

Overcoming in the Time of Fallen Towers

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of standing firm in faith during times of great shaking and upheaval, and seeking counsel from God to avoid assimilation by the world.

Duration: 1:05:13

Scripture: Isaiah 30:9-26, 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Topics: "False Doctrine"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the challenging times ahead. He warns that everything that can be shaken will be shaken, and how we respond to this will determine our ability to overcome. The preacher encourages the congregation to cry out to God for help and deliverance, acknowledging their own weaknesses and the need for God's power. He assures them that if they turn to God and have oil in their lamps, they will have a song in their hearts and be able to stand strong amidst the falling towers. The sermon is based on the biblical passage in Isaiah 30:30, which speaks of God's voice being heard and His anger being displayed through various natural phenomena.

Transcript

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Thank you for being in prayer for Pastor David and Sister Gwen. They're going to be back here again with us next week and we're trusting the Lord has refreshed them. I'm looking forward to what God's put on His servant's heart for us.

Overcoming in the time of falling towers. Overcoming in the time of falling towers. This is one of the most important messages that I will ever preach to you.

I have been deeply burdened by the Holy Spirit to bring this message this morning. We are entering into a time where everything that can be shaken will be shaken. How you hear this message will determine for many whether or not you're going to make it.

I want you to ask the Holy Spirit with me as we pray together to give you the most listening ears and heart you've ever had in the house of God. You're going to hear some things that you may not want to hear. And then at the end we're going to talk about, or halfway through to the end, we're going to talk about God's promises to those who have an open heart and ear to Him.

In this season that we're living in right now, this is an ominous time, but yet it's a wonderful time to be alive. There are people, the Bible definitively says, that will have a singleness of the eye, a singleness of mind and heart, that will take them into a life of Christ that is really unattainable without that singleness of heart and eye. Especially in view of the terror and the shaking circumstances that are going to be all around them.

I'm going to possibly speak slowly. The anointing is not determined by my animation. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is determined by the degree of the kingdom of God that advances in your life as I speak.

That's how the anointing is measured. Not measured by how excited we get or we clap our hands. It's not measured by whether we weep or shake or laugh or cry.

Whether we stay standing or fall prostrate on the floor at this altar at the end of this. That's not the measure. The measure is Monday.

What has happened to you in the service and how it translates into Monday. How your life is lived. Where your trust has been transferred to.

Where you have in your heart agreed with the word of God. And subsequently the Holy Spirit has been able to come and empower you and enable you. And you're moving on a course of life to life in Christ.

That's the measure of the anointing. We've had a lot of erroneous teaching about the anointing of God through the body of Christ. Which I personally consider is absolutely disgraceful to the name of Christ.

The anointing is only measured by the degree of God's kingdom advancing in your heart today. If you leave here unchanged then there's been no anointing. At least the anointing has not touched you.

But if there is an anointing and if your heart is open. There's going to advance a kingdom that is not of this world within you. Father I stand here.

I tremble before you but yet I have great confidence in you. Lord I'm asking that you just simply use me as a vessel. I'm asking you to absolutely transcend the weakness of my mind and heart and physical body.

Lord that you would come upon me Holy Spirit and anoint me. Lord the measure of that anointing would cause the word that goes out of my mouth to find its mark. That there would be change.

We would be a poverty stricken people if all we can do is shout and not change. Lord there's got to be a change. You said that as we behold you we are changed from image to image and glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord.

There has to be a change if there's an anointing. I'm asking you Holy Spirit not just to anoint me but to anoint everyone who can hear my voice. Anoint our hearts.

Anoint our ears. God anoint our eyes. Take us where we've not been.

Make us what we've never accomplished. Lord Jesus be glorified in us. We want to be your church especially now in this last hour of time when towers are falling all around us.

We want to stand as your church. God I thank you for the power and the weight Holy Spirit that you will put behind this word today. May it be a word that is forever stamped in our hearts.

Give me the intelligence to speak it simply, clearly. That every person can understand from every language, every country, every culture that's represented here. God give me the intelligence.

Father I thank you as I stand dependent on you. You will be glorified. Be glorified in this house Jesus.

Be glorified almighty God. Be glorified. We have no other cry.

There's no other purpose to this word today. There's no other purpose to even stand here or be here but that you be glorified. Oh Jesus be glorified.

Thank you in your mighty name. Isaiah chapter 30. Overcoming in the time of falling towers.

Isaiah chapter 30. I'm just going to read two verses to start and then we're going to go back again to the beginning after. And there shall be upon every high mountain and upon every high hill rivers and streams of water in the day of the great slaughter when the towers fall.

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold as the light of seven days. In the day that the Lord binds up the breach of his people and heals the stroke of their wound. Now listen very carefully to me.

Historically Isaiah chapter 30 is written about a time when Judah which was the southern kingdom after Solomon. You remember after Solomon was his son Rehoboam and between he and another man the kingdom of Israel was divided. Judah became the southern kingdom.

And it's a time when Judah had sought an alliance with Egypt to gain protection from Assyria. Now Assyria was an invading power that was conquering parts of the world at that time which had a they had a philosophy of integration or assimilation. Some kingdoms when they would conquer others would allow to gain political favor and just for the sake of expediency would allow that particular country to retain its government, its culture, its religion.

Such as for example when the Romans came and conquered Israel just prior to Christ's coming. But Assyria was a different kind of a nation. Assyria would take the mass of the population and deport them all throughout its empire.

And swallow it up in a sense. Swallow up, assimilate that whole culture so that the culture would disappear. The northern tribes were assimilated by Assyria.

They were swallowed up in essence and really historically never appeared again, never recovered. Although the Bible tells us that remnants of the northern tribes that wanted to serve God. Remember after

Jeroboam had built altars in Bethel and Dan and they said this is not right.

Remnants of the ten tribes left everything and went to Jerusalem. And to worship the one true God who was still being worshipped under Rehoboam's, Solomon's son's rule. And so there is no biblical credibility to any teaching that ten tribes of Israel are lost.

They were never lost. They left the northern part of the country and came into Judah and started to worship with Judah. So you really, although it's called Judah in Isaiah 30, it really incorporates the whole body of Israel.

Now Assyria was threatening and instead of turning to God, they were turning to other theories, other philosophies, other arguments. This encroaching force which is as much a reality today as it was in that day. The devil has a plan, always has had a plan to assimilate the church.

To surround and swallow and draw the church as it is into another place than where God has destined her to be. Another argument, another way of thinking. To so make the church like the surrounding nations that are in rebellion to God that are around her that the church is virtually indistinguishable from those nations.

That was the plan of Assyria against Egypt. That is the plan of the devil against you and against the church of Jesus Christ. That's why the devil infuses the church with false teaching.

That's why the enemy comes against, you know, it seems that I've heard people say, I seem to be getting along quite well when I was a sinner. Then I came to Christ and I'm fighting hell. And that's the reality.

You weren't fighting hell because you were a citizen of it before you came to Christ. But then you came to Christ and now you find out there really is a hell and there really is a devil that is constantly after you saying, don't go this way, don't do that. Come this way.

Trust another form, another theology, another philosophy other than the word of God. Now, some of what is written applies specifically to that era, that time, where Judah was being threatened by Assyria. But according to some commentators, there are some portions that speak prophetically of a day yet to come.

Hendrickson, I want to just quote these to you. One of the probably more familiar and reliable commentaries says, In the day of the great slaughter, the prophet passes from the immediate effect of Judah's repentance to a broader view of what shall happen when God's kingdom is established upon the earth. In other words, what the commentators are saying is that there is an intertwining in this chapter of Scripture between the actual circumstances of that day and the circumstances of another day yet to come.

When the towers fall, he says there shall be a general pulling down of strongholds and a casting down of every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. The full-life study Bible, speaking of this particular passage of Scripture in Isaiah 30, says that it intimates that this speaks of a series of events that will lead up to the battle of Armageddon. It speaks of a condition that will begin to exist in the world that will evidently culminate by the armies of the world gathering in the Middle East for an incredible war all centered around Israel.

Now, in any event, the Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 10, I'll just turn there for the sake of time. In 1 Corinthians 10, verses 11 to 14, Paul says, All these things happened to them for examples, and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. Now, Paul said, we are living.

Paul considered himself to be living at the end of time. He said, now God allowed these things to happen to Israel, all the things that are recorded in Scripture, and they're an example for us. In other words, there are concepts in here that have the same effect today upon people as they did upon the nation of Israel back then.

And they are written for our admonition. Wherefore, Paul says, let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. There's no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man.

In other words, there's nothing coming against this generation that has not come against generations before us. All the devil's methods might be a little more refined and a little more intense, but the temptations and the arguments are still the same. God is faithful and will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, Paul says, flee from idolatry. Run from idolatry. Now, I just want you to mark that in your mind because we're coming back to that.

Now, there are spiritual principles in Isaiah chapter 30 that apply to every generation. I've said that already. First of all, there's the warning of false pursuits and wrong focus.

And secondly, there's the guarantee of God's blessing when certain hard conditions are found in his people. These things never change. Back again in Isaiah chapter 30 and verse 8, the Lord told Isaiah, he said, now go write in a book, write it before them in a table and note it in a book that it may be for the time to come forever and ever.

Now, write it in a book. These principles will so repeat themselves throughout humanity. And it does, in effect, speak of a day to come.

God said to Isaiah, write it in a book and note it there that it may be a record forever, that people may learn from it, that it may speak something into the hearts of men for all of time. Now, back in Isaiah 30 again, verse 1, I shared with you that we're seeing a people of God who are in danger of being assimilated. Now, they wanted to remain the people of God, but it was on their own terms.

They were willing to take advice about their situation, but not from God. Listen to what he says to them. Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me, and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin.

Now, this is an incredible picture of a backslidden condition of a people who once knew God. They were his people, his chosen people. He calls them rebellious children that are going out to receive counsel about their situation.

They're looking for hope. They realize a nation is encompassing them of evil thinkers who want to assimilate them, and they are feeling the pressure of it. And so, feeling that pressure, they're going out to get counsel, but they're not willing to take the counsel that comes from God.

They're willing to hear almost any argument, any theory, any philosophy, but the one that will lead them into freedom. And you'll find that repeating itself over and over throughout biblical history. And he says, they cover with a covering, but not of my spirit.

And it's very, very interesting when you look this up in the original Hebrew text. The word cover, the first word cover means poured out as in a drink offering. That's really what it means.

Something that is poured out, something that is, it's a pursuit. It's something that we are willing to give our lives to. They cover with a covering.

And the word for covering in the Hebrew means it's the molten liquid or molten gold which is poured over a form to make an idol. Now, in effect, what Isaiah is saying, you're being poured out for that which is being poured over you. You are being formed by the idolatry around you.

And the idolatry around you is being poured over you and it's forming you. And you are subsequently pouring yourself out for that idolatry. You give more devotion and time to this idolatry than you give to God.

That's what idolatry is all about. It's anything in our lives that we put above the knowledge of God. It's anywhere we sit.

It's anything we contemplate. It's whatever we give our heart and affections to that takes precedent over the knowledge of God. Almighty God invites us into his presence to give us life and counsel.

But to the degree that we are poured upon by the society around us, society that is given to idolatry, society that lives in total rebellion to God, that have a destiny of an eternal hell cast away from God, but yet to the degree that we allow that idolatry that permeates the society to be poured upon us and we pour ourselves out for that idolatry. And this is what Isaiah is saying. The spirit of Egypt and of the world sits in rebellion to God and it's what you are becoming.

He's speaking to the people of God. That's why he said in verse 8, write this in a book. Write it down.

That it may be for a time to come forever and ever. And he says in it, you cover with the covering but not of my spirit. And the word for spirit is ruach in the Hebrew and it means the breath of God.

You take counsel but it's not from me and you are being covered with the covering but it's not my spirit. It has an appearance maybe of godliness but it is not my spirit that is speaking to you or working in you. There's no breath in you and it's evidenced by your powerlessness.

Oh, you can come to the house of God, you can sing your songs and clap your hands but you are powerless to change. What is covering you is another covering. And he says the end result, they add sin to sin.

I'm just in verse 1, Isaiah 30 verse 1. And the context of the first word sin means habitual sin. And he says the end result of this is that you are enslaved and adding habitual sin to your already sinful condition. You go to church, you selectively at least hear the word of God but there's another covering that's coming on you and it's making you a habitual sinner.

And you seem to be powerless to break the chains of this sin. That's always a warning sign. If you are supposed to be sitting in the house of God and habitual sin is gripping your heart and your mind, something is wrong.

Some form of counsel, some practice has gotten into your life that is causing this to begin to happen in you. Verse 2, he says, they walk to go down into Egypt and have not asked of my mouth to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh and they trust in the shadow of Egypt. In other words, there's

another shadow, another reasoning is covering you.

You are not in the light of God as it is you're under the shadow of Egypt. Verse 6, halfway through he says, they will carry through the verse rather, they will carry their riches upon their shoulders of young asses and their treasures upon the bunches of camels to a people that shall not profit them. And I want you to envision just for a moment the church of Jesus Christ.

If we're speaking about riches, what could we say is the greatest treasure that God has given to us apart from his son? I mean, obviously, there's no greater treasure than the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the life of the Holy Spirit, God's life being lived in us. I think of the fact that God's given us a free will. That's an awesome thing.

There's not another creature in the world creation that has a free will. We can choose to accept or reject God. We can move towards him or away from him.

He's given us the ability to love other animals as it is only have nurturing only by instinct. And when instinct tells them that love has gone far enough, then love is over. We have the ability to trust and to worship God.

And these things are precious. These are precious riches that God has entrusted into us. And the prophet Isaiah said, I see them taking these riches and they're carrying them to another place and giving them to a people that cannot profit them.

Carrying these treasures into Egypt as it is and looking for another argument, looking for reasoning that's not the reasoning of God, taking that free will and moving in another direction. All these abilities to trust and to worship God, placing them in another argument, another philosophy. How tragic, how tragic.

How would you feel if you had a son or daughter that developed more trust for your neighbor than for you? And you saw them get off the bus every day from school, come down the street and go to your neighbor's house. You are the one who loves them. You gave them life.

It was through you that they were born. And you watch them go to a neighbor's house and you know in that neighbor's house there's false theology, there's wrong practice. You're completely aware of it, but your son or daughter seems to be blind to it.

Think of how you would feel. Think of how God feels when he watches his own children move to places to receive counsel that he knows is not coming from his heart. It's not from his mind.

Verse 9, he said, this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord. They say to the seers, see not. And to the prophets, prophesy not to us right things.

Speak unto us smooth things. Prophecy deceits. Get out of the way, turn aside, out of the path and cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

Now there are people that are of that mindset right now as I'm speaking. Sitting here and in your spirit you're saying, why don't you just get off this and encourage us? Why don't you just, this is a tough time. Listen pastor, we're in war, we're afraid, people are nervous.

Why don't we just go to Psalm 37 or something like that and just have a positive time? You're putting something before us that we don't want to hear. We're not ready for this, we don't want it. You're getting

nervous if you weren't sitting so far in the crowd you'd get up.

If you wouldn't make a spectacle of yourself, you'd get up and walk out of here right now. In your heart, you don't want to hear it. And I know this is a fact because humanity never changes.

You fight the same struggle that the people in Isaiah's day fought. Now please, if you have to get up and go to the bathroom, don't be embarrassed because I... They say to the prophets, prophesy smooth things. In Matthew 25, Jesus gives an incredible illustration.

He said, the kingdom of heaven is like virgins that trimmed their lamps and they went out to meet the bridegroom and it was at midnight. Now culturally in Israel, the bridegroom came at midnight for his bride. So it was a known thing that it was at a darkened time that the bridegroom came.

He said five were wise and five were foolish. And they took their lamps, but they took no oil with them. And they went out to meet the bridegroom.

And the illustration is obvious. They couldn't find their way. They had no light.

Now, the word foolish, I don't want anybody to be offended by this, but I'm going to say it the way it is. The word foolish in the Greek text is moros and it's where we get the word moron from in the English language. It means made so in heart and character by foolish and ignorant questions or to be made into a moron by foolish and foolish talking.

That's incredible when you think it. To be made into a moron. Now really, if you look at it in the Greek text, I'll say this with a smile because I think it's important.

You don't think I've mad at anybody here today. But if you look at it in the Greek text, Jesus is saying to the people, consider these morons. That's really what he's saying.

Consider these morons. If I were to stand here today and say, all folks, the battle in Iraq is going well. If I were a commanding general, we are approaching the city.

We have all loaded our water pistols. We have handheld water pistols. We have super soakers.

And we have the finest quality water that can be found in Iraq. We would be standing here and saying, these men are morons. They're absolute morons.

They're heading into a battle. They're going to be slaughtered in this battle. Jesus said, consider these morons.

If I called the choir and said, get up and let's sing a song and worship God. And our leader got up and led us in a chorus, if I'm a Yankee, doodle dandy. We would all of a sudden have the thought, what is wrong with these people? How do they think that this song somehow is going to cause them to break through to God and worship and as such infuse them with strength? And Jesus is saying, you see, in this day, there were various uses of oil.

Now, oil could be used for cooking. Oil could be used for perfume. And oil could be used for lamps, among other things.

I want to speak just about two specific uses. Now, first of all, the oil that is used for lamps doesn't taste good. You can't use it for cooking.

It doesn't smell good. You can't use it for perfume. But it does something that no other oil does.

It gives light in darkness. It's not smooth. If you put it on your body, you don't smell good.

And I think that Jesus is drawing an illusion, in a sense, to these foolish virgins that are heading out to meet the bridegroom, but they don't want the oil that gives light. They don't want an oil that doesn't smell good. They want something they can put on their flesh and perhaps adorn themselves.

See, that was another thing that those that were eventually going to be married would do. There was a time of purification. They would take sweet-smelling oils.

And it's the type of a church that says, give us things that make us feel good about ourselves, that we can take it and put it on and say, oh, I'm wonderful. I'm just awesome. Don't I smell good? Oh, tell me something more about my destiny.

Tell me something more about how blessed I am. Don't talk to me about the Holy One of Israel. Don't talk to me about what's wrong in my heart.

Don't talk to me about things which need to change. It doesn't taste good. It doesn't smell good to me, so I don't want it.

But you see, ultimately, Jesus said, consider these fools, for they come out at the midnight hour. They had a previous knowledge this was going to be a darkened time. And they come out with their lamps, and they smell good, but there's nothing in them to show them the way to the door in this time of darkness.

There's nothing in them. They made choices, but they made wrong choices. They looked for a word, but not the word that could give them light.

They wanted oil, but not oil the way God gives it. They wanted vessels that smelled good, but were full of death, dry, empty. Jesus said, consider this moronic Christianity.

Coming out, they took their lamps, and they had no oil. They're standing there. They have all the form of godliness.

There's no power. There's nothing in them that can show them the way to life. They're blind.

They smell good, but they're blind. Incredible. Smelling good and having no light.

Go with me to 2 Timothy, please, in the New Testament. Now, if I'm raising my voice, I'm not angry. I really don't want anybody visiting to think that.

I'm not angry at all. I have a passion for you, for what God wants to do in you and through you. 2 Timothy chapter 3. Now, Paul says, this know also in verse 1, that in the last days, perilous times shall come.

In the last days. It's going to be a very, very difficult time. Verse 5, he talks about a people who have a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof from such turn away.

I want you to think of these foolish virgins. They look like they belong. They look like they're ready.

They have a knowledge the bridegroom is coming at midnight, but something is missing. They have all the form, but no life. All the appearance, but no light.

They have received another oil. They haven't got the oil that gives them light in a very difficult hour. Verse 6, Paul says, for this sort are they which creep into houses, and they lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts, ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Now, the word for silly, Paul says, it is these types of people that in the last days are going to make their way into your houses. These are the last days Paul is speaking about. And he says that there's a people, now there are very ungodly people that will make their way into your houses, no doubt.

But he said there's also another religious imposter that is going to make his way into the houses of those who are silly. The word for silly in the Greek is foolish. Foolish.

Making their way into the houses of the foolish, those who want oil, but don't want the oil that God gives. They want counsel, but not counsel from God. Paul says they are laden with sins.

They are foolish, they are laden with sins. The word in Greek means they are filled with things that are missing the true goal and scope of life. They are foolish.

They are full of ambitions or directions that are ungodly. Or even if they appear to be godly, they are going to miss the scope of what God has for their life. He says they are led away with diverse lusts.

Led away means to be led, it's a-g-o in the Greek, it means to be led gently and without violence. They are led with a cunning argument. They are led by a smiling face on television.

And they are led very, very gently and with no violence. It's like a thief coming into the house and saying, come with me. I have robbed other people, I have incredible treasure, I want you to be part of it.

And they are led by their own lusts, they are led by that which is in them that is missing the mark, and it's as if they get up and consent with the thief and walk out the door with them. And they are led by their lusts. The Greek word is impulses from the diseased conditions of the soul.

These are areas that have not been surrendered to Christ. They are still led by these impulses. They are still led by their fallen nature.

And there is a gospel, very prevalent today, that caters to that. That leads those who still are being led by their fallen nature. It says they are always learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Now the word is epignosis in the Greek, and it means knowledge which very powerfully influences the form of the religious life. In other words, they are always attending seminars, they are always receiving a new argument on television or radio, or from some person somewhere, but all of this never brings them to a place where they have a changed life by the power of God. It's as simply as I can say it.

They never change. They know more, but they don't change. They can argue with you and quote scripture, but they don't change.

They are foolish. They are foolish. They have gone to all the trouble of having the right robes, and they are in the right place, they have got the right form, but when Christ comes, there is nothing in them that identifies themselves with Him.

Paul says now, as Janus and Jamboree has withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth. Verse 8, men of corrupt minds and reprobate concerning the faith. In other words, they have a given to darkness view of the gospel.

But they shall proceed no further, for their folly or their foolishness shall be manifested unto all men, as theirs also was. Now, I want you to understand something. This is being written in the context of the last days.

Paul says in the last days there is going to be people who have a form without knowledge. And they have fooled a lot of people for a lot of years, perhaps. But there is a time coming in the last days that their foolishness is going to be made known, just as the foolishness of those who withstood Moses.

Incredible. Now, let me ask you a question. What is going to overthrow them? What is going to make their foolishness known? Isaiah tells us.

Go back to Isaiah again, chapter 30. Isaiah says it clearly. And these are the things that God told him to write down for all generations.

God said, I'm going to overthrow this foolishness, and I'm going to do it for a reason. The foolishness of the American church is soon to be overthrown. Isaiah chapter 30, verse 12, he says, Wherefore, thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because you despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon, therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly and at an instant.

And he shall break it as the breaking of the potter's vessel that is broken in pieces. He shall not spare, there shall not be found in the bursting of it a shard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water out of the pit. In other words, God says, I'm going to bring about a sudden breaking of your trust.

If you are leaning on a false trust, the Lord says, because I care about you, because I love you, because I've purchased my church with my own blood, I'm going to bring about a sudden overthrow of your trust. The places that you have looked to, the arguments you have received, perhaps even the gospel that you have embraced, I'm going to suddenly overthrow it. It's going to break like a wall, like a dam that has had water pressing behind it.

It shall break suddenly, and it shall break completely. He said you're not going to have a big enough piece of it left to get something to warm yourself by the fire, or even go to a well to get a piece of water. A drink of water.

There will be no comfort in it anymore. I'm going to take away the comfort. I'm going to throw it down, overthrow it.

He said, in returning and rest you shall be saved, and in quietness and confidence shall be your strength, but you wouldn't come. He said, but you said, verse 16, no, we will flee on horses. Therefore, he said, you will flee.

We will ride upon the swift. Therefore, he said, they that pursue you will be swift. God said, okay, you want to run? You want to have another argument? You still think you're going to find some strength? He said, then I'm going to cause you to be pursued.

I'm going to cause your trust to fail. And 1,000 shall flee. Now, this is, verse 17 is not talking about the enemy here, folks.

I don't care how anybody quotes it. This is talking about the church. Israel in God's day says, 1,000 shall flee at the rebuke of one.

This is God's people fleeing. This is not the enemy here in this verse. And at the rebuke of five shall you flee till you be left as a beacon on the top of a mountain and as an on sign on a hill.

God said, I'm going to pursue you until there's nowhere left to go. I'm going to go after you. The church in America, North America, that has fallen prey to wrong theology, God is going to go after you and pursue you.

He's going to pull the rug out from under your false trusts. In a day, you're going to see your preachers of error flee. They're going to run.

And many will be running with them, still looking for hope and counsel and strength in the day when the towers fall. And there, he said, when you finally know where else to go, I'm going to drive you to a place there's nowhere higher to go, there's nowhere else to go. You're going to be all alone and set apart as a sign on a hill.

And there, he said, will the Lord wait that he may be gracious to you? And therefore, will he be exalted that he may have mercy upon you? For the Lord is a God of judgment, and blessed are all they that wait for him. For the Lord, verse 19, shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem, thou shalt weep no more. He will be very gracious to thee at the voice of thy cry, and when he hears it, he will answer you.

He said, I'm going to drive you until you cry to me. I'm going to drive you. Those that are being formed as it is by idolatry.

Don't you find it ironic that the Oscars are golden idols? They are idols. And they're molten images with gold, and they symbolize the worship of man. That's what it's really all about.

That's what the modern, most of the media, not media, but entertainment industry is idolatry. And the Lord says, what's forming you? What's forming you? What are you giving yourself to? What produces the character in you? Whose counsel are you getting? Are you bowing down to this? Are you giving yourself to this? Do you go home and sit and listen to these theologies incubated in hell itself? Are you sitting and listening to this? Is this forming you? The Lord said, if it is, I'm going to go after you. I'm going to chase you.

I'm going to pursue you. I'm going to take away your trust. I'm going to bring distress into your life, until you cry.

I'm going to wait for the cry. And when I hear the cry, God says, I will be gracious to you. I will be very gracious to you when I hear your cry.

When you finally are like the blind man on the side of the road, and the whole crowd is going by, and they're all talking about Jesus, and what Jesus is going to do, and who Jesus is, and where He's going, and what His kingdom is going to look like. And finally, the blind man has just had enough, and he cried out, Oh, the Son of David, have mercy on me. And that cry stopped him right in his tracks.

And he looked at the blind man and said, What can I do for you? And he said, I want to see. I want to see for myself. I'm tired of what other people are saying you're doing, and where you're going, and what your kingdom is about.

I want to see it for myself. All it takes is a cry. You can be home alone in your bedroom, or your living room, wherever you are.

Cry out to God, say, Jesus, I want to see you. I want to know you. I want to understand you.

I'm so sick of other people telling me who you are. I'm tired of the philosophies of this stupid age I'm living in that want to swallow me and destroy your testimony. I want to see you.

And he said, When you cry, verse 20, he said, Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, though God cause difficulty to come into your life, yet shall not your teachers be removed into a corner anymore, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers. In other words, you will know who is speaking for God. Malachi in the Old Testament talked about a day before the return of Christ.

And he said, There's a people that are going to return, and they're going to discern who is of God and who is not of God. They're going to know who speaks for God. God said, I will put teachers before you that will speak for me, and you will know them.

They'll not be hidden in a corner anymore. I'll speak to you in a plain language that you can understand. You will know who I am and what is in my heart to do for you.

You will understand what's being spoken. It'll be no longer a closed and undesirable book to you. Even the bitter things, as Proverbs says, will become sweet.

You'll begin to understand that I speak for a reason that's eternal. The gospel is not just about the here and now. It's about an eternity.

It's about a purpose that God is working out in the earth and ultimately an eternal purpose for every one of our lives. Verse 21, he says, Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way. Walk in it when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left.

I love this. God says, I'm going to give you teachers in the house of God. But it's not just going to be in the house of God.

Yes, before you, you will see your teachers. You'll know who's speaking for God. But Monday, when there's no preacher standing before you, there's another voice.

It won't be before you, it will be behind you. And God said, It's my voice. I will be speaking to you the rest of the week.

You'll see your teachers on Sunday and Tuesday and Friday in the house of God. But you'll hear my voice Monday, Thursday. You'll hear my voice speaking to you.

You'll be walking down the street and you'll hear me. And I'll say, Don't go in there. Don't do this.

Disassociate from that. Speak to this person. Stretch out a hand of kindness.

You will hear my voice. Hallelujah. I'll no longer.

Teachers won't be locked away. God said, And neither will I be. You will hear my voice.

Hallelujah. Then, he said in verse 22, You will defile the covering of thy graven images of silver and the ornament of thy molten images of gold, and you'll cast them away as a menstruous cloth, and you'll say to them, Get thee hence. In other words, you will throw off the worthless reasonings which the self-consumed and the rebellious have placed upon you.

You will cast it away. You'll say, Oh God, forgive me for spending hours watching television incubated in hell. God, forgive me for pursuing a gospel that only caters to my self-interest.

Oh God, forgive me. I've heard your voice. I've heard your word.

I've seen a reflection of the glory of God. Lord God, you're leading me. You're guiding me.

Oh Jesus, I cast away these other things. They are worthless. They are a filthy rag.

I cast them off. Let the rebellious lead their lives because they're going to be heading to an eternity without God. But their covering will not be found upon me.

He says in verse 23, Then he shall give the rain of thy seed. Thou shalt sow the ground withal. The bread of the increase in the earth that shall be fat and plenteous in the day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

The oxen likewise and the young asses that eat the ground shall eat clean provender, which has been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. In other words, God says the seed, the word seed, He says your seed will be given rain. The word is Zerah.

It's first found in Genesis 3.15. And it refers exclusively to one person, Jesus Christ. God said the life of Christ in you will begin to be manifested. The seed in you will be watered.

What did Ezekiel say to the people? You will be washed with clean water. You'll be given a new mind. You'll be given a new heart.

You'll be caused to walk in the statutes of God. You'll be planted in a place that was formerly barren. You'll be fenced in on all sides.

And even the heathen walking by that once knew you will be dumbfounded at the presence of God that has come into your life. Hallelujah! I'll show you your teachers when I hear your cry. I'll speak behind you.

I will lead you and guide you into all truth. You will throw off the false covering of the Assyrian society all around you. And I will begin to prosper the life of Christ in you.

You will grow. You'll become a fruitful vine. People will be able to walk by you and pluck fruit that they can eat and find nourishment and sustenance.

There will be an evidence of the life of God within you. It goes on, he says, On every high mountain and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter when the towers fall. You know, it's ironic that Isaiah says this day is marked by falling towers.

This day that Isaiah, and I'm not trying to draw an illustration between the Twin Towers and the Scripture. But he does say it's a day that is marked by falling towers. Yes, we had our towers fall and now Saddam Hussein has seen his towers fall.

Everything that has exalted itself above the knowledge of God has fallen. And will continue to fall until the day of Christ's return. Paul said, let me read you very quickly for the sake of time.

If I go over a bit, bear with me today, please. You've got to hear this. Paul said, 2 Timothy 1, We are saved and called with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but now is made manifest by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

And in verse 26, Isaiah says, Moreover, the light, Isaiah 30, of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold and the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord binds up the breach of his people and heals the stroke of their wound. Now, there's not a commentator I read that says that is an actual physical thing happening in the heavens. This is something spiritual going on in the hearts of God's people.

God said, you were walking without oil. You were foolish, but I'm going to give you light seven times. Seven always refers to the perfection of God in the Bible.

I'm going to give you perfect light. This is what Paul says. Again, let me just read it to you.

There was a purpose that was given to us by the grace of God before the world began. It was given to us in Christ Jesus. But we don't know it until Jesus Christ and his life appear in us, who has abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light.

The word is false in the Greek, which means understanding through the gospel. You're going to have light, incredible light. You're going to see, you're going to understand.

The purpose for your life is going to be brought to life. You're going to see things from the perspective of eternity now. It's not all about the here and now.

That's been a huge trap of the devil to get the church of Jesus Christ focused on the here and now. It's been a trap because that's the spirit of the world, folks. That's the spirit of the lawless and rebellious.

It's all about now. It's all about comfort now. It's all about prosperity now.

It's all about destiny now. But God said, I'm going to give you the spirit of my son, who, even though he was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, became obedient unto the death of the cross. Now we're going to finish as we go down to verse 27, says, Behold, the name of the Lord comes from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy.

His lips are full of indignation, his tongue is as a devouring fire, and his breath as an overflowing stream shall reach to the midst of the neck to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity. There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err. God said, the nations are full of pride, and so I'm going to lead them to their destruction.

They're going to pursue courses that don't even make sense. The nations are going to go to war all over the world. The Bible clearly says it in the day when towers are falling.

But the Christian, verse 29, he says, You shall have a song as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept, and gladness of heart as when one goes with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Israel. God said, you're going to see the nations rising up against nations, and ethnic culture

fighting against ethnic culture. You'll see it in Matthew chapter 24.

But he said, for those who know me, for those who have oil in their lamp, you're going to have a song. You're going to lift up your head because your redemption draws nigh. You know that another day is coming, and until it comes there's a purpose for your life, to reach out to fallen humanity and to be the gentleness of God in the midst of a very crooked and perverse generation.

And you will have a song. God says, I'm going to plant something in you, you're going to be worshippers of me. There's got to be a reason for this song.

I'm going to show you the reason. And the Lord will cause His glorious voice to be heard, verse 30. And shall show the lightning down of His arm, and the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering and tempest and hailstones.

This is what's going to happen in the world. For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down with smoke, with a rod. And in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the Lord shall lay upon Him, it shall be with tabrets and harps, and in battles of shaking will He fight with it.

Now this is an incredible verse of Scripture. And this is only for the church. And I want to give it to you from the New Living Translation.

I'm closing with this Scripture now. Here's what it says. At the Lord's command, the Assyrians will be shattered.

Now these are the arguments. These are the ensnarements, the entrapments. Remember, we've been talking about that which threatens to swallow you as a Christian.

God said, when I hear your cry, I'm going to shatter them. I'm going to daily be destroying your enemies. He will strike them down with His rod.

Remember David said, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Now, the staff is that gentle leading of God. But the rod is what God uses to beat and strike the enemies of the work of His hand.

Verse 32 says, and as the Lord strikes them. Now, I want you to hear this now. As the Lord strikes them, His people will keep time with the music of tambourines and harps.

As the Lord strikes them. It's like, I will sing unto the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously. The horse and the rider are thrown into the sea.

His people will keep time. I will sing unto the Lord. There's hate.

There's lust. Bang. There's false argument.

Bang. The horse and the rider are thrown into the sea. The Lord, my life, my strength, my song has now become my victory.

The Lord, my life, my strength, my song has now become my victory. My other call is very simple this morning. Annex, you can go between the screens.

We'll pray for you momentarily. We'll never forget you over there. But my other call is very simple.

If you have the cry, you'll have the victory. There are people here today who say, Pastor, I wondered what was happening to me. It's like everything I've trusted in is being pulled out from under me.

And I'm running before my enemies. And I'm finding myself alone on a hill. And I'm playing the game.

But I have no oil. I find myself standing with all the form, but there's no power in me. I'm being overwhelmed by sin.

God, cleanse me from self-seeking. Cause me to hear truth. Turn me from false reasoning.

Keep me from the grip of unrighteous theology. Give me sight. Give me strength.

Give me a song in the night. If that's the cry of your heart, and the Holy Spirit has spoken to you in this message, I want to invite you to come and cry out to God. Because he's going to give you the victory.

Just even your presence here is a cry in itself. It's an admission. God, something is missing in me.

For those especially that are battling, besetting sin, quite often it's simply because you are adding false reasoning to your experience with Christ. And because of it, you're being overwhelmed by issues of your own heart. And you can't get the victory.

And you wonder, is there not victory in Christ? I've heard about it, but is there not victory? The Lord says that you've got to come and you've got to cast off this false reasoning. You've got to cast off the wrong theology. That many, many are, you're allowing it into your house.

You're allowing it into your heart. You've got to cast off the idolatry of most of the modern media today. You've got to cast it off.

The entertainment industry is idolatry. You've got to put it away and say, God, forgive me for allowing this filth into my mind. God, I want to see your purpose for my life.

And I want the song that you promised me. I want to hear your word, and I want it to be sweet, even though it's hard. I want to stand with light.

I want to be an overcomer in a time of falling towers. I want to be among those who are standing when everything around us is being shaken that can be shaken. I want to stand in the grace and knowledge of my Savior.

Now, beloved, if that's in your heart, I want to invite you to come. Balcony, you can go to either exit. Make your way down here.

Main sanctuary, slip out. If you're backslidden, you come home to God now. Don't waste another moment.

If you're not living for the Lord, if you're unsaved, you come. If you will give your life to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, He will cleanse you. He will save you from your sins and give you a new life.

Just make your way here. The Holy Spirit told me last night that many of you are single. You live in New York City, and you're lonely.

And your comfort has become the television. And, of course, that is what the opening is in your life. You start out with good intentions.

It's going to be just sports and things like that. I'm not even sure about that anymore. But if you start out with good intentions, then it ends up being your friend.

And in the long run, you end up covered with the same gold of idolatry that you find at the Oscar Awards. It covers you. It's idolatry, folks.

Sorry, I can't make any excuses for it. That's what it is. It's the worship of men.

And you end up covered with it. And it's also the entrance to false messages, false theologies of comfort that always have money at the root of them. That's how you can identify them.

I don't care where they start. They will always come to your pocketbook. Always.

And that's how you can identify them. It will not be about you giving your life to the purposes of God. It will be about you giving your money to them.

And as surely as you stand here, you can set your watch by it. I don't care how sincere they sound. It will all come down to your wallet or your purse.

Because they are frauds. They're frauds, folks. They're not men or women of God.

They are frauds. They promise you blessing and liberty. The Bible says, if you read it in the Gospel of Peter, the Epistle rather, it says, They promise you liberty, but they themselves are the slaves of corruption.

God is going to pull the carpet out. The Holy Ghost is going to pull the carpet out from underneath all of them. The moment the economy is touched in the Western world, the whole works of them will be gone.

Because they don't have the Gospel. If you think what you're hearing is the Gospel at any time, just imagine this now. I have to take what I preach here to you.

And if the Lord should send me to, let's say, a troop encampment on their way to Baghdad, I have to be able to preach it there. If I can't preach it there, it shouldn't be preached here. If I can't take this message this morning and preach it in Africa and Ethiopia and some of the poorest places of the world, if I can't go into a prison and preach it, it's not the Gospel.

Do you want to know why Islam is taking over the prisons now? Do you want to know why? Because the hyper-faith and prosperity churches have gone into the prisons. You see, they don't have a message for prisoners. They've taken their message in and said, well, you just confess and it will be yours.

Whatever you ask, believing you shall receive. So you have all these prisoners now that are saying, I'm going to get out of here next month. I'm confessing it.

Lifers, Sullivan Prison, they never get out. They're in for life and they're confessing, I'm going to be released somehow. An appeals court is just going to overturn my judgment.

And folks, it doesn't happen. And so they end up assuming that God is not real and they turn to Islam. It is the hyper-faith Gospel that is turning our prisons to Islam.

You need to see it for how evil it really is. Now, the Lord says, I'm going to show you my word. I'm going to give you oil for your lamp.

I'm going to speak to you all week. You won't have to be lonely anymore. You can turn off your television.

I'll be your friend. That's what I feel the Holy Spirit telling me to tell you. I'll be your friend.

You can go to any Christian bookstore. You can get wonderful biographies of Christians. If you're not a reader, you can get a lot of it on tape.

And you can actually listen to the stories on tape. But the Lord said, I'll bring you, if you need comfort, I'll bring you to a source of comfort that can be trusted. I'll lead you away from things that can't be trusted.

And you pray. You pray. If you go into even a Christian bookstore today and you walk up and you're looking for a friend, as it is, because that's why most people read or turn to a lot of these things, pray and ask that voice behind you to say, ah, ah, don't touch that.

Pick it up. Get your hand off of that. That's hot.

That's no good. Get away from that. Even if it has a nice cover and a nice smiley guy with the Bible, the Holy Spirit says, ah, ah, don't touch that.

Don't touch that. The Lord said, I'm going to give you a song, and you're just going to walk down the street, and I want you to hear, I want you to envision my staff hitting your enemies. And God says, I don't hit them to wound them.

I hit them to kill them. I give them a blow. They never rise again.

And I want you to just march with the song. And as you march with that song, I want you to envision your enemies falling before you because you have turned to me, and I've become your friend. And in the midnight hour, when towers are falling all over the world, you're going to be standing waiting, knowing the bridegroom is coming, and you've got oil in your lamp.

You can see. You know where he is. Your eyes are open to truth.

I really can't lead you in a prayer because it really has to be a cry, but I will pray for you. Father, I thank you. God, your word is anointed.

Your word produces life. We stand, all of us, frail and in need of you, but you prove yourself constantly faithful to us as we cry out to you in our dependence. You said clearly that those who trust in you will never be ashamed, never overpowered by our enemies, never brought to ruin because our hearts trust in you.

God, thank you for speaking to my heart this week. I thank you, Lord, for speaking through me to so many hearts in this house today. I thank you, Lord, in this era of falling towers, that there are going to be a people with a song, Lord, a people who know and see from this perspective of eternity.

I thank you, Lord, that we will understand our calling that was given to us in Christ before the world began. I thank you, Jesus, that you will be our life and our light. You will be the voice before us and behind us.

You promised this to us. You'll be our song and our strength. Day to day, our enemies will be demolished and new life in Christ will be formed within us.

And, Lord, for this, we give you all the praise and all the glory. In Jesus' mighty name. This is the conclusion of the message.

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