness on the mount.

But you see, God takes all his men there. You've got Moses with 120 years. 40 years if you read the seventh of Acts.

He studied in the universities. He was learning all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He knew maybe 10 languages.

He was a statesman before ever he got the Ten Commandments. But where did he learn his trade? On the backside of the desert? He'd be wearing royal robes and lived in all the splendor of the greatest empire in the world. And God takes him away and throws him on the back of the desert.

Not for 40 days. Not for 40 weeks. Not for 40 months.

For 40 years. But why do you expect better treatment? You want to go to school and get a diploma? Dear Lord, you can have enough to put all around the walls. It won't scare the devil.

Moses on the backside of the desert and God communed with him. And God takes all his men there. There's a comparison between Elijah and John the Baptist.

John the Baptist on the backside of... Does God act fairly? Why didn't God go ahead of John the Baptist and put the pillar of fire in the wilderness for a week before he got there? And everybody crowd and say, Hey, the pillar of fire is back. This is God. This is Jehovah that you talk about.

He's there in a pillar of fire. It disappears in the day and it's a pillar of cloud. And people came to the north, south, east and west to hear John.

No, he didn't do that. Why did he give him a healing line? The scripture says clearly John did no miracle. We've had 50 years of miracle in America.

Paul can know more than anybody about that. But what has it done? People are satiated with it. They forget it.

Cripples get up and they go and dance for the devil. They go and drink. When God has miraculously healed them, something far greater than that is coming to America and our generation.

It has to. The very son of God. He knew he was the son of God at 12.

That must be about my father's business. And God let him stay there for 30 years, mending a little boy's wheelbarrow, patting somebody's door, the best carpenter around. And he was the holy son of God.

And there he was. People say, I want to be like Jesus. Don't believe you for a minute.

You want 40 days in the wilderness? Try 40 hours fasting. Put it to practice, your old theology. So John the Baptist is there.

Jesus is there. The most colossal intellect the world ever had, I believe, outside of Jesus was the apostle Paul. I don't agree that you should put him up with Plato and Socrates.

Their genius was by reason. His was by revelation. We don't have to come back to that revelation.

It'll make us tremble. You won't go to church after there's been a holy ghost revelation. You won't say, darling, what was the sermon this morning? I'll tell you how much some of you men love God.

Stay away from the stupid tube. Now they tell us what's coming on Sunday? The ball march. Forget it.

Spend that time with God. See God, it's true the Bible says be still and know that I'm God. But we're active all the time.

We're active. We're doing. We're doing.

We're planning. We're planning. A guy sent me his brochure the other day.

A Baptist. Supposed to be the next Billy Graham. Heaven help us.

But anyhow. I count in the next 52 weeks, he has 40 revivals. Two days here.

Two days there. That's bunker. Doesn't a human dare to turn the holy ghost off and say, go ahead to me? Forget it.

I told Wilkinson, he used to live by the side of me. In New York. I said, David, there's no biblical authority for you, Billy Graham or Robert or anybody else to have a one night stand.

Finney didn't do that. The apostle Paul didn't do it. It's not fair.

Men stay for days. Do you know Finney would go to some crusades and not make an altar call until he preached for 28 days and nights. Now the guy goes in, wants to break up the fallow ground, sow the seeds and gather the harvest in half an hour.

That's below me. Of course, you can't go to a town and preach every night and take a love offering every night for 48 nights. No, they just blow into town.

They get a big display on TV, have a great advertising, a great crowd, a gate offering, and get enough money to refuel their private jet and go to the next town and rob other folk. Forget it. We're going to see men in our generation that have never been on the earth.

God's going to pull us this spirit and all flesh. I think a dear brother here told me the other week, there's a man in western Texas. And I'm not going to find the man I'd love to see.

But he's probably the most anointed man in America. He has no degrees. That's an advantage.

He hasn't been to Bible school, I think. That's a great advantage. Nobody messed his mind up.

And you know what he is, this anointed man? You know what he is? He's a sharecropper. A sharecropper? Oh, there are preachers and preachers. The greatest preacher in the days of Oliver Cromwell was Dr. John Owen that wrote all these fabulous books.

He has about six volumes on the Holy Spirit. One day the king called him and he said, come and speak. I want to speak with you.

You are the vice chancellor of Oxford University. You are the greatest preacher in England today. I hear that thou dost go listening to that babbling Baptist.

He said, your majesty, I walked four miles the other day and I listened to that Baptist. He's a tinker. He's a poor man.

But he said, sir, I will take up my roles of office. I would gladly resign as supreme preacher for Oxford University if I could preach like John Bunyan. You see, there's something the money can't buy.

You can't bestow it. You can't pass it on. It originates in God.

It has to be born in me and make men die. Dear God, you'd be amazed how many young men write and ask me, would you like to pass your mantle on to me? So I write back, no, I'll tell you some of my sackcloth. I never hear from them again.

That kills them. Oh, you're the new apostle Paul and I want to be a Timothy. Forget it.

If we took everybody, we get about 30 visitors a week to our house. Some guy, the Lord has shown me to come and stay at your house a year. Good for you.

He hasn't shown me, so you're not coming. When all we're looking after is a short way to get blessing, aren't we? We're looking for a formula. There isn't one.

There's no formula. It's a person. I hate it to hear Swaggart, Paul Swaggart, saying the baptism.

Have you had it? The baptism isn't it? It's a person. It's a blessed person of the Trinity. And when he comes and invades human personality, everything goes.

A man becomes God controlled. He thinks like Christ. He sees like Christ.

He loves like Christ. What happened all those days? This man was there in the quietness. Go down to Zarephath.

Well, he went into the cave. Then he goes to Zarephath, which was the capital of Baal and all his rotten religion. And remember, this man is standing against the world, the flesh and the devil.

He's standing up against the priests of Baal and Ashtaroth, who are dedicated to immorality and wild living and recklessness. And he stands there, a model of purity. But remember, it's still true that one man with God is a majority.

We're afraid of the quietness. I have a paper here. If I said this, you might not believe me.

But this is pure gold. It's the communiqué from Fullness magazine. Now you dare not say a word.

He talks about revival conferences that began with Jack Taylor there in San Antonio. And he goes on to say that this traveled over to Switzerland and Florida and so forth. And then it says, but there came a sudden quietness, sensing that the Spirit was grieved.

The deity of the Holy Spirit, we welcome him, but not his whole person. First, there was resistance to praise. Many feared the simple scripture courses, because the day we were offering too much freedom, clapping and raising hands, and eventually a possible gifts of the Spirit being manifested among us.

Then, in quotes, out of fear came a clever maneuvering to shut down the great move of God. Well, nobody's going to do that. God isn't asking anybody's permission.

He's going to come, and it may seem ridiculous. So what? I'm sick of mediocrity. Boy, I can predict everything that goes on in a meeting.

I was reading and rereading the history of revival in Azusa Street. On the first page of Bartleman's new edition, it says this. There are 70 million, listen, 70 million, what's it called? 70 million classical Pentecostals.

So I had one of the great theologians of the Pentecostal church in my office recently. I said, I want to read this. This is what Bartleman says.

There are 70 million classical Pentecostals. He said, that's not true. I said, well, I'm sorry.

I misquoted it. He said, not 70 million, 120 million. I moved across, almost put my finger in his eye.

I said, were there 120 million in the upper room? No. Well, I said, what's the difference between their baptism and ours? Come on, be honest. We're boasting about something we don't have.

It's a theology. It's a phrase. It's a technique.

I want an invasion of God. I want a God to settle over a community. It only comes by birth pangs.

Somebody may have mentioned that great revival through Jonathan Edwards, what is it, 1700s? When he prayed that sermon that is still read, sinners in the hands of an angry God. But listen, he spent the whole night before that with a group of choice people praying and fasting and weeping. Do you know in those revivals, never once was there an alter call? Do you know that all the years that Spurgeon was in London, they never once made an alter call? Do you know when there's a revival, you don't make an alter call.

Read the third chapter of Luke and what does it say? It tells you about John the Baptist. What a man. His mother was filled with the Holy Ghost.

His father was filled with the Holy Ghost. The priest of the day was filled with the Holy Ghost. He was filled with the Holy Ghost through his mother's womb.

It doesn't say that about Jesus. Jesus was the Son of God, but he didn't preach until the Spirit rested upon him. And he says, go into all the world, but don't go until you tarry to be endured with power.

Listen, there isn't a Pentecostal church in America today. I've said that in front of Pentecostal audiences. You talk about restoration.

Are you going to see people restored to be deacons like Aatrix, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost with signs and wonders? Those are deacons. Are you going to have revivalists like Philip in the eighth chapter? He's not an ordained minister, we would say. And then he goes into a city and the whole city is moved in the power of the Spirit of God.

But you say, Brother Enlil, that's past days. Okay. Martha, do we have that book? What's it, Get Thy Glory, Lord? We don't have it now.

Pardon? Take Thy Glory, Lord. Okay. I was preaching in South Carolina in Spartanburg.

I gave an illustration. A fellow at the back, very well dressed, oversized, you know, like this, so I knew he was a Baptist. And he came to me after the meeting.

He said, Oh, that story you told was wonderful. I said, The story of Duma. I went into Dr. Chaucer's office one day and he was in there stroking a piece of paper.

What is it? He says, This piece of dog-eared paper is from a little black man in Africa by the name of Duma. I would rather have this letter than have a letter from the President of the United States or the Queen of England. I said, What's unique about him? He said, He's a Baptist, Brother.

And so I told the story in North Carolina, South Carolina, pardon me, how this black man came in a meeting, knelt at the front, got saved and going out. Nobody ever goes to white churches. The preacher said, I'm glad to see you, Brother.

And he said, Thank you. He said, You're the little black man that knelt at the front, aren't you? He said, No, sir. He said, You are? You're the only man in a blue shirt with a white chalk stripe.

Now, come on, tell the truth. You're the black man kneeling at the front of my altar. He said, I'm not.

The preacher said, You are? He said, I'm not. That man died. I'm a new man.

He knew something had happened. So what did he do? He said to the preacher, Can I help you? He said, Give me a church. What? Do you think I've got a church in my pocket to give you something? He said, God has called me to preach.

Well, I can't help you. So he went away. He was away for a month.

He came back into the service. Going out, the preacher said, Oh, I know you. You're Mr. Doomer.

Yes. Well, what can I do for you? Give me a church. I can't.

Finally, they had a deacon's meeting, you know. And the deacon graciously decided to give him a tin hat across town that had five people going. And they smiled and said, You know, he isn't educated.

He hasn't been to Bible school. He can hardly speak English. It's a shame to put him there.

The only thing is that church that he got saved in is just about standing still. And that guy went on to get 2,000 people every Sunday morning. But when the man said to him, I can't give you anything.

He went down the road outside Durban, came to a forest. He saw a path. He went down the path.

He went up by the side of a stream and he found a cave there. He went in the cave. He took a rock and he marked outside the cave.

He stayed there 21 days and 21 nights like Elijah. He never ate anything. He drank water from the stream.

And he said, Lord, you just whisper in my heart that I'm a preacher. And he said, the Lord said, you're a preacher and you're going to be used to heal the sick and cast out demons. Good Lord, I could have set Africa on fire for a Baptist to do that.

So what happened? Well, there's a book, Take Thy Glory, Lord. I read it. Part of it I loaned to one of those famous preachers in America and he returned it.

He said, Leonard, it isn't documented. You can't believe all this stuff. I said, I believe it.

All right. Well, I don't. Okay.

What happened? Duma began to get people healed. One day he got a call, went to a hospital. He checked in at the office and said to the girl, I want to see Mr. So-and-so.

She said, okay. He's in room 13. Oh, he brought some deacons with him.

And they'd seen him praying and they're sickly healed. So anyhow, here's the little black fella. And the other guy said, hey, he's going to room 13.

That's the log. A lady asked me if I prayed for the dead. I said, I just preached to them.

So he goes up to the man, laid there, you know, calm and quiet. People say we have unity in our church. They do in the cemetery too.

Anyhow, he takes the cover off the man. And little Duma, he was a small guy. He climbed on top of the corpse.

And he prayed, Lord, with the resurrection power, raise this man. And the man coughed like that. If he'd done that with me on his belly, I'd have hit the ceiling.

I'd have run out. He got up and walked the man away. Well, this famous preacher you all know.

You've read his books. Wouldn't believe that. Last year, a man knocked at my door.

I went and I said, oh, Brother Vogue. Boy, am I glad to see you from South Africa. I said, by the way, did you know Branham? He said, William Branham? Yes.

I said, well, I've got his book. Get thy glory, Lord. Was he as good as they say? He said, sure, Brother Rainhill.

Pardon? Oh, William Duma. I'm sorry, not Branham. Branham's been dead a good while.

I talked with him for hours. Anyhow, here's this little black guy. Not, not since he died, I didn't talk with him.

Anyhow, here's a little black guy. And he said, Brother Rainhill? Yes, he healed us big. I'll tell you what he did.

He went to a hospital, prayed for a girl that was dead. The doctor was an atheist. And out there, the windows were low.

And there were hundreds of little black boys and girls looking in and pointing at Duma. That's a, that's a miracle, man. He prayed for the child.

The child got up and was perfectly healed. So, excuse me. He said, that all happened.

I'll give you the name of the hospital. I'll give you the name of the girl that was healed. I'll give you the name of the atheist physician who witnessed it all.

I'll give you all the documents. I said, I'll tell you something better than that. What do you mean, better than that? He said, I had a daughter.

And she had some kind of, what was it? Brain tumor. And he said, I signed the paper and the doctors were permitted to take one third of her brain out. And said, ever after this, she's a vegetable.

She'd be no good. And he said, she was lying in my home on the floor. She couldn't have enough spittle even to wet her own lips.

And there was a knock at the door and I went. And there's William Branham. He'd come all the way from Durban on the overnight train.

At his own expense, knocked on the door and said, Pastor, you've got trouble in this house. He said, my daughter's there. She's still paralyzed.

Her brain has been removed. She's a vegetable. Nothing can happen.

Well, you see, he said. And this is the man, Markie, who witnessed it. The father of the paralyzed girl.

And I went in and the girl was laying there. She's a young woman now. And she's lying there in total helplessness.

And he went and stood up and prayed over and nothing happened. He prayed again and nothing happened. He said, Pastor, I'll be back in a little while.

He was away three days. He came back. The pastor said, where have you been? He said, I've been in the cathedral again.

The cathedral went the woods. I've been there for three days and nights. Satan isn't going to get victory in this body.

You see, we want to say a magic thing and leave it. We don't resist the devil. We want to catch a bus or go home.

Listen, when the devil's helped strain a personality for a year, he isn't going to leave it in 10 seconds. There's a persistence in faith. There's a time when I will not let thee go.

So the doctor in all hell was watching. All the angels were watching. And this precious girl's lying there.

So he goes in again and he says to her, he kneels down, takes a kiss down, pulled her to her feet. And what did he say? He just pronounced healing over her. And her lips moved.

And she gurgled a little, a little something. Anyhow, he said, I've told you that. Let me tell you the conclusion.

I said, surely do. He said, now I left Durban, South Africa, just over a month ago. And a month before that, that vegetable girl, with a third of her brain removed, gave me my first grandchild.

Every part of her healed. That in itself is not enough. There must be conviction of sin.

That passes. But when you see wicked, vile, corrupt people transformed by the power of God, the psychologist, nobody else can answer this. But it comes when people get the birth bangs.

I don't think I could have borne to hear Jesus praying Gethsemane. I'd love to have heard Paul when he prayed in Romans 9. And he said, I call the Holy Ghost to bear witness. Do you think these men that have fallen recently, dare call the Holy Ghost to bear witness? What they were doing was of God.

It's hard for a spirit-filled man to commit sin. You've got to resist the Holy Spirit, grieve the Holy Spirit, quench the Holy Spirit. And you can't do that and get up and forgive yourself and go back.

God's going to raise some super holy men. Men that don't grieve for money, that don't care about popularity, that don't want to be listed with the great people. I shun most invitations to preach at conventions and go around the world.

Because people are ready. I'm looking for a few men as God's by witness, like Jack and a few others, that really have a hunger for God. I don't want anything else.

I'm too old. If God isn't going to rent the heavens and come down, take me up. I can't go to sleep at night.

I go to bed at nine at night. I get up at midnight. I spend the early hours with God.

How can I be comfortable out of five million people in the world that are without God, and five million population, four billion, I mean. At last, they're going to hell forever. Boy, some months ago, I went to my office at two in the morning.

I began to read the 20th chapter of Revelation. And suddenly, it seemed as though the thing jumped off the page. What does it say there in Revelation 20? The second death.

I've preached in some of the greatest pulpits in the world, so-called, and preached in some of the greatest places. I've never heard this. I've heard a sermon on the second blessing.

I've heard a sermon on the second coming. I've heard a sermon on the second birth. I've never heard a sermon on the second death.

And I turned in my chair. It was as though a voice spoke. It was two in the morning.

I know it was creepy. I was wide awake, fully conscious, reading the Word. And I read the second death.

And the voice at the side of me said, Hell has no exits. Do you think I went to sleep? I went to speak at a meeting where they let 12 prisoners come in in white suits. And as soon as they walked in, the other thing that came to me, Hell has no parolees.

No parolees. One thing, it's there forever and ever and ever. I want to go to heaven.

No, I'm not concerned too much about going to heaven. I want something better than heaven. What's better than heaven? I've said what's better than heaven? This meeting tonight.

You can get right with God. You can shed your carnality. You can shed your ignorance.

You can shed your laziness. You can shed your greed for money. You can do something here tonight you can't do in heaven.

It's too late to do it there. Do it here. Readjust your prayer life.

Readjust your fasting. Readjust your giving. Ask God that these dry eyes become a fountain of tears.

Ask God for a broken heart. America won't last 10 more years. The way she's going, she can't.

There has to be a divine intervention. And God's just about sick of the pulpit, all that's going on. Your son's in your doors as we prophesy.

You wake up one night, your son will be speaking in tongues in the other room. Your girl will be singing over there. Maybe you'll be scared to death.

But God's going to do that. I'm sure of that. So here's this precious man in my office saying, Brother Ramiel, everything you heard is true.

My darling daughter has given me a grandchild. We're happy. All the people come to see my daughter.

Well, you see, they came to see something. Sure. What's wrong with it? Listen, they came not.

N-O-T, letters eight feet high. They came not to see Jesus, but to see Lazarus that Jesus raised from the dead. What did Peter say on the day of Pentecost? These things which you both see and hear, you can't separate the two.

And God's going to do that again. So he tells you to go down to Zarephath. I'm leaping from one thing to the other.

But why go there? It says there were Sidonians. The Sidonians were the offspring of the Phoenicians. The most fierce, bitter, warlike people on the earth.

My precious wife is Irish. Don't matter, we'll argue after. But some people say the Irish are the descendants of the Phoenicians.

Well, that's what you say about the Catholic football team, don't you say? The fighting Irish. But he has to walk right into the devil's den. What does he care? If a whole den comes round about me, I'm as safe in the devil's den as God sent me there as I am in heaven.

He goes to Zarephath. Boy, don't you think everybody... What do you think people said about Elijah? He never argued with God, did he? He could have said, Lord, I've already got my schedule fixed for next year. I've got three lectures to give every week for the next year at the School of the Prophets for Elijah.

Why did Elijah go with him? Because he wasn't mature enough to go yet. He's going to get the mantle later. But you see, God is making men.

So he goes to Zarephath. And he sees a woman. She hasn't enough money to buy sticks.

So she's gathering sticks. And she's going to make a cake. And he goes up to the woman and says, hey, listen, you make me a cake.

Oh, I'm a widow. I'm a boy. And I have nothing.

You know, these marvelous sexy deeds, they can always find some reason. So the big boys on TV say, I'm not afraid to ask you to give me money. Ask a widow Elijah to do that.

Listen, he didn't ask every widow in the nation to do it. He asked one woman to do it. But listen, she's got a handful of meal.

That's the end of the meal. Yes, it's the beginning end. The next time she went, that barrel was filled to the brim.

Give me a drink of water. Where did she get water? Boy, what a wonderful thing. This man everybody's afraid of.

Hey, lady, what are you doing? I said, you're not losing weight. Oh, no, my barrel of meal, it's 50, what do you call it? Gallons in, and it's still full, and the cruise of oil never fails. What was that lady that was in prison in Holland? Didn't Corrie ten Boom say she had a flask of oil that never ran out? I'm looking for a purse like that.

But you see, the secret is this. I've commanded the ravens to feed thee there. And if you're there, when you should be there, you'll starve to death.

I've commanded a widow to feed thee there. And so he goes down and she makes a cake. Last handful of meal, the last shake of oil, put them together.

I guess that was the sweetest meal that this precious man ever had. But she kept on feeding and feeding and feeding. Well, then a bit later, she comes to a bigger challenge than that.

I'll have to abridge the whole thing for you. Go hide thyself, go show thyself. Then Elijah has a confrontation with Ahab.

Art thou he that troubleth Israel? Send and gather to me. Isn't this wonderful? Here's a little man that only has a leather gird around his loins, no military uniforms. He says to the king, you do as I tell you.

And the king says, all right. Do you know the fear of God is going to come on some men that when they go before rulers and others, they'll tremble. The politicians have had their day.

The economists have had their day. The armies have had their day. God is jealous for his glory.

He's going to show us who he is before we leave this old world and go to glory. And he said, listen, Ahab, you do as I tell you. It's the silliest thing in the world.

People are coming there half bent. They haven't had a meal for three years. Their clothes are all ragged, they're poor.

They said any man they hate in the world, it's Elijah. And they're going to be guests of honor in front of Elijah. Come on, he says.

And so the whole nation, he doesn't care what man shall do to him. And so the whole nation comes. Side two.

We are between two opinion opinions. And Bell said, pardon me, Elijah said unto the prophet said, choose a bullock. This is what he did.

I'm not as sure of this. Check it later. I think it's in Leviticus 1660.

It says you bring a bullet for a sin offering. He didn't bring a lamb. He didn't bring a kid.

He didn't bring a sack of meal. He didn't bring a turtle dove. He brought a bullet.

He identified himself with the sin of the nation. And so there could be no trickery. They poured water on it, 12 barrels of water.

But there is no water. Yes, there is at the bottom of the hill. There's the sea.

So he went down to the sea and got the water and soaked the thing. Our miracle workers on TV, they pour 12 bottles of gasoline on the thing. This is the work of God.

This gets worse and more difficult and more difficult. But the supreme God, the God of the universe is going to do a marvellous thing here. He's going to raise.

He's going to show you his majesty. Let me move on quickly to something else. What's the next thing he does? He comes home and the woman says, you know, I've been wondering who you are.

Well, don't know who I am. I'm risen. His big answers to prayer haven't come yet.

This is a man who prays and the rain falls. He prays and the fire falls. He prays and the people falls.

He hasn't seen that. What does this man pray for? He says, listen, my God is a consuming fire. I hate people who say I've had the baptism.

Use the phrase, baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Our God is a consuming fire. John the Baptist had the fire of the Holy Ghost.

Here is this man, Elijah. He's not many miles away from a place where a hundred years before he called fire from heaven, a man in great robes, a man with ostentation, a man that had all the display you could have in the most costly building the world ever saw. And he had everything and he had the altar and he had the sacrifice and he had the priest, but the fire didn't come.

And in essence, he says, I may as well turn it into a stable. It's the fire that makes the difference. I'll tell you, once you get remedied with Holy Ghost, you'll never forget it.

Something burns. So I'm getting old, I get tired. But I want to tell you, I've got a fire in my belly, if you'll excuse the word.

And if you won't, I'll tell you, it's still there. And it gets more fierce every day, Brother Rick. It doesn't go down.

I jump out of bed if I've gone to bed early. At nine, I get up at eleven or twelve. If I go at ten, I sleep maybe till two.

Many times I think the bed's on fire. I get up and run to my office at the other end of the room. And you know, I want it that way.

I love the fire of God, the Word of God to burn in me until I can't do anything but say, Oh God, don't let this generation pass without seeing your glory. We've had the gold gluttons. We've had these men who want their private jets and live ostentatiously.

Forget it. There isn't a revivalist in America today, not one. When revival comes, the total environment is changed.

You don't have to lash people for money. A prophet never asked for money. Prophets are lonely men.

Prophets are daring men. Okay, so Elijah prayed, the God that answers by fire, let him be God. What do you think they felt like when this precious man saw the offering consumed? Let me go to the last thing.

You see, he's moving step by step in faith, getting deeper assurance. And he's not satisfied with his ministry. And then the Lord says, go back to the woman.

And she says, look, while you were out, my child died. So he says, well, don't you know I'm the greatest healer in the world? He says, nothing ever can. He took the child in his hands and he ran up into a loft.

Have you got a loft in your life or a basement where God seems nearer? What did he do? He prayed over the child and nothing happened. He prayed a second time, nothing happened. He prayed, the first time he prayed for fire, it came like that.

Healing didn't come like that. And the last time he prayed, it really didn't come like that. But he said, this is a key to the situation.

And he prayed a third time. No, he stretched himself on the child. He had compassion.

And he put himself on that little dead child. And the child's life came. And he goes down, says to the woman, here, catch, it's your kid.

He didn't say anything of the kind. What did she say? She said, by this. By this.

Not by the other things you've done. By this one. I know you're a man of God.

What? He brought life where there's death. That's what revival does. It brings life where there's death.

Oh, know your Bible. No, forget about knowing your Bible for a minute. That's not the key.

Does the scripture say the people that do know their Bible shall be strong? No, the people that do know their God. I want to know God more and more. Not so-called success.

Not acceptable ministry. Forget it. The very world is going to herald tonight while you and I sit here and enjoy the presence of God.

You hath he quickened to a dead. We stress that Jesus is the way and the truth. We haven't said too much about his life.

I believe, Brother Jack, with all my heart, if I preach in the power of the Spirit, in any meeting anywhere, somebody is born and somebody dies. It's no thrill to preach. What does God owe you? How many times did he knock to the door of your heart? How many times have you made vows? You say, well, this man did.

He built an altar. No, he didn't. Well, you say he did.

Well, he did. Well, you say he did. He didn't.

It says he repaired the old altar. The vows he'd made and never kept. The promises he'd made and never kept.

He went back and said, Lord, I'm humbly bowed. I haven't fasted as I said I would in that revival. I said at that meeting that we had, after this I'll be less selfish.

I'll give more permissions. After this allow me to watch my TV. You went back to the old rut.

Build again the altar where you made that commitment and make a new sacrifice there. But then you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sin. The apostle Paul, now wind up quickly.

The apostle Paul began his life in the ancient capital of the world, Tarsus. He finished in the military capital of the world, Rome. In between he went to the intellectual of the capital of the world, Athens.

He went to the religious capital of the world, Jerusalem. And he went to the immoral capital of the world. You didn't need to string 20 adjectives together about a man in Corinth.

Just say he's a Corinthian. You knew he was the vilest, corruptest, rottenest, perverted piece of flesh in the world. So the old German commentator that wrote a hundred years ago, Meier said, blessed and sublime miracle of God.

That a church was planted in Corinth. It's rather like trying to build a hundred, a hundred story building on a bed of jello. Listen, we're going to get back to that old rugged cross.

That's the answer. And you know, if you stay by Acts 4, 12, for 10 years, you'll most likely be shifted into a psychiatric ward. You have to mix with Jews and everybody these days.

No sirree. If we cling to the old rugged cross, neither is there salvation in any other. You obliterate every other religion.

We're going to have to suffer for Christ's sake. He guaranteed it, that people are not suffering. They're just enjoying everything.

But dear God, when God comes, two things. I had the privilege of praying many, many times and weeping and groaning with, I never said Jonathan Edwards, I'm not so old. What's his name? Not Campbell McAlpine, Campbell.

No, Campbell. No, not Campbell Morgan, not Campbell McAlpine. Duncan Campbell, there you are.

Dear Lord, I'll tell you what, he'd had revival in many parts of Scotland and it all passed out. He came home one night and his daughter at the university said, Daddy, you're not the preacher you used to be. That's something you say to a man who has a three-quarter coat and a dog collar.

What do you mean? Daddy, 20 years ago you had revivals. Meetings lasted all night. People went home and couldn't sleep for two or three days.

Miracles happened. The drunkard, the liars, the prostitutes would say, You don't say anything like that. And he told me, he said, Len, I went into my office.

It had linoleum like this, took off my coat at 11 at night, laid on my belly till 12, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, about 6 o'clock I hurt feet and I felt a hand on my head and my daughter said, Oh God, I don't know what's wrong with Daddy, but please don't let him die. She went a few minutes and prayed again. Don't let my daddy go insane.

He said, Brother Len, I was looking into hell. I could see the lost there. I could hear their cries and it rang through my heart.

And he got up and said, Oh Lord, just once have mercy. Have mercy upon me. Anoint me again.

Quicken me again. Please. Come on, you've got loved ones.

Everybody here nearly has somebody who's going to hell forever and ever. When did you last shed a tear over them? I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is weeping in heaven because it's the same yesterday, today and forever. But he's not weeping over a lost church.

He's weeping over a world. He's weeping over the church. My last thing, let me wind it up quickly.

I've jumped from one thing to the other, I know. But when these theologians have finished arguing about the pre-, mid- and post-trib theories, the ones I've checked recently have agreed we're living in a Laodicean age, a laid-back church, a church governed by people. Well, what the world says about the church doesn't trouble me that much.

I don't think swaggering these guys should have done the lousy things they did and then all the world scorns them and ridicules them. I don't care what the world says. It's a blind world.

But my precious Lord Jesus died. That lovely hymn, The Church is One Foundation, is Jesus Christ our Lord. With his own blood he bought her.

He didn't buy her by a bollock. He was the Lamb of God. He'd been in eternity.

The past eternity with the Father. He leads all of us around Hawaii. And he took the sin of the world upon himself.

And he says this. He says the church of Laodicea, which is our church today, is this. Poor, wretched, naked, blind, miserable.

And she knows it not. Do you think the guy that built the glass palace out there thinks his church is a dunghill? Do you think that lovely church up the road is a dunghill? Christ says it is. He looks at it.

It's full of spot and wrinkle and worldliness and carnality. The Laodicean church. Poor, wretched, naked, two things.

A man who is blind knows he's blind. A man with a blind spot doesn't know. I say to him, did you come up the road here? Did you see an aeroplane wrecking that field on the right? No? Well, it's been there three weeks.

Well, I come up every day. I've never seen it. He has a blind spot on his eye.

Can't see it. The church is poor, wretched, naked, and blind. There are two things hindering the coming of Jesus Christ tonight.

The biggest stumbling block to revival in America is evangelism. Easy believerism. God pity these men at the judgment seat.

I struggled for three days what to preach tonight. I wanted to preach on the judgment seat of Christ. I didn't think I'd get so much time.

And I felt like I should preach on what I preached. I hope it was right. But wait a minute.

In England, in the royal family, when the princes get married, it seems all of them want to get married in a naval suit with big gold buttons down the front. And big gold epaulets on the shoulders. And a sword with a gold handle.

So here's Westminster Abbey packed with 3,000 of the choicest people of the world come to the royal wedding. Up over the high altar, there's an organ. You can't see the organist.

And the organist says, well, when do I begin to pip? You know, here comes the bride. Here comes the bride. Oh, we'll give you a signal.

At the door, there'll be six trumpeters. And they all sound their trumpets. And when you hear the trumpets start piping out, here comes the bride.

So all these people are waiting there. They travel from the ends of the earth to this royal wedding. And suddenly, the fanfare goes.

The fellow there, pip, pip, here comes the bride. And as he does that, a woman comes screaming through the door. She's stark naked.

She stinks. She's filthy. And she crashes into a pew.

She's blind. And her leg gets bloody. And she rubs on it and gets her blood on her hands and feels sorry for herself.

And she's stark naked. And she's blind and stinking. And the cops get all the men.

What are you doing in here? She says, I'm the bride. I'm the bride. I'm the bride.

You idiot. You stink. Get out of here.

Is Jesus coming for a bride like that, Brother Jack? Is he coming for people who can spend hours with T.D. and hardly minutes in prayer? Is he coming for people who are so worldly? Is he coming to people who can't get to a prayer meeting? I believe one sign of being really filled with the Spirit of God, you thirst for the prayer meeting. After the Holy Ghost came upon them, they what? Continued in prayer. Not in theology.

The disciples never said, Lord, teach us to sing. They said, Lord, teach us to pray. I'd rather pray with a man than have dinner with him.

Prayer is so vital. Okay, here we have the church. If you read through that 17th chapter, you'll find all the corruption that's there is in our nation today.

We're already doomed. We've already got a horrid thing that's sweeping the world called AIDS. We've got herpes.

We've got a disease that four million girls in America have. And they won't know until it's time to bear children. They can't bear them.

We've given away a million children. When we need a million, God will never be born. We're in for trouble.

We've more problems than ever anybody has faced in history. And the failure in America is not due to the strength of humanism. It's due to the strength, to the weakness of evangelism.

We're to be overcomers. People say, I'm a survivor. I say, I aren't.

Surviving means you're going down for the last time. Somebody grabs you by the hair and saves you. I'm not a survivor.

I'm an overcomer. By the grace of God, I want the world of flesh and the devil beneath my feet. I don't want to live like other men.

I'd rather be broken every day of my life than live with the greatest celebrities in the world. I want to be in that narrow margin that God's going to give us. The remnant at the end time.

And in the remnant, there's a remnant. I read it there, Philippians, today. Was it 317? Was it, say, 320? If by any means I may attain... What do you mean? He's already said there's a resurrection of the dead.

There's a resurrection of the just. By any means, at any cost, I want to be in the out-resurrection. It's the only time it's mentioned in scripture.

It isn't the same Greek word. It's the out... The scriptural... What's the scriptural word for resurrection? Anastasis. And this is ex-anastasis.

Out of the out of. There's a remnant. Who's the bride of Christ? The out-resurrection people.

All right. Where's Jesus going to sit? He's going to sit on the throne. Who's going to sit on the throne at the side of him? The queen.

Who's the queen? Him that overcometh. It's not Baptist, it's Him that overcometh. Those of us who are living in victory by the power of the blood.

Walking in the light. Walking in the spirit. It's easy for you, dear friend, to say, I believe Jesus may come at any moment.

Well, then you sign your death warrant. Do you know what that means? It means that at this moment, you have bitterness in your heart against a single person in the world. That you don't have defeat in your life.

You're living in union with the will of God. It's cost you something. People hate you and despise you.

But you have a peace that passes all understanding. A joy unspeakable. A faith unshakable.

Overcomers. You don't want Jesus to come right as you are now. You have bitterness in your heart.

You've pride in your heart. You've no tears in your eyes. You've no love for the lost world.

Let it go to hell. What do you care? God's going to get a people. And He's going to get them now.

He's not waiting for revival to come. You can be made as pure as God can make a human being by acknowledging, I've got sin in my life. I've bitterness in my life.

I've pride in my life. I've anger in my life. I've jealousy.

Purge it all out and fill me with the spirit of the living God. Make me like Jesus. He wept over Jerusalem.

I read that phrase today. I love it. Where Paul says to Timothy, I'm mindful of thy tears.

What a privilege. Timothy had seen Paul praying and travailing and weeping. Dear God, if the greatest preacher in the world had to travel, what should I do? Stand up and recite theology? Tell you a few stories? It's going to take birth pains.

A woman may have a tummy full with a baby. That's not the hardest thing. It's been inconvenient.

But getting that baby through the birth canal is something different. And God wants a people strong enough to birth the next move of the spirit of God. Something that, a Pentecost that will out Pentecost, Pentecost.

I live for that, Brother Jack. Nothing less will meet the need of the church and the need of a dying world. Go hide thyself.

Go show thyself. And when you do everything works in order, the enemy is overthrown. All the people have to cry, the Lord is God.

We live in a terrible day. Evangelism has never been in the history of America as despised as it is now. These dirty men with the women, these dirty men with their money.

Dear God, it's going to be awful of the judgment. But forget the others. Say tonight, it's not my brother, not my sister.

It's me, oh God, standing in the need of prayer. I have a crippled life. I have no burden for the lost.

Pentecost changed my life. I was a youth leader in our church. And when I went forward one night, a man came.

He said, what do you want, Len? Boy, he said, you speak in the open air. You're the youth leader. You've got two prayer meetings going Friday night and early Sunday morning.

What do you want? I said, I want Romans 6, 7, really my life. No, no, he said, you got it wrong. It's Romans 6, 6. Knowing this, our old man is crucified with him.

I said, it isn't. It's Romans 6, 7. He said, it isn't. It's Romans 6, 6. I said, it isn't.

I'm sorry to disturb you, preacher. It's Romans 6, 7. I don't know what that is. I said, well, look it up.

So he read it. He that is dead is freed from sin. I said, I want to die to sin.

I want to die to self. It's possible as long as we're in the flesh to commit sin. But it's also possible not to commit sin.

It's not an impossibility to sin. It's possible to have victory every time. The normal Christian life is victory over sin, over the world, over the flesh, over the devil, over the customs of men, the styles of men.

And say, Lord, I'm living on it. My prayer every day, Brother Jack, I pray it in tears. Lord, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

I'm tired of meetings, big meetings, sensational meetings. I want the holy presence of God to so come that I'm almost terrified with his presence. In our meeting Sunday night at Birchman, a woman said, this is the first time in my life I've ever felt the fear of God on me.

That's a blessing. I wish we'd all feel that. We are debtors to this world, to this generation.

Elijah, and there's the last word. Elijah was a man of like passions as we are. He wasn't a demigod.

He had his feelings. He ran away from a woman. Lots of weaknesses, but this he did do.

He obeyed God. And he stands, here's the last thing. You say you said that a few minutes ago, so what? I copied the apostle Paul.

He says the last thing, and then he goes on two chapters after. Tell me this. When Ahab was digging a pit for his feet, when that vile, devil-possessed woman Jezebel was breeding down his neck, do you think that in that day when he was so weary, he ever dreamed one day that one of the greatest events in history would happen? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will be on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Elijah at one side of him. Did he ever dream of that? When Moses' clothes were torn and worn, no longer looking like royal robes, they were royal rags. Do you think he ever dreamed when the whole valley was murmuring against him and complaining? When the priest had gone to the devil, and the people worshipping strange gods.

Do you think in that crisis moment, when his flesh was weary and the sun was sinking, and his legs were all scratched with chasing stubborn sheep, do you ever think of that moment he thought, one day in eternity, Michael will stop the orchestra, and ten million people, people who are singing, and say, hold it a minute. We're going to sing the first song of those heavens' songs. The song of Moses and of the Lamb.

Do you think of forty years in the wilderness? Or the rotten food he ate? Or the threats of Pharaoh? It will be worth it all. One second inside of heaven, you'll wish you'd prayed more, you'll wish you'd fasted more. You'll wish you'd had a broken heart more.

I've all eternity to be happy. I have the joy of the Lord now. But dear God, what's eternity going to be like? Fabulous.

I thought of you, dear brother Paul. And brother Rick, you've had your trials and difficulties. Forget it for a minute.

Look in eternity. Once you see his face, do you remember what they said to Fanny Crosby? Dear Fanny, God isn't just. You're over eighty years of age.

You're blind. You've never seen the sunset. You've never seen the flowers.

And we can't describe. I don't understand why God has let you write hymns like Blessed Assurance. Hymns that bless millions.

And you can't even see his creation. That's not fair for God to do that. You have so many disadvantages.

She said, my dear, I have a far greater advantage than you have. The woman said, what do you mean? I'm a wealthy woman. I have everything.

Well, I have an advantage over you. What is it? She said, my dear, don't you realize the first face I ever see will be his face. Boy, that's kicking the devil in the ribs, isn't it? Have you noticed Paul never said I'm the prisoner of Caesar? I'm the prisoner of the devil.

I'm the prisoner of Jesus Christ. Glorious. That first verse has got hold of me in 2 Corinthians 5. I have a home eternal in the heavens.

So lash my back. Tear my back up. Put me in prison.

Starve me. Heaven will be sweeter. I have a home eternal in the heavens.

You can't alter it. It's decreed by God. I'm going to be there forever.

What's a bit of suffering? Every day of my life, I pray for my opposite number in a Russian prison camp who's been there 20 or 30 years. He's never had a decent meal. He hasn't had a new suit for 30 or 40 years.

There's human excrement and dirt and filth there. And every day he rejoices. Why? Because he has a home eternal in the heavens.

You know, I don't wonder. People say, I don't know what those folk are. Pentecostal or videratic.

They don't have much joy. Now, I'll tell you what. When you don't have joy, you need entertainment.

When you have entertainment, you don't need joy. He is my joy. Well, isn't that good preaching? Now, I was joking there, but listen.

Don't go out of this place as you came in. I've got bitterness against somebody in your church. Get rid of it tonight.

It's a cancer. It will eat you up and it will eat your church up. He's looking for a pure people.

The bride hath made herself ready. Have you? Maybe you could sing a verse. There is a fountain filled with blood.

Now, I'll step down for this. Jack, could you sing that?

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