

# The Ministry of Restoration - Part 2

by Dick Hussey

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*The sermon explores God's ministry of restoration, emphasizing His provision for the weary and the significance of priesthood in our spiritual journey.*

**Scripture:** Ezra 7:14, Ezra 7:28, Jeremiah 31:9, Jeremiah 31:33, Acts 4:31, Acts 4:33, Colossians 4:6

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Gods Provision"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by sharing a personal story from his time in the Argentine army. He reflects on the hollowness of empty words and expresses a desire for the Word of God to bring forth reality in our lives. The preacher then focuses on three words from different verses: oven, pan, and frying pan, to illustrate the idea of variety in God's provision. He emphasizes that while there is variety, God does things His own way. The sermon concludes with a reference to Acts 4:31, where the disciples prayed and were filled with the Holy Spirit, leading to boldness in speaking the word of God and unity among believers.

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## Transcript

Before I start, I'd like to say that Christmas time last year, when we were still in Spain or about to move to England, we received a large beautiful card packed with signatures and lots of love and good wishes from many of you. The love and the good wishes came through indeed. We received it and it was a great blessing to us and thank you so so much.

Let's turn again to God's Word in Jeremiah and we'll be reading now from chapter 31 starting at verse 9. While you look for it, we were sharing last night that this is part of what we call four golden chapters of this book of Jeremiah where incredible, sweet, blessed promises of restoration and wonderful, wonderful goodness are made by the Lord through his prophet. Verse 9 then, They shall come with weeping and with supplications will I lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble.

But I am a father to Israel and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of him that was strong than he.

Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord for wheat and for wine and for oil and for the young of the flock and of the herd. And their soul shall

be as a watered garden and they shall not sorrow any more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together.

For I will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord. And verse 25 and 26, For I have satiated the weary soul and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

Upon this I awaked and beheld, and my sleep was sweet unto me. There is a great difference between reading the word of God, shall I say, in a customary or even a casual way, or just with the natural human perception you may have proved this many times as I have reading precious passages like this when somehow you know that inside them there's something wonderful, but it doesn't come through somehow. And yet you can read the same passage knowing that you're in the Spirit.

And my every word comes with weight and depth and meaning and it goes right through and it goes right into you and it builds you up and it thrills you and excites you. And how wonderful it is when we've got our eyes set on the sacred page that blesses Spirit from above, is brooding upon us and making the word life and bread and substance to our spirits. I've been enjoying, as I was saying last night, this book of Jeremiah.

God's been giving me so many fresh new things I'd never seen. And here, of all that I've read, my heart has warmed up to these two verses 14 and 25, which I'll read again. And I will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.

And again in verse 25, for I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul. This word satiated, when there is a thirst, a craving, a longing, and something comes from above. In the words, I think it was, of Dwight Moody, an infinite craving for an infinite stilling.

And God comes, and from heaven above he answers in full measure, and that craving, longing, hunger, hungry, thirsty heart now finds it absolutely satisfied inside. The goodness it had cried for and longed for, at long last has come, and now it can honestly say, I am thoroughly satiated and satisfied. My God has filled me.

You will notice here in verse 25, working back to front, that the candidates for this are the weary and the sorrowful ones. God seems to have a special heart for the weary and sorrowful ones. When it's got hard and tough and rough, and we've got worn out and exhausted and tired and weary, and then sadness and sorrow, for one reason or another, have crept into our hearts.

But then if you go back to verse 14, it says, I will satiate the soul of the priest, with fatness. So you see, it's the weary, the tired ones, and the sorrowful ones. And it may seem such a paradox, but this is just the very thing that turns us into priests, or brings us into the priesthood.

Last night you will remember how we mentioned that verse that was read again to us this morning, I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness. God knows that most of us are so foolish that when we're prospered and things are right and well and easy and smooth and it's all plain sailing, we're so happy with it all that we haven't much time for God. Yes, we'll give him some time, we'll come to worship, we'll keep our conscience at rest if it were possible, but we won't go for God with all our hearts.

We won't long for him and value him as the pearl of great price, because there's so much else that's filling us and filling us at a superficial level, but there isn't that cry, that longing for the living God. And so God so often has to allow our circumstances to disappoint us and just find us plunged in a wilderness where we get weary and we get sorrowful and we're disappointed with this and that and the next, and that is the thing that brings forth the cry from our hearts, that brings us in that wilderness to long and yearn for God, to see that he and he alone is the fountain of living waters, and we find ourselves crying and praying and seeking and longing and coming. And that's the thing that makes us imperceptibly come into our priesthood, and we become priests that are occupied in the holy place, and we realize that the sweetest, the best, the sanest, the most wonderful thing we can do is to give a great deal of our time to go right into that holy place and be with our God.

There alone do we find his comfort. There alone we find him cuddling us to his breast and loving us and speaking and speaking with such grace as he alone can speak with. And so we see then that Father says, I will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness.

Now again, if you have a ribbon or a piece of paper, put it on this page, but turn with me first of all to Numbers 18, where we'll read verses 11 and 12 that speak to us about the priest, the priesthood, the words spoken by the Lord to Aaron, the first high priest, and chapter 18, verses 11 and 12, and this is thine, the heave offering of the gift with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel. I have given them unto thee and to thy sons and to thy daughters with thee by a statute forever. Everyone that is clean in thy house shall eat of it.

All the best of the wine, of the oil, and all the best of the wheat, and of the wheat, the firstfruits of them which they shall offer unto the Lord, them have I given thee. And I've got a little note on my margin, I like to write on my Bible, I expect many of you do, God's regal treatment of his priests. It's a wonderful thing, a high privilege to be a priest of such a God as ours, and it's wonderful to know the high esteem in which God holds his blessed priests.

Here we see him pledge to give them nothing short of the very best. Now, I'm going to draw this morning in type, in figure, because that's the way God often speaks to us, and just share something about the way God fed his priests. I remember many years ago when I did my military service, I was in the Argentine army, which a few years ago, sadly enough, invaded the Falklands.

And I remember overhearing a couple of officers, and one while we were out on campaign and maneuvers, we often used to do that kind of thing, they'd sound a whistle at two in the morning, and we'd have to jump out of bed and get all of our equipment, and get hold of the harnesses, and the horses, and the carts, and the pontoons. I was a staffer, an engineer, and just go off on these queer exercises. And one of the officers remarked another, look, whatever you do, you must see that your soldiers are well fed, that there's enough food, and that they don't have to wait long for it, that they get it in time, otherwise you'll have trouble.

And what a true apt remark. You know, when we're not satisfied, of course, I'm speaking in the spiritual, but in the natural too. Don't you notice when you newcomer, and your wife for some reason is delayed, and the meal isn't ready, there's an impatience, there's a longing, where's the food, my soup, my mouth's water, when is it coming? And it's the same in the spirit.

You get a bunch of unsatisfied or dissatisfied people, and you'll have trouble. It may not manifest itself fully at first, it may take time, but once it's run its course, you'll have real, real trouble. And God wants a

satisfied, a gratified, a satiated people.

Now, we'll turn a bit further back to Leviticus, and we'll have a look at a few verses in chapter two. And I was saying a few minutes ago that I'm going to just draw from this typology, from the figures of the Old Testament, and that's God's order. We find in Hebrews, whether it was written by Paul or whoever else, that they draw, for instance, from Melchizedek, and there in type and figure, a great wealth of truth is shared that's highly enriching, and a wonderful blessing to read and to lay hold of.

And this can be done as long as the type, the figure we draw, lines up with specific revelation in the word of God. We cannot, we may not go beyond that, but doing it in the right line of God, making it, as I say, tie up with the rest of revelation so that there's harmony, it just confirms and enriches truth that God gives us, then it's meat and substance to our spirits. It enlarges our understanding, and it makes us prove what Paul said that, and wrote, that every scripture is inspired of God and profitable.

Now, in chapter two, we read verse from verse four, it'll be verses four, five, and seven, and if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering, bacon in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. Verse five, and if thy oblation be a meat offering, bacon in a pan, it shall be a fine flour, unleavened, mingled with oil. Verse seven, and if thy oblation be a meat offering, bacon in the frying pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.

Now, before I go on, another word I feel I must say from the depth of my heart. We're dealing with typology, with figures, symbols, talking about food, and sometimes we can be tempted to speak about these things, but somehow, beautiful as they may sound and be, they can be almost a hollow ring of unreality. Yes, Lord, it sounds very good, it sounds very beautiful, oh, but it's just words, and God, I want reality, and I want to tell you I've been on my knees before God, and I want what I've got to share to come forth by the Holy Ghost in reality.

I think many of us, if not all, at times we get sick of empty words that bring nothing. We want to come to a place in God that the word does what it says, that the word comes through in life, and it spells, and it brings reality. Now, with that in mind, then, let's again have a look at these three verses, and I'll pick out three words, one from each.

And from verse four, I pick out the word oven. From verse five, pan, and from verse six, frying pan. Monday, braised steak.

Tuesday, braised steak. Wednesday, braised steak. Thursday, braised steak, and husband explodes, furious, human.

So, the wife says, I don't understand this man. On Monday, he was delighted with it. I gave him the same lovely meal on Tuesday.

It wasn't quite so good. On Wednesday, he left half of it. On Thursday, he gave me a horrible look, and on Friday, he threw it down and walked out of the kitchen.

What's wrong with my husband? It was just as good on Friday as it was on Monday. And, of course, we just comment, variety is the spice of life. We want variety.

To use another symbol, what a sad thing when we have a one string guitar, only one note to play, and we play and overplay that one note till we go blue in the face, and others want to run away from us because

they can't take it anymore. God is a God that knows that we're made for variety, and so in feeding, it's Monday in the oven, Tuesday in the pan, Wednesday in the frying pan, and so he feeds us with a rich, varied diet. But have a look at this.

Verse four, in the oven it says, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. Verse five, in a pan it shall be a fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil. Verse 11, no meat offering which we shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven, for ye shall burn no leaven nor any honey in any offering of the Lord made by fire.

And here, while there is variety, you find that it's always unleavened. That leaven of sin cannot and must not be anywhere at all to be found. And again, the fine flour mingled with oil.

Fine flour, fine flour. Every time that blessed fine flour, you and I have been used to picking up things, taking situations closely to our lives, perhaps even right into our home, and something that's looked very sweet and lovely eventually. Alas, we found skins, or spikes, or thorns, or jagged edges.

But there's something about the fine flour that has gone through the mill. It's gone through that refining process, and all that rough stuff has come out, and it's just a gentle, soft powder, white as snow. And you can take it in your hand, you can press it tight, and there's no form, there's no skin, there's nothing to cut, there's nothing to pierce.

It's tender, and gentle, and quite safe to handle. And then, every time, there had to be oil. The wafers had to be anointed with oil.

What was cooked in the frying pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil. What was done in the oven, fine flour mingled with oil. And I know it's all too evident, but oh, let's have the holy anointing of oil.

I think you've got ears to hear, haven't you? You've got a smelling sense. You can tell when that beautiful, holy anointing of oil is upon a chorus, upon a hymn, upon a prophecy, upon a prayer, upon an opening up of the word. And oh, it comes with a balm, it comes with a freshness, it comes with a heavenly fragrance, and like when Mary just anointed Jesus, the whole place is filled with a perfume.

Oh, blessed, holy anointing of oil. It must never, never be lacking. In this verse 11, we end with these last three words, made by fire.

Made by fire. And in all these offerings, yes, variety as to reaction, taste, oven, pan, frying pan, oh, but always unleavened, always, always pure, pure flour, always, always the holy anointing of oil, and always fire. Fire.

Whether you do it, I know within the age of the microwave, but I like to be an old-fashioned God, you know, just back to old biblical times. And whether it's in the oven, whether it's in the pan, whether it's in the frying pan, there must be the fire. I've so often spoken about the fire, because I was born of the fire, and I love the fire, and when I hear someone that's moving in fire, it fires me.

But I've never seen this simple but lovely thing, that the fire, apart from purifying, and kindling a holy flame, and burning, and lifting you to God, it does this lovely thing of cooking the offering. So, it's something that is raw, and it's unpalatable, and tasteless. Oh, it's been skillfully put in the fire, and seasoned, and boy, oh boy, it makes your mouth water, because the fire has done the wonder of cooking it, and bringing it just right, and tasteful, so that you'll be abundantly satisfied.

It will go down, hallelujah, with great delight, and you'll feel you want more, you'll come back for seconds, bless the Lord. Always fire. But now, move on to verse 13, And every oblation of thy mid-offering shalt thou season with salt, neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy mid-offering.

With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt. We know Jesus said, ye are the salt of the world, and in symbol and figure, there's a wealth of meaning, and blessing, and revelation in this simple subject of the salt. Quite briefly, the salt has many meanings.

It stands for hospitality, for purity, for durability. That is something that is lasting, not a flash in the pan, but something that will go on. It stands in a very special way for loyalty.

Every time you find those words, the salt of the covenant. A covenant is based on mutual loyalty. A man or a woman, a son of God or his father, pledge to be absolutely faithful to one another.

The salt is, of course, used to give savor. As has been said, the salt is used to make others thirst. So, the salt is also used, bless God, to replenish the energy we expend.

If you are really earning your living by the sweat of your brow, perhaps chopping logs or doing hard physical work, you'll find that a lot of the salt in your system is being expended on the effort. And your system, unawares perhaps, but will require, you'll want salt in your food. And it's as the word says, that now there's no losing the cook.

You know an expression when a young lady is in love, and she's doing the cooking, and she forgets to put salt, and you have your soup and your stew, and oh, it's tasteless, there's no salt in it. And the saying, I trust you know it, don't you? We're losing the cook. By that you know.

Well, it's one imported from South America then. Out there it's well known. By that you mean that girl's in love, and she's thinking of her sweetheart, and she's forgotten to put salt in the soup and in the stew, and she's given us this insipid stuff.

We're losing the cook. She's soon off. With God is no losing the soup.

Praise his name. There shall always be salt. There shall always be salt in the offerings.

Now, would you turn with me to the book of Colossians chapter 4 and verse 6? Well, we have a little link that will help, well known to many, doubtless, but we might as well read it before we proceed. Colossians chapter 4 and verse 6. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. And here we just see salt associated yet with another feature, this lovely feature of grace.

Grace. And this is what we really want to focus our attention on this morning, and I don't think I'll be too long. But with that in mind, what we've just read, would you turn with me now to the book of Ezra? As you know, Ezra comes after 2 Chronicles.

Then you get Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms. So, after 2 Chronicles, we come to Ezra chapter 7. And I'd like to read the passage from verse 14, from verse 14, right through to the end of the chapter. It's rather lengthy, but never mind, listen to it.

It's God's sacred word. It's part of the letter containing a decree by that great emperor and king, Artaxerxes, on the occasion when he was sending Ezra, the priest and the scribe, back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. So from verse 14, Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king and of his seven counsellors to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand, and to carry the silver and gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem, that thou mayest buy speedily with this money, bullocks, rams, lambs with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem.

And whatsoever shall seem good to thee and to thy brethren to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God. The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house.

And I, even I, archabservices the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily unto an hundred talents of silver, and to a hundred measures of wheat, and to a hundred bars of wine, and to a hundred bars of oil and salt, without prescribing how much. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven. For why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? Perhaps we ought to cut it short.

Verse twenty-seven and twenty-eight. Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem, and hath extended mercy unto me before the king and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel sheep men to go up with me.

This is an astonishing passage. Seventy years ago, the people of God had been led away in captivity, downtrodden, shamefully defeated, bleeding, and sad, and broken-hearted, ashamed, and of reproach. The temple, as we said last night, had been ransacked, and it had been burnt up, and all the vessels turned away and taken to Babylon, and just ruins and desolations left behind.

But now, in the day of God's power, in God's calendar, this seventy years have expired. Daniel's been praying behind the scenes, and the wills of God start to do this amazing thing. He gets hold of this great emperor, and he strikes him with the fear of God.

And he sees in this man Ezra, a scribe and a priest of God, and decides that he's to furnish him with gold, and silver, and wheat, and wine, and oil, and everything necessary, and paved the way, and say, you go ahead with all my blessing and support. You rebuild the house of God, whatever else you need, just say the word, and it will all be given. It's all yours.

Go ahead and do it. And rightly, dear Ezra says, Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, who has put such a thing as this in the king's heart to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. Looking at it with New Testament eyes, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has put it in the heart of the king of kings to furnish us with gold, and silver, and every precious thing, and every needed commodity to beautify the house of the Lord.

And of course, we could say so much, couldn't we, about the gold, the silver, and the corn, and the wine, and the oil. But let's now just come back to verse 22, read it again, unto a hundred talents of silver, unto a hundred measures of wheat, unto a hundred bars of wine, unto a hundred bars of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. And salt without prescribing how much.

In other words, salt without measure. Tons, tons, and tons upon tons, tons, you can have all the salt you need without measure. Now, to all that we said about the salt a few minutes ago, we must add this very, very important one.

Listen to me, it's very simple, it's very old-fashioned, but it's very true, and it brings the truth of the scripture to us. And that is that salt was used for preserving something, foodstuff in particular, put it not to go bad, put it not to rot, and become a stinking foul thing that had to go to the dustbin. What was done? Simply lots and lots of salt, because there is that thing that we all know in our atmosphere that are these tiny things we can't see we call germs, or microbes, or bacteria, that when they see good foodstuff around, they wait for their chance, and unless they're checked and something's done about them, they'll just go and have a good tuck in, and begin to erode, and bite, and work their way into that beautiful stuff, and they'll make a foul mess of it, and they'll rot it, and spoil it, and ruin it.

And this is the word and the note of reality I want to spell this morning. You know, when I was speaking about those wonderful things, and when you read about King Jesus having made available for us, who are building the house of the Lord, gold and silver, and all manner of wonderful things, I'm sure many of you will say, yes brother Dick, that's right, that's very true, that's in the word of God. But brother, with a cry in our hearts, is there not the other side of the coin, that with the wear and tear of going on together for years, oh you get this bacteria, these microbes that somehow get into the precious body of Christ.

Men and women who love one another, you take them individually, they're sweet, and precious, and wonderful, but somehow this bacteria, these microbes get in, and with a passage of time, cross currents of misunderstanding, disagreement, and I don't like this. And they trod on my corns, and I don't feel I'm loved enough. And why isn't it done this way? And why isn't it done that way? I can't take that ministry, that kind of thing.

And I speak to you as a man that in his own flesh and blood has had a thorough taste of all this. Some of you may know that years ago we were up in North Wales. There I was serving an apprenticeship before God sent me out on the mission field for a second time, and for seven years almost, I knew in my flesh and blood whatever one did, however one tried, and prayed, and fasted, and died, and tried to die, but somehow this bacteria, these microbes, these filthy germs were eroding, and undermining, and rotting, rotting up things salt preserves.

And when in the old-fashioned days they got a choice cut of meat, it was often shipped from the Argentine beef line to Britain in the old days, like that, seasoned with salt, completely secure, because there were lots and lots, pots of salt right over the place, and where these germs, these nasty microbes would try and get in, oh it's too hot, oh that's salt, I can't bear it, I can't stand it, because salt has the power, it's a pungent thing that repels them, and it doesn't let them get through, and so the precious, precious choice cut of meat is preserved intact with all this beautiful taste. And if I know anything about it, it wasn't only in North Wales, but as I go around and I visit situations in Spain, in the Argentine, even here on the British Isles, I see the same old story, the precious body of Christ, the precious, precious body of Christ. Dear ones, as I say, you take them individually, and they're lovely, they're wonderful, but somehow in the

gritty-nitty of, in nitty-gritty of church planting, and church growing, they get in, and you get loggerheads, disagreements, seeds of division, misunderstanding, why not this, why that, criticism, and all the rest.

I was on my knees this morning, and as a servant of God, if one is to come as a true servant of God, there are two essential qualifications. One is to come unto God for his glory, and speak only what God lays upon one's heart. And the second one is that one should come in real selfless love, loving those to whom one is sent.

And I trust I'm speaking utter truth, that by the grace of God, I feel that love of God flowing to every one of you. I know in this place, I know enough about it to know it's true. Dear David, Medlock, and Yvonne, with all the keen, precious ones gathered around them, Ron, Bailey, and Margaret, I'm sorry I'm not mentioning other names, but this precious, precious flock, and I know that the hallelujah, there have been years of sacrifice, of love, of givenness, of laying all on the altar, of working hard, and honestly, honestly, solidly unto God, and raising up this testimony for Jesus Christ, this temple of the Lord, which must be exceeding magnificent, and which our God wants to beautify, and to raise up, for it to be the wonder of angels, and archangels, and cherubims.

But alas, brother and sister, there's the other side of the coin of these rotten, horrible, disgusting germs, microbes, bacteria, that somehow they're so persistent day and night, day in and day out, in a gesture, in a look, in this or in that, just trying to row the way into the body of Christ, the blood-bought body of Christ, so that something that's precious, that's God-given, that speaks of heaven and of glory, should be corrupted and spoiled, and it should begin to rot, and to stink, and to fall into decay. Alas, what a wicked enemy we have! And yet, this is the thing that forges the Jesus-lovers and the warriors, for it is the spirit inside, hallelujah, that rises, rises from heaven, rises in our hearts against that wicked, wicked malice that would come and ruin and spoil that precious heritage of the Lord. As I was waiting on the Lord this morning, what came to me was a tremendous welling up of the Spirit with these words, hallelujah, wonderful about the gold, the silver, the wheat, the wine, the oil, but oh, sought without prescribing how much.

In other words, sought without measure. Trying humanly to sort out situations, we only make a bigger mess of them. Only the skillful, wise hand of God can do that.

And very often, you know, the way of the mind is to think and to prove our point and to think I'm right, and God steps into the scene and he says, none of that. I'm going to do it my way, a different way. And here I see something so blessed and wonderful.

You know, turn with me to the book of the Acts, chapter 4, chapter 4, the Acts chapter 4, and we'll read from verse 31. You remember the disciples here in a very difficult situation, assailed by the priests, the high priests, the elders, and the scribes, threatened with imprisonment, etc. They prayed unto God, and verse 31 it says, And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness, and the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.

Neither said any of them that all of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common, and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. Now you can imagine for months there had been thousands living shoulder to shoulder. They were human beings like you and I are.

It would have been so easy to tread on each other's feet, get into trouble, but here we read that they prayed, and God's answer wasn't let's have an argument, let's see who's right, let's see who's wrong. God's argument, sorry God's answer was to make the place where they were praying quiver and shake and quake with his mighty power, and all of a sudden that blessed Holy Ghost came down again in renewed torrents, and they found they were sharing with the Holy Ghost. They found that they were giving witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and there was power in the words.

They were speaking the words, they were electrifying words, words of life, words of power, words from above, and then we read these words, and great grace. was upon them. You see tons and tons of salt came from above, and the nasty bacteria that then too would have done his awful job, found they didn't have a chance.

They were completely, completely let out. Did you know that one of the many names of the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Grace? He is the Spirit of Grace, and what does grace do with you? When you really get into the holiest of all, as we were saying last night, that Spirit of Grace comes upon you. There is, by the way, let me read the last passage, and then we'll wind up.

Zechariah chapter 12, and we'll come back to our thread immediately. Zechariah 12, here's a promise from God in verse 10, Zechariah 12, 10, And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of Grace and of supplications. And then he goes on, but just leave it at that, the Spirit of Grace and of supplications.

That God here has this wonderful promise to the house of David, that there's going to come a time when his people cry to him, when they seek him with all their hearts, when they go for him in real earnest, when God is going to open again the floodgates, and he's going to pour and pour the Spirit of Grace and supplication. Does that happen to you lately? When did God last pour the Spirit of Grace and supplications? What does that mean anyway? Supplications, we had a little of it last night. You find you're not just saying pious, conventional prayers.

You're praying from your depths. You're supplicating to God. You find you're praying like you've never prayed in your life.

You're touching God, and God is touching you. That's what happens when this Spirit is poured upon you. There is also the Spirit of Grace, and you might go in your need, perhaps a little tense, perhaps there's been friction, trouble, problems, and you go into the holiest of all, and you live to cry to God.

And there's a renewed outpouring of the Spirit of Grace, and that blessed source begins to come in torrents to your heart. It melts you inside, and the harshness and the hardness goes. And all those thoughts that kept assailing your mind, why this, and he said that, and he didn't do that, they all go by the board too.

And you find that a great grace comes into your heart so that you don't come out of the holiest of all like you were perhaps before, like a sergeant major, you know, with your heels all over the place. But spiritually, you've taken your shoes off, and you're walking on tiptoes in grace, wanting to prefer one another, to love one another tenderly, to walk gently in the Spirit, to have a sweetness that will make no wrong construction, that will give your heart resolve, oh God, this tongue of mine, whenever it's to speak, I want it to speak words of love and life. Lord, nothing out of my mouth, no harboring in my mind, or a word or a thought that is anything but pure and perfect love for my brother and my sister.

And if there's anything out of place or out of gear, my God, you put it right. Surely you, the head of your church, Jesus, the Holy Ghost is the executive of heaven, come down to keep your brother and your sister in line. It's not my job, it's his job, and a grace to make you inflexible with your own self.

When you put a foot wrong, you've done something you shouldn't have, you don't gloss over it, but you go to God and you put it right like a downright honest man or woman. But when it comes to others, you're tender and gracious to make allowances, even as your Jesus has made many allowances for you, hasn't he? I found he's been so gracious, just so infinitely patient with me. I dare not go about judging, misjudging, or condemning anyone that doesn't want to come with a grace, a grace, a grace, a grace that brings heaven upon us.

I know sometimes you may say, Brother Dick, this sounds almost wishful thinking, and the reality of every day, shoulder to shoulder, it don't work, it cannot be. Is that so? Hasn't God promised Deuteronomy that if we walk in his ways, our days shall be like the days of heaven upon earth? Hallelujah, in heaven there aren't undercurrents of distrust, there aren't shadows of disapproval, there's no gossiping, there's no joking opposition, there's no fault finding, it's all love and grace, it's all heaven, it's all God. And this simple, simple word is what I want to leave you with, my precious brother, my dear sister, I plead with you that you'll receive it in the tenderness of Christ, that our great God has put it in the heart of the King of Kings, Jesus.

He asked to furnish us with oh, gold, silver, wheat and wine and oil, but hallelujah, sold without measure, a promise to pour from above into your heart and into mine, that spirit of grace and supplication, that word pours, it speaks about tolerance, it speaks about abundance, it speaks about copious gushes that come right, right from above, and oh hallelujah. Shall I tell you what it does to me every time I find that spirit of grace? Oh, when I get alone, alone with my God, and hallelujah, I touch him in reality, and I mean business, and I want God, but oh, that spirit of grace comes in tolerance, and it melts me inside, it speaks such a tenderness, such an exquisite, delicate love and grace, that I feel I dare get up and have a cross word with anyone, misjudge anyone, or do anything, anything but love and walk in the purest grace and tenderness of Christ. What's a witness of your heart to what you've just heard, my brother, my sister? Isn't there something that makes your mouth water and says, oh God, oh God, that salt without measure, that great grace to come upon us all, and to flood us, Lord, that any and every microbe and germ and bacteria come from that wretched pit, should find it's gotten no way into our hearts, we're kept pure and sweet in the grace and in the love of God.

Dear ones, will you stand before the Lord with me? Will you lift up your hands now unto God, and shall we in real earnest cry that he will pour upon us that blessed spirit of grace, that salt without measure, to walk in the grace and in the love and in the oneness and in the sweetness of our blessed Christ. Just stand up with me, hallelujah, and in that spontaneity of the spirit, oh God, blessed be thy name.

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