

Dvd 24: Ezekiel 37 Resurrection Reality

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the prophetic calling and the need for the church to come to a place of transcendence beyond itself to fulfill its mandate to Israel.

Duration: 1:05:17

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1

Topics: "Spiritual Resurrection", "Prophetic Ministry"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need for believers to be willing to undergo multiple deaths to self, to experience the resurrection power of God in their lives. It challenges individuals to move beyond their own abilities and trust in God's strength, especially in speaking prophetic words that bring life from death, like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision. The message calls for a deep surrender to God's will, even in the face of humiliation and suffering, to fulfill the ultimate mandate of being a remnant people of God in the end times.

Transcript

Jesus. Above God. And we see the beauty of their lives, and their character, and their integrity.

And we hear them speak their many languages, and see their intensity, and their passion, and their character, and their nature. And our hearts call upon them for the kingdom of God, that they might be an end-time people of God, proclaiming His salvation throughout the earth. The issue of history, which is the issue of the nation, is the issue of the church.

I was brought to a crisis of such extremity, beyond my ability to find solution. And that's what God has got to bring, both the Jews that are in the world, and those that are living Jewishly, by their wit, by their intelligence, by their prowess, and by their ability, to such an abject place of utter collapse and failure, where God is finally allowed, and must be God. What I'm trying, and I think needs to be said tonight, is that the church itself is on such a course.

And we've been doing everything in our power to defer it. Looking for any panacea that would keep us from the recognition of the death to which God Himself is wanting to bring us, charismatically speaking. Looking for some kind of new gimmick.

Of course, it's got to come from America. Whether it's power evangelism, or Kingdom Now, or some other innovation, that may be that thing that will bring the missing ingredient, that will bring the quotient of life

back into the church. What I think the text will make clear tonight is this.

That if we're appointed to speak a prophetic word, that brings life, that it cannot be academically understood or obtained, but that we ourselves, who are the bearer of that word, must know both death and resurrection in truth. So, verse 1 of chapter 37, The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about. And behold, there were very many in the open valley, and lo they were very dry.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. And he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live, and I will lay sinew upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.

So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, O Lord, the sinews of the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them.

Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, Prophesy, Son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and they stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.

Behold, they themselves say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know then, I am adding, that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land.

Then shall you know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord. Amen. As I said this morning, by the inspiration of God, that to know God truly is to know a God who speaks and whose word establishes event.

And no event is the more conspicuous and glorious demonstration of that power and that reality than the event of resurrection from the dead. And I believe it is on this course that God's people Israel are set. It's a painful but necessary requirement.

Would to God that it were not so, that they were a people who could recognize and receive the truth without the necessity of the painful suffering that death is, but evidently it is not so or God would not require it. The calling of this people, the destiny of this people is of such a magnitude that if they are to bless all the families of the earth, it cannot conceivably be on the basis of their own strength, their own prowess, their own ability, their own religious or well-meaning intention. It has got to come from another realm entirely, namely the reality of his own life, the issues of his own character, of his own meekness, of his own spirit, and this cannot be obtained cheaply and death therefore is the necessary prelude.

You wonder why it is that God required an intermediary called the Son of Man. Why was it not possible for the God who breathed himself over the chaos in creation and said, let there be, breathe over their chaos and speak again the word, let there be? Why does he require an agent called the Son of Man, a prophetic man, and command him to speak the words that God could himself have spoken without him? And I believe that the answer is this, that God has as much intention for this Son of Man, he is as much the object of God's concern and God's dealing as Israel itself, and that in the mystery of God it is only in the conjunction with Israel and the radical requirement that Israel constitutes for the church that this Son of Man has opportunity to come into the final and ultimate prophetic place of God's intention or he will not be equipped for his own eternal destiny to rule and reign with him from the heavenly places. And if you think that this Son of Man just ipso facto was able to speak the word and command and the bones came together and it was some kind of thing, look, my no hands, you've got another thing coming.

Lord give me the grace to impress you with the fact that this challenge to this Son of Man, this prophetic man, was ultimate challenge. It was a stretching of the man to breaking. It was a requirement of faith beyond anything even for which prophets themselves can be known.

Can these bones live? Son of Man is as if the Lord is rubbing the prophetic face into the dirt and taking a and so immersing him into the fact of Israel's death that he himself has to choke and splutter and say, Lord thou knowest that he had not even the faith to believe that those bones could live. That's how total and ultimate a death to which this people must be brought, and that's how ultimate is the requirement that God makes on this Son of Man. It's a requirement of such ultimacy that the fact of the matter is that even the prophetic man not only has to stagger at it, but has to announce with Paul who is sufficient for these things.

And I want to say, dear saints, if we go on with the Lord to the end, that gasp and that groan and that articulation, the reiteration of who is sufficient for these things will be heard from us frequently. But let's confess up tonight how many of us have had yet an occasion to require it's being said till now. What is there in our present church life or evangelism or program of such a radical and utter kind that we're brought to a place beyond ourselves and beyond our any ability to perform it? That's not a reprimand.

It's only to say that everything till now has been preparation for a time toward which we're heading, when this will be the character and the condition for God's final, ultimate remnant people of God. And we will not be many. In fact, we will constitute a few.

And, in fact, the final issue of the age is really the reciprocal mystery and relationship between two remnants, the remnant that God will bring forth from the people of Israel who will stand for the nation, though many who are Jews and who are present-day Israelis will not be found among them. And I think the same will be true for the church. There will be, indeed, a great falling away.

The love of many will grow cold. There will be disappointment and disillusionment, or the cost of true faith in the last days will be of such a demanding kind that many will not be willing for the cost of it. And if I've not said it before, I want to say it now, and it deserves being repeated, that I believe that the one issue that will really distinguish the true remnant people of God, the final end-time prophetic constituency of God, from a larger number who will still call themselves Christians, still attend service, still occupy pews, and still hold the tenets of the faith, is this, that the larger number will be satisfied with mere subscription to the correctness of the doctrines of God, including resurrection, but the remnant people of God will eminently live and have their being in it.

And somehow the one will not be able to tolerate the other, because if the other had not existed, those that merely hold the doctrine verbally would have constituted Christendom. But so long as there is a presence in their midst of a radiant kind who are living in the actual power of that life, it blows the whistle on the pretense and the sham of that which is only nominally religious. And therefore, they will not be able to tolerate our life.

They will kill us and claim they're doing God a service. We'll not be going along with their ecumenical renewal designs in keeping with the global unity that will also be formed at the same time of a political, social, economic, and even religious kind. We'll be that strange incongruous element that can't fit and will not subscribe.

We'll hear another drummer and another beat. And the last of all things is that we'll be identified with a people who by that time have become so onerous, so despicable, so hated in the world, that to be identified with them, though they be cast out in the world as refugees and harassed, will be to compel us to share both their suffering and their persecution, the Jew. That the issue of the Jew, as I've said, will be the issue of the church.

Because there's no reason why a nominal religious entity will have any disposition to be sympathetic to them who from their point of view have been the disruptors of world peace and constitute a threat to the equilibrium of the Middle East and of the nations of the world. Far better to remove such a people and such a vexation that we might have a peace, even if it's a false peace, which we who are the people of God can never subscribe to nor tolerate because we know that we know that this people, whatever their condition, are yet chosen of God for a destiny and a fulfillment that is His redemptive answer to all the nations. So I take the time even to indicate something like that, that you probably know but need to read again because likely your habit has been every time you've read these things to think that the church is being described rather than the people Israel themselves.

Their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, I'm reading from Isaiah 61, don't turn to it, verse 9, their offspring among the people and they that see them shall acknowledge them that they are the seed or the remnant which the Lord hath blessed. The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory and thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

You say, well, Lord, how do you know that that's not the church? Because the next verse says, thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate, but thou shalt be called Hephzibah and thy land Beulah for the Lord delighteth in thee and thy land shall be married. Many, many, many prolific references to not only the restoration of Israel but an Israel of its final character and kind, of such a character as to bless all the families of the earth, a royal diadem in the hand of the Lord. How do you feel about that? Do you feel like they're upstarts and Johnny-come-latelys and how dare they crowd in and perhaps threaten or compete or challenge the place of preference and esteem that you have held exclusively till now before God? I'm not asking a light question, saints.

This is deep, deeper than your mind and consciousness will allow. We have enjoyed a privileged place with God, and I don't know how many among us have the magnanimity and love that will admit back an erring son to God and rejoice for his return. Remember the prodigal older brother who could not bring himself to it and was churlish and wanted to play hooky and not join the celebration? And his father said to him, But don't you know, he said, that I have always been a father to you? I have always, all things have

been yours from the beginning.

Don't you know that? Don't we know that? Do you feel like they're upstarts and Johnny-come-latelys and how dare they crowd in and perhaps threaten or compete or challenge the place of preference and esteem that you have held exclusively till now before God? I'm not asking a light question, saints. This is deep, deeper than your mind and consciousness will allow. We have enjoyed a privileged place with God and love that will admit back an erring son to God and rejoice for his return.

Remember the prodigal older brother who could not bring himself to it and was churlish and wanted to play hooky and not join the celebration? And his father said to him, But don't you know, he said, that I have always been a father to you? I have always, all things have been yours from the beginning. Don't you know that? Don't we know that? A restored Israel threatens the place of the glory of the church. I want to tell you, dear folk, it's exactly the opposite.

The issue of Israel and the Jew establishes the glory of the church because it requires us to come to a place of such transcendence beyond ourselves, larger than life, more prophetic than we would ever have thought to enjoy, because except in that condition, our mandate to that people cannot be fulfilled. We cannot charismatically fulfill it. We can only fulfill it in the final and ultimate prophetic and apostolic constituency that God intends for the church.

And one thing is clear, that you don't come from where you presently are to that without a suffering. If you have been glassy-eyed about the prophetic calling, and you like the sound and the ring of it, and you wish that you had such a calling, let me tell you, many deaths, saints, many deaths, many humiliations, many failures, many occasions of being stretched out before God, shut down, closed down, misunderstood, all the kinds of things, I don't even know how to rehearse it. There's something intrinsic to the prophetic calling that if we are to be as his mouth, that is not to be cheaply obtained.

That he can say to this son of man, prophesy to these bones, and in hearing the word from his mouth, it constitutes the word from the Lord and becomes an event for a people who are as dry as dust, has got to be a phenomenon of an ultimate kind. The thing that distinguishes prophetic speaking is that to speak for God as God, to command the elements, to speak to the things that are dead and to bring them to life, is a word that is event. And God does not trust that privilege to many.

Remember what Elijah said, There's a Lord my God lives before whom I stand. It shall not rain nor dew according to my word. Who do you think you are, hot shot? What kind of bumptious arrogance is that? Do you think you puny wilderness thing can command the elements? He thought so and he did so.

And the rains were stopped for three and a half years until he released them again by his own word because his word was God's word. And you cannot tell where the prophet ends and God begins. The one is so melded into the other.

And God is so discreet. He does not give us the case history of what it takes to form an Elijah. The curtain of silence is discreetly pulled down.

It's not for our eyes to see. But if I suspect anything from my own faint intimation of that same prophetic calling, the dealings of God of necessity were severe. These bones live.

However, the prophet is the man of faith. Even here, his faith is stretched to the breaking and all he can choke and splutter and say is, Lord, thou knowest. But I'll tell you what, that if a prophet cannot speak from

the place of faith, of what value is his speaking? The issue of Israel for us is that stretching, that requirement, that mandate that compels us to come to a place in God beyond that which we ourselves would have chosen.

It grows us up. That by our mercy they might obtain mercy. That if they stumble, they should fall.

Not only will God forbid, but through their fall, salvation has come to the Gentiles so as to move them to jealousy. Wherever we turn, as we examined Romans 11, it was clear there's only one agent that God has chosen in relationship with Israel to be that factor that brings that people through to the place of God's ultimate intention. And I can show you other places where, except that Zion travail, Jerusalem, the new Jerusalem of God, that converted and profoundly changed people cannot be brought forth.

For their coming forth is nothing less than life from the dead. It's a nation born in a day in the hour that Zion travails. Because they themselves are incapable of praying for themselves.

That's how dead they are in the death to which God will bring them. Would you like to go through the spasms and agonizing and travail and pain of birthing another woman's child? That's what it will amount to. By a Jerusalem who cannot come forth by herself.

By an Israel that cannot come forth. So in the place of God's dealings and dead that requires someone else in such an identification to groan and travail in that ultimate empathy and power and truth that brings that life forth even in a day. Prophecy upon these bones and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord, thus saith the Lord God.

The prophet prophesies, but the word is the word of the Lord. And in the hearing of it, an event takes place that brings this people out of the grave. So I prophesied as he commanded me.

Verse 10. And the breath came into them and they lived and stood upon their feet an exceeding great army. So I prophesied as he commanded me.

And not the least of the requirements of this prophetic corporate people is the immediate and total and full obedience to God when we are commanded. This morning I spoke about the word that can only come forth in power if it be the word that is spoken out of a tremendous total agreement and unity that cannot be punched off the assembly line. Just like the shout that had to come from Israel to bring down the walls of Jericho, if there had been in that shout unbelief, doubt, uncertainty, the belief that that wall is going to come down, by the ragtag army that Israel was by a shout, if there had been a wavering, if there had not been an agreement when the priests sounded that trumpet in that moment for the Israel of God to give their shout, the Jericho would never have been taken.

And so must it be with us at the end of the age, an agreement with God that cannot be fabricated, cannot be coerced. That is the work of God's sanctifying spirit that we are one mind, one heart, one agreement with Him, that we desire to speak the word and are able therefore to do it when we are commanded because we have long been habituated to being commanded. How are you doing presently if the Lord should command you? Are we full of ifs, ands, or buts, or whys, or how? Do we, as my brother suggested before, stand above the command and evaluate it about its practicality? How many of you have been doing it even in these meetings? That if this word does not seem practical, if there's not an immediate consequence that redounds to our benefit, the tendency is to reject it or to dismiss it.

There's got to be an obedience of such a sublime and ultimate kind that when it is commanded, it is immediately given. And if I know anything about the hand of God and His dealings with His sons and daughters, I know that that is not some kind of magic that is going to be provided in a final moment, except we submit now to a process of God from commandment to commandment, from faith to faith, that when the ultimate requirement comes, we shall not be found wanting. And that's why God is speaking now.

This is an ultimate in time message, but the preparation for it, the being fitted for it, must commence now. There's a seriousness that needs to come into our life and into our corporate life that moves us from what we presently are as the islands of individuality that come together for purposes of meetings to being the true corporate body of God, moved by His head in implicit, explicit, and immediate obediences as they are required, without asking why, and having the faith to perform it. You see how ultimate the requirement is and how we need to be fitted for it over a process of time, which we will not give ourselves to because it requires a suffering, except that we understand that the end of it all is unto Him be glory forever.

Amen. That God has appointed a demonstration before the face of all nations that they might know that I Am is the Lord, as well as the people Israel themselves. It's going to be of such a radical kind, such an evident demonstration of a people who have been dismissed as dead and reject, desolate and forsaken, that the nations that observe God's bringing of this people to Himself and to the land and establishing of them again as a holy nation and a nation of priests will be the ultimate demonstration of God's mercy, for which, in the rejection of the same, the nations will be without excuse before the judgment of God and so also the church.

And the key to the whole thing is ourselves, that remnant people, that Son of Man company who can be commanded, whose faith will not falter and will be able to speak a word that constitutes event because it's a faith that worketh by love. And only by that will that word have the power to create life where there is death. Think of the irony to love a people that the world in that same hour universally hates has got to be a remarkable demonstration that we're not moving out of religious obligation or sentimental attachment or any other thing, but that we have come to such a place in God that Elijah himself occupied, that he can say, as the Lord my God lives, it shall not rain nor dew but according to my word.

And we're told that Elijah was a man of flesh and blood like as we. What we're not told is what were the sufferings and the dealings and the severities of God required to bring him to such a place that his word was God's word and his thought was God's thought. To stand before the powerful Ahab and Jezebel force of his day without a trembling because he stood before God rather than before man.

Such a man is not bought in a day and such a corporate man is not obtained in a day, but it will not be obtained at all except we have some sense of the vision and the ultimate intention of God for his remnant people, the church, and we'll give ourselves to the disciplines and dealings of God by which this final configuration at the end can be obtained. Do you really believe that God can bring life from the dead and take something as dead as these dry bones that if you touch them you can feel the chalk grit powder in your hand and that from that material in which there is no hope that he can bring life? That it's a death of such a devastating kind that the Jews who have been famous for their optimism throughout all generations that having come out of Auschwitz and the concentration camps with the tattooed numbers on their arms and no more than a tattered shirt on their backs can within a decade or a generation be established in prosperity and can establish a nation and believe with full conviction that this shall not come again. Never again, they say.

And think that that's true. Think that their Holocaust experience was the consequence of some kind of ghetto, orthodox Jewishness that was timid and therefore suffered haplessly the kinds of things that sent them through the ovens. But now this Israel of God, this military might, this technology, this expertise, never again.

But there's a verse here that says, verse 11, Behold, these bones are the whole house of Israel, and they say, our bones are dried, our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts. They themselves say. I have yet to hear my people say that.

And what will it take before they will is the present course upon which they are embarked in all of the pressures and afflictions that are coming upon them, not only in Israel, but increasingly in every place in the nations where God has cast them to this day. When they themselves will say, we are cut off, and we are without hope, and we are as dry bones, God is released to say to the Son of Man, Therefore, now prophesy. They are on a collision course, and we are on a course if we can but see it.

So from our part, do we have the faith to believe that when God commands it, we can speak that word? That a word spoken out of our mouths can constitute life from the dead? Only if we ourselves know the reality, the truth, and the power of the resurrection life. Because a word has been spoken into us. Because he said that because he lives, we shall live also.

But the heck of the matter is, saints, that few of us are living from that place presently. If we could only see as we are seen, we would know that though we give acknowledgement and consent to the truth of the doctrine, we are not yet obliged to be found living in the reality and the power of it, because it always is preceded by a death. We are well able on the basis of our own religious well-meaning intention to do most of the things that we do for God.

It's rare to have a necessity beyond ourselves to know that except God be God, we perish. And how would you like to stand up tonight at an invitation to give God leave to bring you to that place? For except that you know it in your experience, and this is the whole nub of what it means to be prophetic, how then shall you be able to speak the truth of it for another that will constitute for them the fact and the reality of it? This is not a teaching about resurrection. This is the word of resurrection that can only be spoken by a people who have come through resurrection because they have submitted to the deaths to which God calls them.

I remember my first such experience as a high school teacher in America. How old was I? Maybe one or two years older than the Lord. Having such ultimate intentions for my history class, not content merely to be the disseminator of information, give examinations, and get back dates, names, and places, but to see some transforming work of God in my class, which was a labyrinth, a laboratory for the bringing forth of something new that would be for the redemption of the world.

For every issue was in that classroom. We weren't vying, the students weren't vying for power, they were vying for grades, but all of the issues of life and truth were there. Five times a day, I taught a compulsory course that students were required to take who did not want to be there.

Churlish, angry, victims of social injustice and racial things and every kind of thing in a metropolitan school. I'll tell you that if you didn't maintain control over that class at any moment, and when the opportunity would be provided, you might well be a dead duck because in the eyes of many of these black students, you were just whitey. They didn't care what your noble intentions were.

As far as they were concerned, you were visibly the enemy. You know what I had to do? I had to conserve my strength. Having suffered hepatitis on the very journey by which that culminated in my conversion, I was a physically weak man and remain so to this day.

I knew that unless I played it safe, unless I measured myself out with limits, I would not make it to the end of the day. And if I had not that control by the power of my own personality, who knows what thing would rise up in the classroom. But I wasn't content with the results.

It was not enough to have good intention. I wanted to see the transforming power of God which if it did not come to the lives of these students, it would not come. And I can tell you later on, of all the calls and invitations given in history classes, where as many as 17 students received the Lord in a secular environment, I saw a trembling in tears and every evidence of being born again, of coming into newness of life.

My invitations given in the context of a history discussion when the Spirit of God moved it out of the parameters that we thought to establish. How many of us are limiting the Holy One of Israel and don't really believe that life and death is at stake and don't share the naivety that I had at that time because I couldn't distinguish between secular and sacred. For me, everything was sacred, even a secular classroom.

So you know what I determined one day? I was going to go for broke. I was going to pull out the stops. I was not going to limit myself by my strength.

I was going to believe for the resurrection that this is not some academic thing, some doctrinal thing that we enjoy agreeing about, but a very provision for life and being, particularly when the stakes are enormous and beyond any ability that we have in ourselves. And I had already been dealt with in the hand of God that though I was an animated and able teacher as an atheist before my conversion, I could lead students off a cliff by the power that I had in my own personality that when I came back to the same school district as a converted man, strangely I had lost all my charm and all my ability. That a man who was so fluent and so able to speak and vividly challenge students and inspire them as a Marxist and as an atheist was patently a dud as a Christian.

And to go to school every day was a trip to the cross. It was a suffering and a pain to know what I was going to see in the faces of my students snickering up their sleeves at this character who couldn't put two sentences together and couldn't even so much as form his face agreeably. I had no control over anything.

I was a mess. And to stumble and stagger my way through the day before the disgust and the contempt of even my own students having yet such noble intention for them was a prescription for death. And I want to tell you that the Lord let it go on for more than a day, more than a week, and more than a month.

It went on for months and months until finally one day a Christian came who understood something about the ways of God and I said, Brother, I don't understand it. I was such an inspiring teacher as an atheist. Why is it now as a believer with such an intention to touch the lives of my students for eternity and I have them more under my influence and more hours with them than their own parents if indeed they have a set of parents or their own pastors if indeed they're going to a church and yet I'm a mess, I can't put two words together, I'm incoherent, I stumble, I stagger, I've lost my every ability.

I thought it was going to be enhanced being a Christian. Oh, he said, dear brother, don't you know? No. He said, God is emptying you of your every ability that you should have no confidence in the flesh.

I didn't have it tonight either, saints, and I don't have it even now or this morning or any other time. Came the hour of test and I was going to put God to the test who said that because he lives, we shall live also. Not just the continuation of our protoplasmic life but living in the resurrection dimension and power, the glory that accomplishes things that cannot otherwise be obtained.

I went to school that day and I pulled out all the stops and I gave everything I had and I poured out my soul. I wasn't one that put up something on the chalkboard and said turn to page 260 and do problems three through five while I read the paper with my feet up on the desk. I poured myself out.

We explored the depths and the ramifications of the issues of history and why it was done and should it have been and what was the moral implication and what would you have done. I'll tell you it takes the very gut out of you. And by the third hour I was reeling and staggering and there was that voice of the conventional wisdom that says take it easy brother, conserve your energy.

Remember there are yet two classes to go and if you falter and grow weak and collapse these students will rise up out of their seats and they'll let you have it. Indeed in that very school after my departure there was a racial riot and many hot shot humanist teachers found themselves on their backs with blood flowing into their eyes and their classrooms wrecked wondering what hit them. And so I was tempted to kind of conserve my energy to trust my own strength to last the day.

But by faith I pulled out that last stop and sure enough my voice went, my words went, my intelligence went, my tongue began to cleave to the roof of my mouth, my head began to pound, I wobbled, I couldn't remember my name let alone what the next statement would be. My eyes were growing dim, I felt a complete collapse and exhaustion and I may think I saw in the last moment some of these surly students rising up out of their seat and coming toward Whitey. And just in that final last moment something happened, something began to surge in me, something came up my legs and my arms, my head began to clear, my voice began to resonate again, I began to have an authority that was not just man's, my eye became clear and undimmed and God, we of all men are most to be pitied.

Are you willing to take the risk to stand before men tomorrow and not have a word to speak and to look foolish and without answer and weak and hapless and accept His life grants you that word. God wants this power to be manifest in the life of His saints and as He spoke this morning, not just at the Sunday worship time, do we dare take the risk? Do we dare reveal the glory? Do we dare take the risk of the failure if God will not answer in the power of His life? For we are dead, are we? And hid with God in Christ until His life be revealed unto glory. And I've seen that life come forth out of my death, out of my inability, again and again over the years, university encounters, confrontations with radical students, Harvard University where I came into a room like this, loaded with atheist, secular students who came for sport to do in the Jewish freak who believed in Jesus, waiting the opportunity with relish, rubbing their hands to take me apart in the Athens of America, the epitome of intellectuality and sophistication and also occultism and degeneracy and perversion.

And I came in that crumpled condition, weak, in a day of a fast like today, threw down my crumpled corduroy jacket, looked out with trembling, I thought, Lord, You bailed me out on many such occasions, but this, this, this is impossible. These opposing forces are too much. My weakness is too great.

And I said to them something I remember. I said, tonight, I said, you're going to see one of two things, a terrible human fiasco or the glory of God. And with that, I threw my jacket down, and I turned and I faced them, and myself expecting the fiasco, the terrible human fiasco of some pitiful dribble coming from my mouth and these men rising up to chew me up and spit me out.

The door of the furnace burst open, boom, and out came a rush from God and such a dissertation on the human condition as I have ever been privileged to hear. It was so airtight, it was so cohesive, it was so intellectually faultless, it was so cogent that I watched men with their hands clapped to their mouths who could not gainsay a word. And when God finished that statement, there wasn't one wise aleck to make a wise crack or tease or provoke the servant of God.

They sat in their seats glued because something had come into a Harvard auditorium of a kind they had not ever thought to consider. Nothing less than the resurrection power and life of the risen Lord manifest and demonstrated in the heart of the secular kingdom of darkness. I don't know until what time we were there that night in baptisms of the Holy Spirit and deliverances and all of the expressions of the power and life of God available that night.

Can you imagine how I went on my next occasion in the City College of New York? The first gospel outreach in a school that was 95% Jewish that had never had any kind of outreach in its history where the Lord had shown us supernaturally we would have an outreach and we'd been praying and fasting over the period of three or four months and now the day had come. And I was up exhausted the night before. I was in another university in Boston and flew in early that morning, picked up by a car and driven to City College of New York.

Just buoyant, just trusting God. I didn't care about my condition, my lack of sleep. I was depleted.

What has that got to do with anything? Let His strength be made perfect in my weakness and walked into, again, a room like this, all Jewish, bristling with hatred and vitriolic anger. Not just content to rub their hands and glee to do this guy in, but with such... They were looking at the enemy and told me quite frankly, Hitler sought only to destroy our bodies. You've come to destroy our souls.

You paid flunky. You missionary. You traitor.

Sublimely confident in the resurrection power of God, I opened my mouth and I read the text that God had quickened, Isaiah 6. And the first word that fell out of my mouth went out of my lips and went clunk. It fell to the floor like lead. And I knew in that one moment, I am finished.

I have had it. God is not here. And I went on, just taking a deep breath and facing the music and doing what I had to do, speaking pitifully, weakly, and lamely.

And when I finished my pathetic little address, it was their time to ask the questions. And a rabbi got up with a Van Dyck beard, brilliant and anointed, and let the whole audience know that this man is a fool as well as a traitor to come with his pathetic King James Bible to speak to orthodox Hebrew scholars of things of which I had but scant knowledge myself, not speaking Hebrew. And he went on just to shred me up one side and down the other.

When he finished, there wasn't much left. And when he left that room, his heels pounded into the floor and you could hear the shock of that door crashing in anger and indignation while another one got up to continue where he left off. And another, and another, and another, and another, and another.

I don't know if my wife remembers the condition in which I came home that day and in which I remained, I think, for about three months like a dog, a cur, licking its wounds, decimated, crushed. Oh, you want to be prophetic? Want to be at his mouth? You think his glory will always be revealed if you're dead and hid with Christ and God? Always living in that tremor of not knowing whether it will be a suffering or a glory. And unless you're prepared as much for the one as for the other, you are disqualified.

And I want to tell you, dear saints, what was the most cutting and painful and mortifying aspect of that entire experience. It was not the failure before my Jewish kinsmen. It was not being called names by them.

It was not the collapse of the noble thing that we had hoped for that day that would have been historic. It was looking into the faces of the Christians who were there and seeing written in them such patent disappointment, so much as to say, we had thought it had been you who would have restored the glory of Israel. We heard what God had done through you in Harvard, and we thought it had been you.

But look, brother, don't you know how to pray? Don't you know how to fast? You're a collapse. You're a flop. You're a nothing.

You've bitterly disappointed us and altogether wasted the one occasion that has come to the school in its entire history. You're a flop. How would you like to see that in the faces of your believing kinsmen and not be able to answer them a word? And God allow you to languish in that condition and in that suffering for three months without explaining why it is that he chose not to reveal his glory, having done so before Gentile students at Harvard and to withhold it before Jewish students in New York.

Until the day came that I got a phone call from a woman whose voice was so thin, I always said, uh-huh, what did you say? Mr. Katchi said, uh, I'm a Jewish woman and I've got some questions. Would you be able to help me? And I said, dear lady, is there anyone better that you can find? But she came over. What a wreck.

What did I say? Like one foot in the grave, her veins protruding, a skinny little thing. The world's victim. And chain-smoking and asking me question after question and I patiently trying to answer until she snubbed out her last cigarette and asked me the last question.

What, she said, must I do to be saved? And I told her, call upon the name Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. For the same Lord who is rich unto Jews and Gentiles is rich unto all who call upon him, for whosoever shall call. And so she gave me her little bony hand and I took it and she followed me word for word in a prayer, a sinner's prayer to receive the Lord and passed from death to life.

I watched the light of God come into her face. She was saved. She was born again.

I have not seen her from that day. I know I'll see her in heaven. And I walked her to the door that night.

The woman was aflutter with the excitement of the spirit and presence of God that had come into her and put her coat over her bony shoulders and I said, oh, by the way, I said, how is it that you came to me? Oh, didn't I tell you? No. Well, my son was at City College in New York just three weeks ago, three months ago, and he said, he came home all excited. He said, Mommy, the most remarkable thing happened today.

A Jewish man came and stood in the eye of the storm and was mercifully maltreated but did not answer back in kind and just stood there and patiently bore all that abuse and he said, I've never seen anything

like that. And I was able to get a copy of his book and here, I think you ought to read it, Mom. And she said, I read that book and I have these questions and now she's saved.

All of that for one pathetic, weak Jewish life. There's a reason why we're on the wrong side of the resurrection saints. We don't want to taste the death again and again alone by which the power is revealed.

All the more if we have something going for us that's good. All the more if we're accomplished. All the more if we're capable.

All the more if our services are pleasing and our Christian life is satisfying for us. But except that we know the death to which God calls us and the power of resurrection that can only be granted from that place, how shall we speak a word in such a way as will bring life from them whose coming from the dead will be life for the nations? For what shall their return be but life from the dead? So I want to put a question to you about something that cannot be commanded or required but needs voluntarily to be given. How many would bring into the place of death the thing that is now good, the thing that is now personally satisfying and adequate to come into a realm alone where God's glory is and be willing again and again to believe for that as we pull the plug out from our own energy, our own intelligence, our own ability and trust that life which is his by which his glory will be revealed? I don't think anything less than this will move my Jewish people to jealousy and nothing less than this will fulfill the enormous mandate which is ours that cannot be fulfilled except on that side of the grave.

There's a resolution that needs to come now and a willingness to be inducted into this not just on our Sunday services in the moments where we're brought beyond ourselves but in the totality of our life and to be brought from obedience to obedience from command to command in that power that in that historic moment that comes when God shall say, Son of man, speak to these bones that they may live that we shall speak a word in agreement, in unison and in prophetic power that constitutes for Israel life from the dead. Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God who has been his counselor? For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. God's calling for something tonight and in these days that he's not yet had from his best people to be dead and hid with Christ in God until his life is revealed.

Sitting on my seat tonight waiting to be called on sensing how momentous an occasion not just for yourselves but those who'll be seeing this tape hearing the message feeling my weakness, my ineptitude, my inability not knowing how to proceed knowing that every time that the Lord has had me to speak from this text this text that comes out yet another way each time and speaking tonight things I had never thought to employ. It's a death. It's a disagreeable thing.

It's a painful thing. But it eventuates ultimately in a glory. I want us to bow before a God who has called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus.

A destiny. A mandate. While he's at the same time preparing a people a remnant people who will be indeed an Israel of God of a kind that can bless all the families of the earth like their father Abraham who became the father of many nations only when his body was as good as dead being a hundred years old and Sarah's womb being dead believed the word of God and so shall his seed be.

Thank you precious God for our call to be the sons of Abraham to be the inheritor of nations by the same power my God by which he was brought when his body was as good as dead and Sarah's womb also

because he believed and did not waver giving glory to God and Lord our desire also is to give glory to God and not get by.

Our desire is not just to be adequate for the needs of our life religious or otherwise we're called for your glory and we know that we know that we cannot ourselves answer to it that it takes God to love God it takes God to worship God it takes very God to serve God that Jesus himself is the spirit of God that it's his speaking my God through our death that constitutes life for others and nothing else and we know it only academically because we have not wanted to taste the humiliation and the pain and the suffering of the death that snuffs us out that you might be revealed and Lord I ask you to look upon us tonight trusting your word that there are a remnant of people within this room who will stand in that last hour who can be commanded by you without flinching who will have the faith of

the son of God himself and will not balk at the death of those dry bones and whose word will be your word an event for a nation that will otherwise languish in its grave except it come and are willing from this night forth to yield themselves to the multiple deaths of God which must come that we might become a people of the resurrection the prophetic son of man company of God for that last day if you understand what God is asking and wanting to begin tomorrow and are willing for the suffering that it requires and its humiliation which is a death I ask you to stand before the Lord now you are right to be cautious, careful, and solemn because when you'll see me, whenever the next time is will you be saying what that engineer said whom I bumped into in America who said, oh he said, I don't

understand it I've lost all my competence I've been demoted in my career I'm doing janitorial work it's a humiliation I have no ability I said, dear brother, how long has this been going on? since the day I stood to your invitation precious Jesus, come Lord seal by name every saint who is standing whose spirit understands the ultimacy of this call and are willing not just to be available in that last moment but every moment that must precede it which constitutes our preparation to speak as your mouth in that day seal them by name bring into every life what is needful by discipline deal, my God, with our softness, our indulgence our insincerities, our casual airs all the things by which we've been able to get by and become in what in us resurrected and ascended king that we might fulfill,

my God, in the power of your life alone the mandate which is ours bless this people now seal them with a holy seal and perform it thank you, my God that this chapter that we've read ends with this people being established again in their land and before and under a king whose name is David and David shall be their prince forever and you will set up your sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore and the heathen even shall know that you are the Lord who sanctifies Israel when your sanctuary shall be in the midst of them forevermore and David shall be their prince and their king forever perform this, my God, we pray to the eternal praise of your glory we thank you and praise you for a word whose time has come we receive it, grant the grace to perform it we thank you and give you all the

praise and all the glory in Jesus' name and God's people said Amen and Amen and Amen

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