

# To Whom Shall We Liken Him?

by Martin Knapp

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*The sermon draws parallels between Mr. Weber's evangelistic efforts and the missions of biblical figures, highlighting the eternal significance of his work.*

**Scripture:** Joshua 1:9, 1 Kings 18:36, 2 Kings 2:14, Isaiah 6:8, Jeremiah 20:9, Ezekiel 3:8, Daniel 5:27, Matthew 3:2, Luke 3:3, Acts 9:3

**Topics:** "Evangelism", "Spiritual Leadership"

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## Description

Martin Knapp preaches about the remarkable similarities between Mr. Weber and various biblical figures, highlighting his evangelistic zeal, family's conversion, deliverance mission, and prevailing prayer like Elijah. Mr. Weber's life reflects characteristics of Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah, Elisha, Ezekiel, Daniel, John the Baptist, Paul, and other evangelists, showing his dedication to God's work and the challenges faced in spreading the Gospel. Despite misunderstandings and persecutions, Mr. Weber's impactful ministry has led to numerous conversions and spiritual transformations, echoing the sacrifices and successes of past evangelists.

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## Transcript

It may not prove profitless to trace some of the correspondences between Mr. Weber and others of the same evangelistic lineage, who have sounded the Gospel trumpet in this and in other centuries.

He is unlike Noah, in that his efforts appear much more successful; yet he resembles him in that his own family have confidence in his religion. Since his conversion, his entire family, with the exception of his father and one sister, have turned from Catholicism and "entered the ark." The father is standing at its entrance, and his sister is awakened.

In his deliverance from death in infancy, he reminds us of Moses; also in that the burden of his mission is the rescuing of captives from bondage.

Like Joshua, he is dauntless, aggressive and full of faith, daring to echo the shout of victory in the defiant presence of Jerichos and giants, as well as to sing praises after their surrender.

Like Isaiah, he has a glowing enthusiasm, vivid imagination, and the readiness that is ever saying,

"Here, Lord, am I, send me, send me."

He has, like Jeremiah, a special mission "to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant." He is like him, also, in that there are seasons of which he can say, "His word was in my heart, a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and could not stay"; and in that he often has a burden of soul for the people, such as led Jeremiah to say, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" In prevailing prayer he reminds us of Elijah on Mt. Carmel, and his meetings are suggestive of the testing there of the religion of Baal and of the living God.

Like Elisha he was called to minister in holy things from secular employment.

As with Ezekiel, God has against his enemies "made his face strong against their faces, and his forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint." Thus, like him, he is enabled to deal crushing blows against the sins of the day, and at the same time, without injury, receive any blows that may be returned. His descriptive powers also remind of those of Chebar's prophet.

Like Daniel, he weighs great men in "God's balances," and fearlessly declares to them His messages. Regardless of men's pet and set ways of doing things, and emphasizing the Scripture Gospel of repentance, he, probably in this respect more than any other evangelist, except it may be Jones, resembles John the Baptist.

Like the apostles, he forsook all to follow Christ, and like them, were it not for existing protective laws, would doubtless meet a violent death.

Like Paul, he was converted suddenly. He says, "I did not know I was under conviction one moment before I was saved. As soon as I saw the light, I accepted it."

Rescued from the Church of Rome, like the evangelistic reformers of the Reformation he is zealous in exposing its errors.

In his burning zeal for souls, his scorn of all opposition and his love for sacred song, he seems akin to Wesley, while his "magnetic" influence over a congregation, and his multiplicity of public services, are suggestive of a Whitefield.

Himself receiving blessed baptisms of the Holy Ghost like Finney, with him he is a mighty power in personal persuasion and appeal, and in "holding on" to God and man until revival victory comes.

In profligacy before conversion, and fearlessness, fervency and evangelistic success afterwards, he resembles the sainted Summerfield.

In the discouragements he met when first beginning Christian work, he reminds of Moody; also in his fearless presentation of the Word.

A part of Hyde's description of Thomas Harrison, whose fame fills the land, applies fittingly also to Mr. Weber. "His eyesight is keen; no movement in any part of a great congregation escapes him. His wit is ready; he knows as if by instinct how to answer a question, how to encourage a movement, and how to quell a disorder. Yet he is immensely inferior to what he is doing. No wit nor wisdom nor speech of his is equal to what is done in his presence." His sermons, delivery and mode of conducting a meeting are such, that he has been frequently likened to this successful

Like them all, he is misunderstood, and sometimes slandered, reviled and otherwise persecuted, by the leaders of sham "society."

He also reaches the masses with his messages, gets a hearing and sends it home with such energy that it will never be forgotten. Captious critics, as with them, carp at the way he sometimes does it, but he is too busy to be bothered by their bickerings. At their faces, like others of his illustrious line, he rebukes men of their sins; and when they condemn him for severity in so doing, they arraign the prophets, Whitefield, Wesley and all who have been true to their message from on high.

As with all of the worthies mentioned, great crowds attend his ministry, and God crown his labors, as theirs, with success, such as will more vividly appear throughout the ages of eternity.

Like theirs, his converts do not all "hold out." A large proportion of them do, but sometimes they have to be left with teachers who are unable to lead them on unto holiness. Sometimes they are starved to death on the husks of "scientific" sermons, or are "amused" or "entertained" to death. Some are "shallow earth" and others "stony ground" hearers and others like the seed that "fell among the thorns."

It was so with Jesus' ministry. Some thronged Him for the loaves and the fishes, but when He gave them a real spiritual talk, "many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him." Paul lamented sad backsliding among early converts, and Wesley takes up the same wail. Probably as large a proportion as usual of Mr. Weber's converts remain firm.

With all the other bright stars in this wonderful evangelistic cluster, God cares for and protects him, and will continue so to do, if faithful, and the perils of this life, the swellings of Jordan, the throes of dissolving nature, the scenes of the Judgment Day and through the cycles of eternity.

To Him be glory forever! Amen.

Like all of those mentioned, his most eloquent eulogiums will be after he is dead and gone. Then, as with them, when the "mists have cleared away," his work for humanity will be better appreciated than during his life. As he sometimes says when criticized for giving merited praise, "The world needs more 'taffy' and less of 'epitaphy.'"

## CLOSING REMARKS

To comprehend all the results of his evangelistic work would be as impossible as to number the stars in the heavens.

Through his agency God has put in motion influences that will vibrate throughout eternity.

It is thought that twenty thousand have professed conversion in his meetings. He has the knowledge of twenty-five young men converted in his meetings who are going, or have gone, into the ministry. There are doubtless many more whom he knows not of. The church debts that have been paid and buildings erected, the believers perfected and backsliders reclaimed, and the service for God rendered by his converts on earth and their successes on the shores of eternity, no tongue is able to tell.

Bro. Weber's life, in a marked manner, shows that it is the highest wisdom to hearken unto God rather than unto men. Not that human counsel should be entirely ignored, but secondary. "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God."

Had he listened to his well-meaning advisers, and remained in the pastorate instead of heeding, as he did, the Spirit's voice, the probabilities are that through his agency only hundreds would have been saved where now there have been thousands. Instead of becoming an evangelist whose worth in the church and in heaven is reckoned by the souls he has rescued from the pit of sin to shine in Jesus' crown, he would probably have been but a divine whose greatness the people would have measured by the number of cents in his salary.

Is it possible to conceive of how he could have made more of his life than God is making of it in the field to which He has called him? The following words of another, slightly altered, seem very fitting when applied to him, and may be a stimulus to all who, like him, are devoting all their energies to the salvation of souls:--

"Suppose he had set his heart on assisting the starving, hungry crowds, and, in order to accomplish it, had gone to work to reduce taxation; to increase the opportunities of the wage-earning class to help themselves; to invent new forms of employment, or by various plans to increase their ability to earn money. Supposing he had given himself up to this, and thus expended his life in the struggle; does anyone, acquainted with the main causes of poverty, think that through any alterations in the laws, or by any other success that might have attended his efforts, anything like the number of poor people would have been benefited, or to anything like the extent which has been the case, as the result of what he has been enabled to do in the direct work of saving them from sin?

"(a) Supposing he had set to work to make money in order to bestow it on the poor, and had succeeded, what would the scattering of a few thousand dollars have been compared with the sum that reformed people have earned for themselves, or saved from public places and gambling halls as the result of their regenerated characters, and of those habits of sobriety, industry and economy which flow from salvation?

"(b) Or suppose he had started upon the track of social reform and had achieved remarkable success in that direction, which would not have been certain, the beneficial results to the poor people must necessarily have been immensely behind what has been accomplished through his revivals, by the influence of which many, saved from the poverty which serfdom to sin entailed, have transported themselves to comfortable cottages and dwellings, and in many instances have advanced to respectable social positions

"(c) Or suppose that, in order to alleviate the lot of the poor, he had given all his time and taxed all his energies to shorten their hours of toil, and to cheer and alleviate their existence, and had succeeded as well as such reformers usually do. Who would claim that the result would begin to compare with what he has accomplished?

"In thousands of homes where once nothing was known but cursing, quarreling and misery, there is now the spirit of contentment, and song of praise and gladness, while hundreds of individuals literally sing their way through all the hardship, persecution and difficulty they are called to endure in seeking to rescue their fellows from the abyss out of which they themselves have been lifted by the glorious salvation of the cross

"(d) Suppose that, out of pity for the poor who suffer from disease, he had embarked in the study and profession of a physician, and suppose that he had prospered in this profession far beyond an average practitioner, what success could he possibly have accomplished in the removal and prevention of disease compared with what has been wrought through these wonderful revivals? If cleanliness and clothing and warmth and abstinence from intoxicants and narcotics, together with the practice of morality and the use of nourishing food, with kindness, tender nursing, happiness and love, not only prevent disease, but go far in

the majority of cases in effecting its cure, then what multitudes of precious children and fathers and mothers are bale and hearty today, and likely to continue so, who, but for his loyalty to the evangelistic call, would have been suffering on sick beds or lying cold and stark in the dark and cheerless grave!

"(e) Suppose that, lured by the fascinating claims of the poor drunkard, he had thrown himself in his behalf into any or all of the various temperance reformation enterprises. Could he have hoped to have delivered as many hundreds from the chains of the dark fiend as through the instrumentality of his revivals have been rescued?

"Or could he have ever dreamed, in his most sanguine moments, of being able to make any infinitesimal proportion of the number of abstainers that this movement has produced? Could he have hoped to have created any such portion of enlightened public opinion on the subject, or to have created such an amount of execration of the drink traffic and abhorrence of it as a fortune-making business as he has been enabled to thus bring about. We think not; we are sure not.

"Supposing he could have produced by merely human efforts the material, earthly well-being aimed at; if he could have removed the heavy burdens of the poor; if he could have increased their wages threefold; if he could have transferred them to comfortable dwellings; if the sick could have been healed, or their diseases prevented; if the drunken could on any large scale have been made sober--would these things necessarily have brought happiness to the people? Does misery only dwell with the poor, the sick, the harlot and the drunkard?

"Moreover, may not all these outside evils be taken away and still leave the heart a prey to cankering cares, jealousies, envyings, strifes, lusts, bitterness, hatreds, revengeful tempers and the like, which, together or apart, are the authors of nearly all the miseries of men, making life an intolerable burden, though passed in gilded chambers on the couches of ease, or in the possession of health and wealth and all else that earth can give or human power create?

"Therefore, it follows that this plan for removing misery in this world--the plan to which the Spirit of God led seven years ago and in the working out of which He has sustained him -- has gone much deeper than any human methods could possibly have done, not only dealing with results, but healing the festering disease itself and opening in the soul an ever-flowing fountain of gladness, which, while it sustains the spirit in the endurance of the afflictions and hardships that remain, transmutes them into sources of blessing, both for this life and the life to come."

His life is also a forcible illustration of the following revealed truths which challenge the faith of every child of God.

1. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."

2. "Give and it shall be given unto you." He has been an ever springing fountain of liberality, and has bountifully proved that "he that watereth others shall himself be watered." He is an exemplification of Wesley's advice to "make all you can, save all you can and give all you can." Though himself poor, yet he has been enabled to make many spiritually rich, and also to distribute thousands of dollars to help assuage temporal misery, and drive wolfish want from the door of the poor. Himself too full of trust and busy in his Master's business to worry about his own necessities of this life, he has sought first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all "these things have been added unto him."

3. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." In what maybe termed the audacity of faith and persistent prayer, his equal is seldom met. God honors it and grants great blessings.

4. "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold, brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." He has given up all the comforts that come from home and association there with loved ones, and has verified the blessedness of this promise, for hundreds of homes all over the land greet him with welcomes as tender as if he were a father, a brother or a son. Nor, as we have seen, does he lack the spice of persecution, with which the Master flavors the dishes of all those whom He delights on earth to use and honor.

5. "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor." Had Bro. Weber heeded the doleful prophecies of mistaken advisers when he forsook all and entered the evangelistic field, or had he have served self and sought his own promotion, he never would have exemplified the truth of this blessed promise, which challenges the best thought of all who would seek and secure abiding honors. Honors that the river of death cannot drown or the fires of judgment consume. Honors compared with which, D. D., L. L. D., and like degrees, with all those highest in the gift of kingdoms, empires and republics, combined with all others which worldlings love and the world can give, magnified a million-fold, are but like bursting bubbles which amuse for a moment only and then vanish forever.

These all are but flickering tallow candles, which glimmer for an instant and then go out.

Such are among the most tempting honors that this world can offer. Is it any wonder, then, that Jesus said, "I receive not honor from men," and that thousands of His humble followers have counted it a privilege to follow in His footsteps?

And that He also questioned, "How can ye believe which receive honor, one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" The cup of man's capacity of receiving honor can contain but a limited amount. When filled with earthly honors, there is no room for those which are enduring, and which come from God. A part of the honor which Jesus promises to them that serve Him, He often gives while they are still on earth, as with Paul, Wesley and a host of others; but this is only as a grain of sand to the seashore, compared with what awaits beyond the honor, which, beginning with the King's "Well done" before an assembled universe, His grand reception into the society of the redeemed and high, angelic hosts, continues to increase with man's capacities to receive, as he reigns a king and priest unto God and the Father forever more.

Like many others, Bro. Weber has been given, for his encouragement, a part of this infinite reward while here on earth. God already has given him a name, among men and angels, as an illustrious soul-saver. A name more highly valued in heaven's kingdom, and more to be coveted, than all honorary degrees and titles high of church or state. A name which bids fair to shine with increasing luster as the "firmament" and "as the stars forever and ever."

As this book goes to press, he is in the midst of another mighty soul-saving "Tornado," at Alpena, Mich., in which the pastor reports the power of God being displayed in a wonderful way, over three hundred having professed conversion.

He still is a comparatively young man. He hopes yet, by God's grace, to win thousands more for his Master. The story of his life will never end. We have been permitted to write and read this fragmentary, yet

thrilling, section of it. It may never all be put in print, but it all is being written by an unseen hand. In more attractive form than this, in the burning characters of some new language, yet to be unfolded among the revelations that await us in the Celestial City, we may be permitted to peruse it.

May we each be among the number, who, having "washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and having "turned many to righteousness," shall, with "everlasting joy upon our heads, enter through the gates into the city, to go out no more forever! For the triumphs of our King herein recorded, for the mighty efficiency of the cleansing blood and the indwelling Spirit, and for the soul-entrancing prospects of God's children here and hereafter, let us each, while we live, when we die and' throughout Eternity, "Praise the Father, Praise the Son, And praise the Holy Ghost." -- Amen!

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