

The Key to Unlocking the Provision of God

by Carter Conlon

The key to unlocking the provision of God is compassion and faith, as demonstrated by the four lepers in the story of Elisha.

Duration: 41:38

Scripture: Matthew 9:35, Matthew 14:13, Matthew 15:32, Matthew 20:34, Luke 7:13

Topics: "Provision"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of four lepers who were in a desperate situation during a time of famine. Despite their condition, they decided to head towards the place where provision could be found. As they approached, God struck terror into the enemy forces that were starving the people. The preacher emphasizes that God can use ordinary and struggling individuals to bring about miraculous provision. The sermon also highlights the importance of trusting in God's provision and being willing to step out in faith, even in the face of difficult circumstances.

Transcript

The Key to Unlocking the Provision of God, 2nd Kings chapter 7, beginning at verse 1. Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, Tomorrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned and answered the man of God and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate, and they said to one another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore come and let us fall into the host of the Syrians.

If they save us alive, we shall live, and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight to go into the camp of the Syrians. And when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there.

For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host. And they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us. Wherefore, they arose and fled in the twilight,

and left their tents and their horses and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.

And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver and gold and raiment, and went and hid it, and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well. This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.

If we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us. Now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. So they came and called to the porter of the city, and they told him, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and behold, there was no man there, neither voice of men, but horses tied and asses tied, and the tents as they were.

Now folks, our text today takes us to a time of incredible hardship and famine. The enemies, Samaria being the northern part of Israel, was surrounded by an enemy that had come and cut off its food supply. 2 Kings chapter 6 and verse, I think, 24 says, And it came to pass after this that Ben-Hadad king of Syria gathered all his hosts, and went up and besieged Samaria.

Verse 25, There was a great famine in Samaria. Behold, they besieged it until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a calf of a dove's dung for five pieces of silver. There was a famine.

The enemies had come in. The food supply is completely cut off because that's how they would conquer a city. They would surround it and starve the people out.

The prices for the most meager of provisions had skyrocketed. Things that literally held very little value were now taking all of people's savings. There was a rush to get whatever food was left because food had come into scarcity of supply.

People were resorting to previously unthinkable means to survive. They were resorting to cannibalism. And it's a tragedy that the king of Israel himself was so enraged by it that he blamed God and the messenger of God for this.

He said, I'm going to take Elisha's head off him for this thing. Whenever hardship comes into a place, folks, quite often God and his servants are the ones who get the blame for it. And even the king of Samaria had become so physically weak that he had to be supported to stand.

He came to see Elisha, and the scripture tells us that he was leaning on a servant. And it was that servant, of course, who professed unbelief at the word of God. Now, Elisha is standing there in God's stead.

He said, tomorrow, he said, there's going to be supply like you've never seen. And not only will there be supply, but the supply will be so reasonably priced, literally, that the poor can't even afford it. There'll be enough to go around for everybody.

And the servant of the king said, unless God opens windows in heaven, how is this ever going to happen? And Elisha said to him, you're going to see it with your eyes, but you're not going to partake of it. Do you remember when the supply finally came into the city, he was trampled by the people as they were running through the gate to get the supply and the word of God. Folks, we dare not ever deal casually with the word of God, both the promises of God and the warnings of God.

If this man had had any wisdom in his heart, he would have said, oh, God, forgive me for my unbelief, forgive me for what I've just said, because I know the history of the word of God, and I know the faithfulness of God. Now, God had given a word through Elisha, and he said in chapter 7, verse 1, Hear the word of the Lord. Tomorrow, about this time, shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria.

Now, God gave a word through Elisha that provision would be made available and affordable according to the word of God, not by power, not by might, not by any reasoning of man, but God had a way of unlocking the provision of heaven. He was going to give it to his people because of the servants of God that were working there and among them. Now, even though this servant replies, he said, how could this thing be? Now, you and I could equally say this today.

If provision were to become scarce, who would unlock the supply? Let's say, for example, for whatever reason, provision became scarce in this city. Remember how quickly the stores shuttered when the planes hit the towers in 2001. It could happen just as quickly for other reasons.

You and I live in a generation like this where things can be, they can change almost overnight. What if provision suddenly was in short supply? The question comes, now God always feeds his people, and he always feeds not only his people, but through his people. And so we ask ourselves, who then would unlock the supply? How many would it take? What strategy would they have to employ? And if they were successful in that generation, what would it teach us today? Remember that Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1, verses 25 and 27, the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God has chosen the weak things of the world, or in other words, the things that this world considers weakness or foolishness to confound the things which are mighty. That should give us hope.

If nothing else in this entire message today, the fact that God chooses the foolish means that I'm in. And might I dare say it means that you're in too as well. So what's the plan of God? Chapter 7, verse 3, There were four leprous men at the entry gate of the gate, and they said to one another, why should we sit here till we die? Four lepers.

Now I want you to keep in mind that this was not plan B. This was plan A. Now God had a king in the city, there had to be some counselors left, there had to be somewhat of a minimal army. And in the past he had sent out armies in their weakness. Remember the one time he ordered Ahab, he called on Ahab to order an army and go out and fight against their enemies.

And there was a great victory, even though they were not in the strongest position to have that victory. I remember another time when angels just went out and smote the whole camp of the enemy. And there's so many ways that God could do this.

He had Elisha in the city. We know that through Elisha and Elijah, these men had the power to blind, literally, physically blind opposing armies, and bring them into captivity. And so with all this resource at his hand, God chooses an incredible strategy to unleash this provision.

And I'm going to share with you today a reason why I think this was. Four lepers. And I love it, he says, because as they headed towards the place where provision could be found, God himself struck terror into

every force of hell that was starving the people.

Listen to verse 6 and 7. The Lord made the host of Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host. And they said one to another, Oh, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites, the kings of the Egyptians, to come up... Now keep in mind, there's only four lepers heading towards them. If there's such a thing as a volume button in heaven.

God finally found an army. He finally found somebody that he could send into this supply to unlock it. The least likely of people.

And as they're heading down, suddenly the Lord makes this thunderous sound come into the very gates of hell itself. And hell hears something coming that it knows it has no power against. You have to understand, these are just four lepers.

These are just four ordinary, well actually not quite ordinary people really. They're struggling people, they're hurting people, they've had a measure of pain in their lives, but they're heading down to where provision is. And wherefore they arose, in verse 7 they say, fled in the twilight.

They left their tents, their horses, their asses, their camp as it was, and fled for their lives. Folks, I see it all the way through scripture. Remember when Jonathan and his armor bearer went up to take that half acre of ground, and Jonathan said, listen, let's just go.

I'm tired of sitting on this hill with my father's army as it was, Saul's army, just polishing their armor and trembling. I'm tired of this. Jonathan said, let's go, the Lord doesn't need a lot of us to win a victory.

And they went up and they took a half acre of ground, remember, and God sent a trembling through all the host of hell that was gathered around the children of Israel. They took their swords out and began to fight against each other and just began to dissipate away. If you and I could lay hold of these truths, if we could understand, it's not by might, it's not by power, it's not by numbers, it's not by fanciness of our presentation, it's not by the eloquence of our preaching.

Four of the weakest in society headed toward a place where food to feed thousands could be found. A place that all the strategists had overlooked in Samaria. Nobody had considered this.

Nobody's looking at what the plan of God really was. Faith, in great measure, except from Elisha and perhaps a few that were associated with him, faith was really gone. We ask ourselves the question, why would God use these men? Why would he use them? How is God going to get glory from this? What is in them? What is in their character? What is part of these men that God sees? That he can send them out and they become the virtual key to unlock a storehouse of supply for all people.

I believe he saw a core value in their character, which has to be in any person before the true provision of God can be released through them. Now go to 2 Kings 7 verses 8 and 9. And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, Now keep in mind, they're coming and suddenly they walk into this provision. And this is an incredible provision.

And it's just all left there. The campfires are burning probably. The soup is still warm.

Fresh horses are there. Everything is there. And you've got to picture these four men going in.

And they came to the uttermost part of the camp. They went into one tent and did eat and drink. I think it was warm still.

I think the provision was incredible. And they took out silver and gold and clothing and went and hid it. And came again and entered into another tent and carried out from there also and went and hid it.

And they said one to another, We do not well. This is a day of good tidings and we hold our peace. If we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us.

Now therefore, come that we may go and tell the king's household. Now this is the key, folks. They were men of compassion.

That's what God saw in their hearts. Compassion. How easy it would have been to forget a city which had subjected them to rejection and pain.

Think of it for a moment. These men were made for even the moments that they were allowed inside the city. They had to cover their faces and cry out unclean.

And everywhere they walked, people would flee from them. A city that had rejected them. A city that had caused them pain.

A city that perhaps at one point had offered promise. But now the promise of that city was taken away. And they were outside the gate.

You remember where we started? They said if we stay here, we're going to starve. I think they were of the last priority in the city to be fed. If there was a pecking order, it would be the king first.

And it would be his soldiers. It would be the families. It would be those of importance.

Those of wealth. And influence in society. And these guys are outside the gate.

They're given last priority. It's a city that had caused them pain. Now how self-righteously could they have said, let them suffer and starve as they did to us.

You and I are going to be provided for no matter what comes our way. And there can be something that comes into the heart. That says let the city that has caused me such pain starve.

Let them figure out how to get out of this mess on their own. But I'm going to take what God's given to me and I'm going to hide it. And I'm going to put it in place and I'm going to store it there.

And I'm going to go to that storehouse every day. And I'm going to eat my morsel alone. In other words, I'm going to have my little place.

I'm going to have my little corner of security. So what for my neighbors? What have they ever done for me? All this place in this city has ever done is bring pain into my life. And I know there are many people here today, that's your testimony.

You came to New York City and you thought it was going to be an inclusive place. Only to find out it's not as inclusive as you thought. You thought opportunity was going to be around every corner.

Just to find out that it's not quite the way you envisioned it. You thought there would be perhaps a measure of kindness to be found somewhere. Only to find that you yourself are pushed to the sides of the streets.

As everyone else seems to be passing you by. And now as a Christian person in this last hour of time. You're going to find an incredible provision of heaven.

But beware lest a thought get into your heart. This is for me and for me alone. I'm going to take this morsel.

I'm going to store it in a safe place. And when this is all over, I'm going to come out and be the one who's been provided for. But too bad for everybody else.

Why should I feed them anyway? With all the pain that they've caused me. No, they were not like this. They were men that had an inner compassion.

And I know that's why they were sent into the Syrian camp. I'm not sure that the king would have acted as righteously as they did. I'm not sure that some of the other people would not have taken these resources and used it for themselves.

No, they were moved with compassion. And in doing so, they exemplified the heart of Christ. Compassion is essentially what moved Christ's heart all the way through the scriptures.

Matthew chapter 9. Please, if you go there very quickly with me. Matthew chapter 9 in the New Testament. Verse 35.

I want to show you that compassion is an ingredient in the heart of God. And in the heart of His church. That if we ever lose it, we've lost everything.

We've lost the keys to the true provision of God in any generation. Matthew chapter 9 verse 35. It says, Jesus went about all the cities and villages.

Teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with what? Compassion on them.

That word means sympathy, pity. It's an inner moving or yearning that moves one to doing something about the situation. Because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep that have no shepherd.

And He said to His disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He'll send forth laborers into His harvest. Now keep in mind, this is still in the context of compassion.

Now there's a lot of people that go into the harvest. And some of them just stand on corners and just throw scripture at people. Now that can have an effect and thank God for that.

But quite often compassion is not the reason. It's not the undergirding reason why people are going into the mountains of human need. Sometimes it's just to prove a theological point.

Sometimes it's just to earn favor with God. Or their church they attend has just put them into a program and they feel obligated to do this. But in spite of all this, I don't know about you, but I would rather be out there filled with the compassion of God.

I'd rather be speaking because I'm compelled of God to speak. I'd rather be giving because something in my heart is being moved by the Holy Ghost to give to those that have need. I'd rather move in the compassion of Christ than the compulsion of religion, folks.

There's a huge difference between the two. Matthew chapter 14, again, as we go ahead. Just in this one gospel.

Matthew chapter 14 and verse 13. When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart. And when the people had heard thereof, they followed Him on foot out of the cities.

And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion towards them and He healed their sick. Now a lot of people want to pray for people. They want the sick to be healed.

They want the demon possessed to be free. But it's not so much moving by compassion. It's just we have this inner obligation to kind of prove the existence of God to ourselves if not to anybody else.

And I wonder sometimes the miracles not happen. Do we pray in vain? Are we reaching out? And it seems that the storehouse of God's power is locked to us because the motive is not right. We're not reaching out with the right reasons because we do have within us this heart of God that wants to reach those who have no helper.

And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, verse 15, and said, This is a desert place and the time has now passed. Send the multitudes away. Send them away.

That they can go into villages and buy victuals or food for themselves. That's kind of the way we operate a lot of times. We, I mean collectively, the body of Christ.

Send them away. Send them away. There's resources somewhere.

Send them away. The word that we've spoken to them is good enough. But Jesus said to them, they do not need to depart.

You give them something to eat. And then they said to Him, we have only five loaves and two fishes. He said, bring them to me.

And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass. Took the five loaves and the two fishes. And looking up to heaven, He blessed and break and gave the loaves to His disciples.

And the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat and were filled. And they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

And they that had eaten were about five thousand men besides women and children. Feeds five thousand. Because He's moved with compassion.

I want to suggest that the storehouse of God is unlocked through compassion. When you and I have the sense to allow this compassion of Christ to become part of our hearts. And allow God to do this deep work

within us.

The storehouse begins to be opened. Chapter 15 and verse 32. Then Jesus called His disciples to Him.

And He said, I have. What does it say in your Bible? I have compassion on the multitude. Because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat.

And I will not send them away fasting. Unless they faint in the way. And of course this is another situation where He fed four thousand the same way.

Taking the resources that were available. And through this compassion the power of God was unlocked. Verse 38 says, they that did eat were four thousand men besides women and children.

If we take this to another level. I'm not going to speak about it so much this morning. But Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 18 linked the root of forgiveness to compassion.

Matthew 20, 34. He linked the healing of the two blind men to compassion. You can see it all the way through the scriptures.

The raising of a widow's son. He had pity on her. You can see this compassion of God.

But folks it's just a continuation of what we already know. From the gospel of John chapter 3 verse 16. God so loved the world.

God was so moved towards the plight. Your hunger and mine. Your starving soul and mine.

Your hopeless future and mine. He was so moved with compassion. That He gave His only begotten Son.

That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. I thank God that it was not obligation that came to me. It was compassion.

I thank God that the cross was not just some legal proving ground. For God saying, listen I'm just going to do my part. Now you got to do yours.

I thank God there was so much more on that cross. It was the absolute compassion of God that caused His arms to be nailed wide open. To whosoever will could come and receive the supply of His life.

The supply of provision. It was open through a compassionate Savior folks. And it will always be open through a church that has embraced that heart of compassion.

In this or any other generation. I hope you can see today how utterly diabolical every gospel is. That turns the reason for walking with God inward.

And creates a selfless thing in the heart. That's why the provision will be locked in many places in our generation. The life of Christ is to move out from us.

To a hurting and a dying world. We're not to hoard to ourselves. We're to give to those that have need around us.

Compassion does not mean sorrow. A lot of people misunderstand that. If I become a compassionate person I just walk down the street going boo-hoo-hoo all day.

At all the human need. No, no. Compassion is deeper than sorrow.

Jesus Christ Himself in the scriptures had moments of exuberance and great joy. He was a delightful man to be around. Sinners were not comfortable in their sin.

But they were surely comfortable in the presence of their Savior. No, compassion does not mean sorrow. Compassion is something deeper than sorrow.

It's an inner sense born of God. That God you've got to release through my hands. Whatever it is that is needed in this situation Lord.

It's not right that your creation should be like this. That your children should be hungry. That the house of God should be in bondage.

That somebody should not know the freedom that Christ has fully bought for them on Calvary. God Almighty release it through my hands. Compassion is an inner moving in the heart of a person.

It's born in the church of Christ within us. It leads a person to the type of action that may seem impossible to perform in the natural. Remember four lepers went into the camp.

That's where the provision was. The hearts were moved with compassion. In 1958, David Wilkerson came to New York City.

Moved by compassion. To help some street boys who had committed murder. Because they were starved of love and hope and all provision for change.

It was an impossible task. He didn't have the resources to do this. He didn't have the reputation.

And in the natural, even in the press, it looked like a ridiculous action. But I want to suggest to you that compassion unlocks something of heaven. David Wilkerson went into a courtroom.

Was goaded by the media to hold up a Bible. Stood on what he believed God was calling him to do. Didn't know how it could happen.

Just knew there were several boys that needed to know that God loved them. Yes, they were going to jail probably the rest of their lives. But they needed to know that there was hope.

They needed to know that things could change. And from that action of compassion, Teen Challenge has been formed. One of the largest drug and alcohol Christ-based programs on the face of the earth today.

World Challenge was born out of that heart of compassion. World Challenge is today feeding orphans. Providing for pastors.

Paying the wages of missionaries. And staff workers in places where the needy are all throughout the world. Compassion.

Released. Did Brother Wilkerson have any idea what was about to happen? What was about to flow through his hands? What kind of resource God was about to give him? How much good has been done in the world? Oh folks, only heaven is going to recount how much good has been done in the world. From one heart moved with compassion.

Not compulsion. Compassion. There's a huge difference.

Many people are moved by compulsion, but that never unlocks the supply. And then in 1987, Times Square Church came into existence here in New York City. Church that has reached out to the poor, the marginalized, the addicted, and the homeless throughout the world.

Since its inception. In 2001, I became the senior pastor of Times Square Church. Pastor David told me that he was here essentially to undergird me.

To hold up my hands. To give me advice. To help me in the journey ahead.

And to help bring about a smooth transition in this church. Now earlier this year, he returned to New York City after a short stay in Texas. And he spoke to me something that really stirred my heart.

He said, I've come back for two reasons. Now the first reason he spoke about, and we both understood that reason. And he said, but there's another reason.

A second reason that I don't know. I don't know why I've returned to New York City. Now he had never fully left New York City, but he was spending some time in Texas with family.

And he said, I don't know why the Lord has brought me back full time. Into New York City. So I began to pray about it.

I said, God, why have you brought Brother Dave back here? Full time. I'm not talking about just coming back every third or fourth week. But full time in New York City.

What was the reason for this? And the Lord told me, I brought him back to speak to you. And I'm so sure I heard the voice of God. That I went to his apartment one day.

We sat in his office and I said, I know why you're back here. Full time. The Lord brought you back to speak to me.

So I said, here I am. And I sat in his office and I said, speak to me. And he looked at me and said, I don't have anything to say.

And it was a rather uncomfortable moment, I think, for both of us. And I said, but I know that God sent you here to speak to me. And then he looked at me again and said, but I don't have anything to say.

So we arranged that we'd meet again the next week. And see if things got any better. But they didn't.

And we realized after a while the meetings were rather pointless. Now how many today know that the finest sermons aren't in words? And I began to say, God, you brought Pastor David here. And I sense in my heart that we are running more or less.

If it was a relay race, we're coming around the corner. And the passing of the baton is happening. And we're running together.

I don't know. And thank God, I pray it'd be another 10 years. But I have watched.

The Lord just said, I'm going to speak to you. Just watch. So since Brother Dave came back to New York City, I've watched a man filled with compassion.

Filled with compassion for his wife and his family. Ministering so tenderly to his wife in these golden years that God has given them. Focused, not completely, but largely on her well-being and her happiness.

I've watched him come in on Thursday nights. And when I haven't been there, I've gotten the reports of what was said. And I've watched him come in, as he said, with a cup of cold water.

And all that is flowing from this man's heart is compassion. I don't know if you've noticed that lately. Compassion for you and for me.

Because he knows the days are going to be difficult ahead for us. I read his blog every day on the devotionals. And I see nothing.

I don't hear anything but the compassion of God now. Compassion that says, listen, the resource will be there. God will be there.

You don't have to be afraid. You're going to get through. He'll be faithful to you.

I don't know if you've noticed this. And I saw, in fact, that he had been speaking. And he had been sent of the Lord to speak to me.

And God showed me that the ministry of Times Square Church will only be strong if it finishes as it has begun. There has to be a compassion in this church that is born of the Spirit of God. The Lord has once more shown us the key to unlocking the provision of God for our city and for our generation.

Remember, David Wilkerson started by coming to New York in his car, filled with compassion. There's been an unlocking of spiritual and physical resource that has touched much of the known world today. Through one man, one heart, who moved in compassion.

And now he's come back into the church, and he's moving in that same spirit in which the life of God and the ministry of God through him started. He's finishing the way he started, folks. Now, I'm not saying he's finished, but he's finishing.

It's the last leg of the journey. And through his life, I've seen where the power of God really is. I found myself in the prayer closet recently, lifting up my cup and saying, Lord, I'm only a third of where I need to be.

I don't think compassion has been my strong point. But part of the change is the willingness to be honest with God. Not pretending we are something that we're not.

I have a measure of compassion, but I lack in this area, and I know I lack. And I've taken it to the Lord and said, God, the other day I was praying and said, Lord, there's a song that goes, Fill my cup, Lord. I lift it up, Lord.

Come and quench this thirsting in my soul. Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more. Fill my cup, fill it up, and make me whole.

Times Square Church will only be effective in our generation in so much that we move in the compassion of God. And if ever I've heard from the Lord, this has been hard. I don't know if it's because I'm an ex-cop or what it is.

There's just stuff in all of us, right? Is that fair to say that? And we don't bend easy. We don't break easy. We want to hold to, my view is good enough.

It's right. It's gotten me this far. God's been with me.

And the Lord says, no, I want to take you farther than you've ever gone before. I want to do something deeper than you've ever known. I want to work something of my life into you that you lack in.

And it takes guts to just agree with God and not call ourselves something that God doesn't see as fully as. I'm not ashamed to say to you today that I lack in this area. I would be ashamed if I stood here as a fraud and said, yes, I'm a man filled with compassion.

I'm not. I'm moving in that direction. It's not easy.

Like I said at the beginning, if there was something called Brokenness 101, I would have taken it a long time ago. But there's no other way that God can get through these hard parts in us but to put us on an anvil from time to time and put a sermon before us that we've not been able to hear. It's not that I've never been willing to hear it.

I've not been able to fully hear it until now. I think I've cried more in the last couple of weeks than I have in a long, long time. But it's a good washing.

It's like a cleansing going on inside of me. We have to be a church of compassion. And if we are a church of compassion, I do believe that in the coming year, the Lord will unlock to us the most incredible resources of heaven.

If, if, we are willing to not store them in our tents and go back into a city that may have caused us pain, and go back to neighbors that maybe were not kind to you, go back to people that you've never appreciated, go back to places that you rather have not returned to, but you will be the ones, we will be the ones coming back with the provision of heaven. Not only the physical provision, but the spiritual provision. I've heard Pastor David say of our coming days that this is going to be a time of the miraculous, and I truly believe it.

I was thinking again last night of the time that twenty people came to our house one Sunday. Unexpectedly. One family with five kids that had nowhere to go.

We had a pound of hamburger in our home. On the counter, two cans of tomatoes, and my brother, feeling pity for us, went out and got two little tins of pre-prepared spaghetti sauce. We invited everybody in.

How do you turn away a hungry family? Where do you send seven people that have nowhere to go for lunch? Filled a whole pot with spaghetti. And I remember just, my wife just started ladling it out. She said, she felt in her heart God saying, just don't look in the, just don't worry about it.

Just keep giving it out. Twenty people ate on one pound of hamburger, folks. And there were leftovers.

It was truly, we've seen it. We've walked in it. I've known it.

We do not feed anybody out of obligation. We've fed them out of compassion. And when you and I are willing to do this, God is going to multiply the supply to us.

You're going to know a sweetness and a joy like you've never believed was possible in your entire life. If you and I are willing to move where God calls us and not hoard the supply that He puts into our hearts, we're going to live again in the miraculous, in the very, very new future. Now, Father, I thank you, God, with all my heart for this word today.

I know this is the future of this church. God, I want to thank you first for speaking to my heart. I want to thank you for Pastor David.

I want to thank you for a godly man. I want to thank you, Lord, that instead of just speaking to me, he chose to live it before me and created a greater sermon, a greater illustration than any words could ever have put into my heart. I do thank you, God, for your faithfulness in coming and speaking to me, Lord, not letting me take this church in a direction that would rob it of the supply of heaven.

Oh, Jesus, I pray that you increase us on every side, increase our borders, oh, God. Give us the resources, Lord, and make us kind to the unthankful and to the unholy, to everyone, God, beginning at the house of faith and beyond this, Lord, into the streets of this city. Let it be known again, God, as in the days of old, that there's bread in Bethlehem.

There's food and supply in the house of God. I pray, God, that you touch so many people that it create a space problem for churches all over the city. Oh, Jesus, oh, Jesus, oh, Jesus, come to us and be glorified.

Be glorified in the days we have to face, oh, God. I thank you for this with all my heart, God. I thank you, and I praise you in your mighty and holy name.

I want to give an altar call this morning, and it's just for those who say, God, I hear what you're saying, and I'm asking you to make me a man, a woman of compassion, and I'm asking you, Lord, to give me open hands and an open heart and help my heart to feel what the needs of people in the world, in this city around me. If I could, if you would allow me to be considered the first one at this altar this morning, although I have to stand in the pulpit, I am at this altar in my heart. I want to be a man of compassion.

I want this church to walk in the compassion of God. As we stand, if the Lord's speaking to you, please come just join me. We're going to pray together in the annex.

If you could stand between the screens, if you will. And we're going to pray together. Let's take a moment to worship.

If you and I are people of compassion, we will be amazed at the resources that God is going to put in our hands these coming days. Be amazed. Don't be gripped by unbelief.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. And what he did for those four leprous men he will do for you and I. We just simply move in faith and have a willingness in our heart to come back to the city with what God has given to us. That's really the key.

That will make the testimony of Christ great in our generation. We don't keep it to ourselves. We give it for others.

Everything that God does, let the focus be outward now. When you pray, don't just pray for this church. Pray for every church in New York City.

Pray for the churches by name. Get a list if you have to. Pray for them by name.

Go on to nycprayer.org and just list the churches with prayer meetings and pray for those churches. Let's believe God for the mightiest move of God that New York City has ever seen in any generation. I believe that with all my heart now.

I think the evidence that that's coming is the deep work that the Holy Spirit is doing in us now as a people. He will always prepare his people before he moves so that we don't touch the glory and we don't take what God does for ourselves. Hallelujah.

Paul the Apostle said to you, though you have 10,000 teachers, you've not many fathers in Christ. If you and I can hear the lesson that the Lord is speaking to this church, we'll be wise people. Now, Father, we just come before you today.

God, I want to especially thank you for Pastor David. I want to thank you for the grace, God, that has always emanated from this man's life. I thank you for the sincerity of his pursuit of you.

I thank you, God, for how you are continuously speaking to us, Lord, through his life. Help us, Lord, to carry on this legacy, Father, of compassion. Don't help us.

God, don't let us move to strategy. Don't let us move to trying to figure things out. God, keep us moving with the heart of Christ.

Father, we thank you, Lord, that as we do, you'll unlock the resources of Christ's life, the provision of heaven, God, spiritual and physical. We thank you for it, Lord. God, thank you.

That's all I can say today. Thank you, Lord, that you're guiding us. Thank you that you're leading us as a people of God.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

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