

# When Prophets Return to the Gate

by Carter Conlon

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*The sermon warns against the danger of spiritual reprobation, where people turn away from the true image of God in Christ and create a false image of God that suits their own desires.*

**Duration:** 48:57

**Scripture:** Exodus 15:22, Proverbs 29:18

**Topics:** "Prophets"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not ignoring or passing by suffering that we encounter in our daily lives. He highlights the significance of displaying love to one another as a way to bring God and Christ to reputation. The speaker also discusses the biblical story of the Israelites finding bitter water in the wilderness, drawing parallels to our own spiritual journey and the need for a vision of God. He encourages the audience to seek a deeper understanding of God's image and to allow Him to expand their borders, growing in faith and bringing Christ's reputation to every aspect of their lives.

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## Transcript

Let's pray together. Father, thank you for this day. Thank you for this time together in your house.

Thank you, Lord, for anointing of the Holy Spirit. Lord, if it wasn't for you and for your presence and for your anointing, all we would have is theories about God. I thank you, Lord, that we have a living relationship.

I thank you, God, that you are bringing us into something of your life that, Lord, will delight our hearts. Give us the courage to hear your Word. Give me the strength to speak it.

I thank you, Lord, that you will expand the borders of this frail vessel. You'll give me abilities that I don't naturally possess. You'll give me thoughts, Lord, that are deeper than my own.

You'll give me strength in leading. I pray that you animate me, help me to get out of the way. Animate me, Lord, so that even the intonations of my voice come from your heart.

I thank you, Lord, that you have a bride and a people in this generation, Lord, that will truly glorify you in the midst of whatever happens. We thank you for it. I praise you in Jesus' mighty name.

Second Corinthians chapter 13. I'm going to be speaking message number nine in the Corinthian problem series. And for those who have not been following this series, it's the Apostle Paul coming to the church in Corinth, a church living in a very central, affluent society, very selfish society.

And in measure, that spirit had found a residence and was still occupying the thinking and the hearts of many of the people in this church in Corinth. They had not made the break as it is from the society around them. And because they hadn't made this break, it was opening the door to divisions, dissensions, court battles, false prophets and preachers were rising up that were catering to this self-interest that was still very much at the foundation of a lot of the people's thinking.

All types of problems. There was immorality in the church that people were not even grieved over. They were not even dealing with it.

These things had found an open door and they were all on that foundation of God's own people, not fully understanding what it meant to be part of the body of Christ, what it really meant to identify with the Savior. And Paul, you'll see this thread all the way through 1st and 2nd Corinthians. And if you read it in that context, all of a sudden the scripture comes alive and you see what the Holy Spirit was actually doing as these words flowed from the pen of this precious apostle.

2nd Corinthians chapter 13, message title is When Prophets Return to the Gate. When Prophets, that's P-R-O-P-H-E-T-S, Return to the Gate. 2nd Corinthians 13 beginning at verse 1. Paul said, this is the third time I'm coming to you.

In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. I told you before and foretell you as if I were present the second time and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned and to all other that if I come again I will not spare. Since you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me which to you word is not weak but is mighty in you.

For though he was crucified through weakness yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you. Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith.

Prove your own selves. Know you not your selves how that Christ, Jesus Christ is in you except you be reprobates. But I trust that you shall know that we are not reprobates.

Now this message today is about the danger of spiritual reprobation. Now spiritual reprobation happens where the natural mind, that means the fallen man in his own natural thinking as opposed to the spiritual mind which is a new mind that is given to us in Jesus Christ. This natural mind is allowed to take control and lead him into fashioning and embracing an image of God which is incorrect.

And folks we're living at that time. We're living in such an hour. Much of the gospel that is on our airwaves today, not all thank God, but much of it is another Christ.

It's another Jesus. It's another image of God. It's something fashioned out of the minds of men.

Paul speaks about a reprobation in verse 5 and here's the official definition. It's something that is unapproved. It's undiscerning.

It is empty of judgment. It possesses a mindset that is abhorred by God and it should be abhorred by man. Now Paul said examine yourselves.

Take a look at what image you're following. Who is the Christ that you're serving? He was trying to get this through to the Corinthian church all the way through these two books. He's now come to the conclusion actually in second Corinthians chapter 13 and now he's saying examine yourself in the light of all I've written to you and how I've shown you what true ministry is, who the real Christ is.

Now I want you to examine yourselves and see if the Jesus that you've fashioned is the Christ of the scriptures. The Christ Paul says that has been revealed to me. Paul said in second Corinthians chapter 11 just back a little bit in verse 4 he said I fear in verse 3 actually he says I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

For if he that comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached or if you receive another spirit which you have not received or another gospel which you've not accepted you might well bear with him.

Paul is saying to the church in your present condition if someone comes to you with another Christ you might stop you might pause you might begin to listen to this message and you might begin to give it consideration and Paul says listen I'm concerned about it I have this I have this foreboding in my heart that you're going to fall to the same subtlety that came to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden that there is another way to godliness that there is another image that you can embrace other than the image of God which Satan is always coming to God's people and saying this image is not sufficient this do you really want to look like this this is what the preachers that were rising up in Corinth were telling the people look at this man he's weak he's poverty stricken as it is and Paul said

I have nothing but I possess everything he said I am as weak but I'm making others strong yet Paul had the real treasure of heaven in his life but they were pointing to him and they were saying to the church at that time do you really want to look is this what you think that Christ makes you look like do you want to look like this do you want to follow this same journey or wouldn't you rather look like us and you can just see them just as we're living with this kind of a message that is found inroads into much of what testifies to be of Christ in our generation now the reprobate is a person who blocks out of his mind the image of God which he doesn't want to follow and he creates a new image which he finds much better to his liking that's exactly what happened in exodus the people came

out of Egypt they they traveled only a short distance really and they finally in their hearts they wanted to go back to what they left behind this is this was the problem in Corinth they they simply couldn't make the break from the the ways into thinking of that society and they they said we remember the flesh pots and we remember the the vegetables and things that we could sit around and the bread and we could fill our bellies with these things there was a self-consumption still very much at the core of the people and they wanted to go back but in order to do so they had to block out this image of God and his messenger Moses and this image that was leading them in a direction which to their flesh they found very very unappealing go with me now to the book of exodus chapter 15 if you will

second book in the old testament for those who are new to the Lord exodus chapter 15 and verse 22 now the scripture says so Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea and they went out into the wilderness ashore and they went three days into the wilderness now and found no water now they had just come through they'd seen the miraculous they'd watched this provision of God destroying their enemies and they're

three days in the wilderness and they started to complain and when they came to Mara they could not drink in the waters for they were bitter and they called of it Mara and verse 24 says the people murmured against Moses saying what shall we drink and they cried unto the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters the waters were made sweet and there he made

for them a statutes and an ordinance and there he proved them three days and they found no water that appealed to them now folks everything here is a type of Christ everything in this bible speaks of Jesus Christ if you see the scriptures in that context all of a sudden they begin to come alive to you God had one thing in mind he had a son that was going to come to this earth before the foundation of the world he had a bride that was going to be redeemed out of a fallen condition this bride was going to be empowered by the Holy Spirit cleansed by the blood that would be shed on calvary and this bride would bring the name of God to reputation and honor in the earth and God saw this now here's a type the people are coming out of Egypt like you and I have come out of sin when you came to

Christ they're walking and they they find the waters bitter and they don't want to drink what is before them and Moses was shown by God a tree and when he cast this tree which is a type of the cross of Christ when he cast this tree into the water all of a sudden the bitter was made sweet you see the self-focused person will never be satisfied on the Christian journey until the giving of ourselves as Christ did for others is the central core of why we are walking with God you'll never be satisfied you'll travel from conference to conference and place to place and you will complain about the waters you will look in the scriptures it will seem too hard it will be remote it will be distant it will be bitter to swallow you won't like what you look at until the giving of yourself is the very

central core of why you walk with God folks there has to be an understanding in our generation your heart and in my heart I'm not called to live for myself I'm not called to use Christ for my own glory I'm not called to build something of myself with Christ being the foundation I'm called to give of myself for the purposes of God I'm called to walk the pathway of God that he set before my life bringing honor and glory to his name as he changes me from image to image and glory to glory gives me the ability to endure what natural men cannot endure the ability to give where natural men fall short the ability to be and to do the very work of God in the earth this giving of oneself is at the central core and that's why so many people now are dissatisfied so many people are running from pillar

to post all through the Christian community looking for a word a thought something from someone somewhere the word that you're looking for is right here if you've been among these that are traveling the circuit looking for God give of yourself for others let your life be used as a living sacrifice for God which the scripture says is your reasonable service think of the multitudes following Jesus in John chapter 6 you don't have to turn there and suddenly he turns to them and he says truly I say to you except a man except you eat of the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood you have no life in you and as the living father has sent me and as I live by the father so he that eats me he shall live by me Christ was saying you need the power of another life within you to finish this

journey you need the power to put your old life away you need a new mind a new heart and you need a new spirit but can you see the people looking and saying to themselves well this is not the image of God that I had in mind I would I was willing to follow as long as I was seeing the miracles and thought well perhaps maybe I could lay hold of some of that power perhaps I could have influence over men but I had an image I had a vision as it is of what God was going to make me that is the greatest hindrance I think to so many people now this coming into the presence of God and God revealing himself and saying well

that's not quite what I had in mind that's not what following you was supposed to be about and verse 66 says from that time many of his disciples went back and and walk no more

with him now the scripture doesn't imply that they ceased from religion as a matter of fact I think they got even more religious but the reality is they stopped walking with him they said no this this is this is really not what we want and the bottom line is they turned from the image of God God was manifested in the flesh the expressed image of God was in Jesus Christ John himself said we we beheld him as the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth is the glory the doxa that that which brings God to reputation John says was on him and we saw it we beheld it and I can't think of I can't imagine how many people now of that time how many now know this was the image of God we stood before God we saw God we heard God God was clearly revealing himself to us but you see we didn't

want to hear this this this is not the mindset of that society this this was not the the general thinking of the religious populace we we don't want this this simple ordinariness that we see before us this common man who seems to be given for others doesn't use his power for himself he's not gathering an army that we can see with our natural eye is not is not pressing into the hallways of political power and not using his influence the way we think it should be used when the crowds gather he seems to get in a boat and go somewhere else everywhere we think he should go he doesn't go everything we think he should do he doesn't do and they looked at him and just as Isaiah said they saw nothing in him that they should desire him and they walked away it was like a root out of dry ground it was

like an uncomely tree to them he was like a fruit that's to be despised and they looked and they didn't want this image of Christ and they turned and they walked away from the image of God now how do people do this how do how do people walk away how do people sit in church and actually walk away from Christ no they don't walk away from religion but they walk away from Christ they probably become more zealous than ever before they probably travel more they probably go into more conventions they probably travel the circuit more than they ever did before always looking for some new corner on God unaware that they've seen him and walked away from him we're living at that time folks i make no apologies for that statement we're living at a time of religious deception in the name of Christ

exodus 32 1 tells us how they did it how did they walk away and here it's very simple and they said as for this Moses in verse 1 the men that brought us up out of the land of Egypt we want not or we don't know what has become of him that's really the issue they said we don't know what's become of him he's too distant he's invisible he's hard to understand he's hard to follow everything we hoped that we'd be led to through him is taking too long to happen it's only a few days folks a few months at this point but they're saying no we don't we don't we can't see this man we don't know where he's gone he's too far too distant too invisible now we know what we'd like God to look like so let's make him of gold let's let's make him a God of personal advantage and wealth and let's point him in a

direction where we want him to go and that's exactly what they did when when a society is turning away from the image of God they will recreate a God in the image of gold and this is a God that doesn't lead them this is a God they begin to lead because now they're free to fashion him any way they want they're free to make him say whatever they think he should be saying they don't have to listen they don't have to follow they can point him in any direction they want him to go a God of personal advantage a God of gold Jesus said in Matthew 6 23 if the light that be in you be darkness how great is that darkness if you know biblical truth that it's turning you away from the image of God there is a darkness that comes into your soul much deeper than the darkness of sin the deepest darkness

that you'll ever find in this world is a religious darkness now keep in mind that Jesus is speaking of many people who are seeing the express image of God in human form would soon call out for his death it doesn't get any darker than that there are people in that crowd that are very shortly going to be saying crucify him we do not want this image of God we we are this is not who we think God is crucify this image of God we're living in a generation now where they're saying get rid of the blood in all of our theology get the cross out of what we preach get rid of this God crucify this God put him to death that's darkness folks it's the it's as deep as darkness will get if the light that be in you be darkness how great Jesus said is that darkness Paul said in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 in the

last days perilous times are coming I believe we're living there now men will be lovers of self themselves that's where that's where we'll all come to there and this self-love will invade the church the professing church it will never invade the true church but it will invade the professing church of Jesus Christ and in this love of self men will be ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth never come to the simplicity of understanding that I'm called to be given for others I'm not called to live for myself I'm not called to use God for my own comfort I'm called for you and in turn you are called for others and we are all called for one another we are we are called in a sense I think this is a divine moment in the history of this city simply in the fact that this

church and perhaps a few others have over 100 nations in it a living testimony to this generation that unity that the whole world seeks can be found it can be enjoyed it can be real but it can only be in Christ and it can only be found among people who are given for one another not living for ourselves because if you live for yourself you'll hold grudges there will be divisions as we're getting into the Corinthian church Paul very clearly pointed that out but if we are given for one another if we've died to living for ourselves we will forgive we will forget we will move on in Christ they will resist he says Paul says in 2nd Timothy in verse 8 chapter 3 verse 8 he said they will resist the concept of being abandoned to God and yielded for the good of others there will be a ministry but it

will resist the simplicity that Paul says was in Moses when Moses appeared in Pharaoh's court a man simply abandoned to God and standing for the good of others not standing for himself not seeking power not looking for political office not looking for gold or gain this man is standing for the good of others he's standing because there is a cry in the hearts of over three million people whose children are being thrown into the river who are being fed straw and they're sent out to make monuments for men's egos and there's a cry it came and because of the cry this abandoned man appears but there was a ministry that had gained access to the throne of pharaoh they're called Janus and Jambres and the scripture says they withstood Moses they're the type of a ministry that withstands the

simplicity of being personally abandoned for the good of others we're living at such a time now Paul says in 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 18 but we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord Paul said if you if we are looking at the image of God if in my heart and yours we can come to the point of saying yes this is the Christ this is the son of God these are his words these are his ways I want this oh God if you called me to take up my cross if you called me to be abandoned all the days of my life for the good of other men and women and children in this world and so be it that's the path that I choose if I'm brought to no reputation that you might be seen and heard if I

might have to be nothing that you might be everything even as the apostle Paul if I may have to go to prison at the end of my days and all I can do is take a pen and begin to write a few letters and so be it I will

trust that there's a purpose in all things that you allow my life to go through Paul says as we behold this image we are changed from glory to glory by the spirit of the Lord and the word in the Greek and it means that inward life of Christ that brings the person of God to reputation in the earth we are changed and our lives begin to bring God to reputation praise be to God a God to be reckoned with in our generation as you and I begin to do the simple things as we begin to take groceries to somebody that has nothing to eat as we begin to put a hand and speak comforting words

on somebody's shoulder that nobody else cares about in society we start bringing God to reputation praise be to God God comes to reputation in the simple things this giving when we get to the point in life where we can't walk by suffering anymore we can't cross the other side of the road as we're on our way to church on Sunday morning we see suffering it could be somebody just crying on a park fence but we see suffering and we can't pass it by anymore we can't turn off the station or change the radio channel when we hear about suffering in some country we can't pass it by anymore bringing God to reputation bringing Christ to reputation Jesus himself inferred in John 13 35 he says all men will know that you're my disciples when they witness the love that you display to one another this

this this love that is evidenced by a sacrificial and continuous giving of oneself that is rarely lastingly found among the self-interested of this world as they see it they will know that you're my disciples not because you have the right theology not because you speak in tongues as great as all that is but they see this giving of yourselves to one another and they will know praise be to God thank God proverbs 29 18 says where there's no vision the people perish and really that what that means there's the living bible says it this way where there is an ignorance of God the people run wild where there's no vision where there's no image the people run wild why are people running wild in our generation think it through folks is it possible is it possible that much of the church of Jesus

Christ is not the image of God is it possible folks to can we at least look there can we at least start thinking about it can we at least have the courage to ask the Holy Spirit God is there some truth in this is it possible that people walk by church after church in our society because there's nothing there that represents God there's nothing that brings God to reputation and honor and then you find the reprobation that Paul speaks about in Romans 1 all the way through the chapter that begins to flow through a society folks it's not ever been up to government to change a culture it's never been given to outside organizations has always been given to you and to me the church of Jesus Christ Paul said in 2nd Corinthians chapter 13 verse 2 if I come again at the end of that verse I will not

spare Paul said I'd like to come I'd like to come with comforting words I'd like to stand I'm sure he's like every other preacher I know he grieved I know how hard it is to preach messages like this sometimes but Paul said I will not spare I must not spare I cannot spare because I've espoused you as a precious bride to Christ I'm jealous over you Paul said with a godly jealousy I want you to know who the real Jesus is and I want you to understand he's worth following I want you to know that there's real spiritual life Paul was telling them I want you to know where the power of God is it's not found in anything that the natural man or the natural mind embraces this is a spiritual kingdom and when you and I are willing to become nothing that Christ may become everything when we're willing

to give our all that others may find life in him Paul said there's power there that the natural carnal preachers don't know anything about and those that were trying to bring this message of reigning and ruling that wasn't true I will not spare I want you to think for a moment Moses comes down from the mountain he sees what the people have done and this righteous indignation comes into his heart he took

the calf that they'd made Exodus 32 tells us and he ground it to powder he burnt it and ground it to powder and then he threw it in the river and he made the people drink it he made them drink of their error he made them see he made them taste of the spiritual foolishness that they was being manifested around them he saw that they were naked before their enemies he saw that they had no

power they could not go into the land of promise they had been made spiritually bankrupt by this god of gold that they'd created they would have no influence said no military power and there would be nothing and Moses knew it and he says no I'd like to just gloss it over but I can't you've got to taste the bitterness of this you've got to be able to taste what this has done to you what it's done to your families what it's done to this entire nation as it is that had come out of captivity god help us in our time that we're living in to be able to see and to understand the bitterness of this error and in Exodus 32 and verse 26 the Bible says that Moses stood in the gate of the camp and he said these simple words Exodus 32 26 Moses stood in the gate of the camp now Moses was a prophet I

don't have time to prove that to you but just look up prophet in your concordance you'll find it he stood in the gate of the camp and said who is on the lord's side let him come unto me and all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him he stepped into the gate and said who is on the lord's side oh god help us it should be the cry of your heart god give us prophets again give us prophets you'll stand in the gate now the gate is where the battle plans are formed the gate is where business is transacted the gate is actually the entrance way into where god dwelt and Moses stood in the gate of the camp and he said who is on the lord's side those of you who want to continue on worshiping this god of gold and you want to head back into selfish self-consumed Egypt then go there but I

want to know who's on the lord's side I want to know who's willing to embrace the image of god I want to know who's willing to follow this god that you can't necessarily see the way you'd like to see him but he's leading you into something you don't understand that's why Paul said in 2nd Corinthians 13 5 he said examine yourselves he said this is the third time I'm going to be coming to you he said examine yourselves and whether you'll be in the faith prove your own selves if it's not Christ that is in you you've followed a reprobation that's what Paul is saying if it isn't the real Christ then you have embraced a reprobate image of Christ it's an image that proves that you're void of judgment which image will I follow you see this is the question I guess that you and I have to answer

every day which Christ will I follow is will I follow a Christ that allows me to be sensual and self-indulgent or will I follow the Christ who as Moses did gave himself to lead millions into freedom which Christ will I follow will I follow this Christ who as Moses did with a simple yet all-consuming passion in his life that fallen men find freedom and return home to God Paul said to them in verse 6 of 2nd Corinthians 13 we are not reprobates Paul says you know we are not reprobates those that have come with me we've come to you we've lived by the power of God because of you we have been quickened because of you Paul says and if you seek a proof of Christ speaking in me says in verse 3 which to you it is not weak but is mighty in you he said Paul said this is the proof that Christ is

speaking there's something supernatural happens in you when you hear the words that come from my mouth I'm speaking on behalf of God and as your hearts are open to what God has to speak something is transpiring Paul said this is the proof that God is with me don't look on the exterior if you look on the exterior look to the natural you'll always be led astray it's it's what God is doing in your heart praise be to God there's so many today who claim to be anointed and they've they've made this the anointing of God this spooky stupid looking thing in the house of God where they're throwing handkerchiefs at people and

just doing all kinds of bizarre foolish things the anointing is that's what happens when the eyes of the people are natural the anointing has got nothing to do with me the

anointing has everything to do with what's happening in your heart right now if there's an anointing on my life then something is happening in your heart that's what Paul's saying to the Corinthians you're changing you're being provoked by God hope is exploding in your heart your eyes are beginning to see things you've never seen before prison doors are beginning to open and you the courage is coming into your heart you're you're you're finding this this desire to get up and go out and be something you could never be in yourself something of God is coming into your life you're you're looking away from the naturalness of man and you're looking now to the supernaturalness of God praise be to God now go to Malachi please this be my last text in chapter three last book in the old testament

now Malachi is the last voice for 400 years before John the Baptist appears on the scene and Malachi speaks of a forerunner to Christ it's it's a voice that God raises now it's it's not in in the case of John the Baptist it was an individual voice that was announcing the coming of Christ at a specific time and location but most commentators agree that there's a duplicity in this last part of Malachi that in the last days voices this same spirit is going to be raised again announcing the coming of Christ there'll be prophets again there'll be men and women of God raised up all through the world all through the church world in particular that will be calling the sons of Levi as it is back again we'll be standing in the gate just like Moses did saying who's on the Lord's side oh praise God

you better thank God if you're sitting in a place anywhere where you can hear this now because the call has come it's time now to find out who's on the Lord's side and who's not there's time it's time that a dividing line a plumb line again as the name is as they fall and the voices be raised again and said enough of this foolishness enough dancing around a golden calf enough self-essential religion who is on the Lord's side who's going to walk with God who's going to embrace the Christ of the Bible who's going to walk with the Christ of the Bible in verse chapter 3 of Malachi says that the Lord that you seek will suddenly come to his temple even the messenger of the covenant verse 2 says who will abide in the day of his coming and who shall stand when he appears he's like a refiner's

fire and fuller soap i want you to just picture Moses coming back down from the mountain as it is and all of this revelry is going on and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver he shall purify the sons of Levi remember it was the sons of Levi that made the break the true worshipers made the break and came back to where Moses was there are true worshipers that are caught in mixture even in our generation but the true children of God recognize the voice of God they recognize when the Holy Spirit is speaking and they stepped out and they made the break and they came to where the voice of God was speaking he will purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness i'll come near to you in judgment he says and i'll be a swift witness against

the sorcerers and the adulterers and false wearers and against those who oppress the hireling at his wages the widow and the fatherless and turn aside the stranger from his right and that do do not fear me says the Lord of hosts now verse 16 they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another and the Lord hearkened and heard it and the book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name and really when you you look at it it's the people who are concerned about the glory of the Lord they thought about his name God what's happening to your name what are men saying about you in the world today how is society responding to you is the conviction of God found in the meeting places where we gather together do sinners come in are they convinced

of their sin are they are they aware of the lostness of their condition how is your name being glorified as we meet corporately and how about individually through my life is your name being brought to reputation in the workplace let me ask you specifically are you bringing Christ to reputation are you honest in your dealings do you speak well of other people when others are tearing them to pieces around you how do you govern your life how do you live in your apartment building when you come home do people know that you're a godly person as you walk down the corridors heading to your apartment have you brought God to reputation through acts of kindness and charity simple things that the Holy Spirit will lead you to do every day have you thought about his name or is it about your name which

name is preeminent in your mind he says in verse 17 and they shall be mine says the Lord of hosts in that day when I make up my jewels and I will spare them as a man spares his own son that serves him in verse 18 says then you will return and discern between the righteous and the wicked between him that serves God and him that serves him not you come back he says and embrace the image of Christ and the very first thing that happens is a discernment comes into your mind you know immediately who's speaking for God and who is not who is serving him and who's pretending to serve him chapter 4 says the day comes that shall burn as an oven all the proud and all the do wickedly shall be stubble and the day that comes shall burn them up says the Lord of hosts it will neither neither root nor

branch but unto you that fear my name shall the son of righteousness arise with healing at his wings and you shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall now this is a promise for the last days for those who come to the image of Christ the true Christ you who fear the name of God he says I will come to you with healing and when everyone is shrinking and all that they thought they were is fading and everything that they thought would give them safety and security is failing when men are casting gold and silver to moles and bats in the earth and are looking for places to hide he says you're going to be going in a completely different direction you're going to be growing in grace you're going to be growing in knowledge you're going to have this interior growth that can only come from

the holy spirit you're going to be expanding your borders on every side you're going to be if you've ever seen I have seen because I live next to a dairy farm one time you see a new calf come out of the stall and make their first appearance in the field and they leap and dance for joy all over the field it's an amazing thing when you get to know cows later on how sedate they are to see them when they're young and when they find their first taste of freedom and he says you're going to grow up as calves of the stall every day every day Paul says image to image and glory to glory something of God is birthed in your heart bringing Christ to reputation everywhere you go thirsting and hungering as it is for more oh God I see what you're doing in my life every morning new mercies are coming into

my heart into my family into my home you're keeping me God you're keeping me through every trial through every difficulty through every hard place he says whenever everybody else is running one way you're going to be going in the completely opposite direction verse 3 says you will tread down the wicked and they will be ashes under the soles of your feet in other words you will have spiritual victory when everyone else is being triumphed over when the Christ that they trusted in finally they find out they've been looking at the wrong Jesus they're left naked and bankrupt before their enemies you're not going to be in that position you're going to have this full armor of God upon you you're going to be walking in the righteousness of Christ the strength and power of the Holy Ghost will be

on you you'll be putting the serpent under your feet where he belongs you'll be walking in victory you'll be singing a song of praise and glory in the midst of the fire hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah you'll be

singing these songs of glory to God knowing knowing knowing as David did though the mountains roar though the sea the mountains fall into the sea and though the seas roar I'm not governed by these things my security is not based on these things I have the life of Christ within me I found the purposes of God I've been walking with God I've been growing in grace this selflessness of Christ has been growing in my heart he says I'll send you verse 5 Elijah the prophet that's the voice of Elijah that's that spirit of Elijah remember Elijah confronted the religious wickedness

of his day built another altar and the glory of God came on that altar and the hearts of the people were turned back to God again I'll send you Elijah the prophet before that coming great and dreadful day of the Lord and he will turn verse 6 the last verse in the Old Testament he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers lest I come and smite the earth with a curse he will destroy the selflessness of fallen humanity he will take that root of selfishness out of your heart you will turn back again to fallen humanity around you fathers looking at coming generations all of a sudden with care and compassion for those that are coming after them children again looking to their spiritual fathers praise be to God praise be to God I see

revival in the midst of whatever is coming our way I see a glorious visitation of God God himself knows that selflessness is what's bringing the curse of sin to bear on the earth he said that's why I'll come and I'll turn this selfishness lest the earth be smitten with the curse praise be to God praise be to God praise be to God is it possible is it possible that we are this generation is it possible that we are the ones that God is calling to return and discern to grow again in the grace of Christ to embrace the Jesus of the Bible is it possible that we are the ones that the scripture speaks about this thought was in my mind I was pacing in my apartment yesterday and praying I said oh God is it possible is it possible that we are these people that Malachi spoke about that are going to

come back again that are going to come to discern and that are going to care with God's heart for other people is it possible that we are this generation that's going to bring Christ to reputation again and I was thinking last night if I give an altar call and people stand up and move to the altar and truly mean it in their hearts if I had the courage to stand and say who is on the Lord's side is it possible that this scripture will be fulfilled in measure I think it's being fulfilled all over the world at this hour but is it possible in measure it will be fulfilled today think about it for a moment that that your name was actually written here that God saw you getting out of your seat I'm not doing this I've moved way beyond having to an altar to appear successful I'm not doing this

for that reason I'm doing it for you because the journey begins with a step and I remember the first day I got out of my seat in a church and made that journey to the altar and it's a journey that's never stopped but it began with a step it is significant for some people I know it's an issue of the heart but for some people the first step is significant what the Lord told me to say to you today is no matter what you've done no matter where you are no matter what you have to get through if you get here Christ will receive you Moses said Moses looked out from the gate and what a mess there were orgies going on there the people were naked before their enemies they're worshipping a cow it doesn't get any worse it was a cow that's what they were worshipping made of gold it doesn't get any darker

after having seen all the miracles this is where they got to and Moses stood in Christ's stead and said who is on the Lord's side let him come let him come remember Jesus said whosoever will whoever's thirsty whoever can say this this is this is bankrupt where I'm living is bankrupt and I don't want to live here anymore but I see Moses standing there and the call is very clear no matter where you are or what you've

done no matter how jaded your view even if Christ has been I will receive you if you will be on the Lord's side and that's my altar call this morning who's on the Lord's side I want to I speak to every confused person every backslider every person who's been playing games and you know you're playing games with God every person who's been your whole purpose even coming to church

is what can I get from God today not what can God do through me and how can I be given but what can I get and finally there's somebody standing in the gate says this is not God here's where God is who is on the Lord's side and I see it's significant because in Exodus it says the sons of Levi the Levites got up and the Levites are the worst person the Levites got up and they just ran I can see them running out now there's a mixed multitude there that are not going to go anywhere they like the cow they like they like the free sex they don't like they don't like conviction they like to live licentiously they like to they like a God that lets them fornicate and do all these things and have and live a rebel versus it is lifestyle they like that and they're still assured that they're going

somewhere and so they're not going to move and there may be some here today like that that's part of the tragedy I guess of the human condition but there are people here today who will say I'm going with God I'm going with the Christ of the book I'm going to be given no matter how I've lived no matter how compromised I am I hear today that Christ will receive me and he will give me these things that are promised in the bible I'll have joy and victory I'll be given the ability to be given for others in in starting in my own home I'll be given that ability that's where it all starts folks and then it will kind of move out from there but if you need to be on the Lord's side today we're going to take a moment to worship and as we do and we stand together in the annex you could step up between

the screens if the Lord's moved you to do that and for those in the main sanctuary the balcony you can slip to either side just make your way to this altar and we'll pray together let's stand the Holy Spirit is speaking to you just come now if I read it correctly the end result of agreeing with the word of God and embracing the right Jesus is joy healing and power so I think we should just rejoice now I think it's just clap your hands give God glory praise God praise God praise God praise God thank you Lord thank you Lord thank you Lord thank you God thank you Lord oh Lord we give you praise and glory thank you Lord thank you God bless God let's let's sing one more song you've got to rejoice you can't go heavy-hearted you've moved forward and the Lord has received you now you got to

settle it in your heart God says I've received you I've received you now there's going to be an explosion of grace come into your life an explosion of new thinking an explosion of new feeling as you grow in this grace of God praise be to God you have to rejoice before the Lord God bless

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