

# Abrahams' Journey

by Jacob Prasch

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*Abraham's journey is a model of faith and obedience to God, and it serves as a reminder of the importance of building an altar and making sacrifices for spiritual growth.*

**Duration:** 58:11

**Scripture:** Genesis 12:1, Genesis 13:1, Genesis 13:18, Proverbs 14:14, Amos 4:4, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 20:15

**Topics:** "Abraham"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not wasting one's life and youth by going back to worldly ways. He uses the example of Abraham and the prodigal son to illustrate the consequences of straying from God's will. The speaker also highlights the brevity of life and the certainty of judgment after death. He urges listeners to embrace the true gospel of Jesus Christ and make a decision to follow Him, as He is the only way to escape judgment and receive eternal life.

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## Transcript

Are any of you open with me, please, to the book of Genesis, chapter 13? And you will recall Genesis in the beginning. Genesis, chapter 13, beginning in verse 1. And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless and make your name great, and so you shall be a blessing. And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all of the families of the earth shall be blessed.

So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sarai.

Sarai in Hebrew means my princess. Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran. And they set out for the land of Canaan.

Thus they came to the land of Canaan. And Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shem, to the Oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanite was then the land, and the Lord appeared to Abram and said, To your descendants I will give this land.

So he built an altar there to the Lord, who appeared to him. Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent with Bethel on the west, and I on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

And Abram journeyed on, continuing towards the Megid. Now there was a famine in the land, so Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there. For the famine was critical in the land.

And it came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, See now I know that you are a beautiful woman. And it will come about when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, This is his wife, and they will kill me, but they will allow you to live. Please say that you are my sister, so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I might live on account of you.

And it came about when Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. And Pharaoh's officials saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. Therefore he treated Abram well for her sake, and gave him sheep, and oxen, and donkeys, and male and female servants, and female donkeys and camels, no zebras.

But the Lord struck Pharaoh and his house with great pains because of Sarai, Abram's wife. Then Pharaoh called Abram and said, Why has this been done to me? Why did you not tell me she was your wife? Take her and go. He and his wife and oxen still ran and go, and he went on his journey from Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Isis, to the place of the altar which he had made there formerly, and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.

As we can just skip down to verse 18 of chapter 13, Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the Lord. Heavenly Father, we come before you now, and we ask you in the name of your son Jesus, the one who saved us, that you would open our eyes, our minds, and above all our hearts, to the glory and meaning of your word. In his name, Jesus, we ask these things.

Amen. His name was Abram, but changed to Abraham. Now when the Bible was told, there's something called the Book of Life, and people will have a new name, if their name is going to be in the Book of Life.

But there are a few people this side of eternity who seem to have some kind of a revelation of what that is. Abraham was one. Peter was another.

Jacob was another. The father of all who believe. He's the father of the three monotheistic states.

Jews, Arabs, and Christians all look to Abraham as a patriarch. To Jewish people, he is Abraham. To Muslims, he is Ibrahim, or he is Ibrahim Abu Isik.

To Christians, of course, he's simply Abraham. The father of all who believe. Now, the Semitic idea of father does not simply mean progeny or a biological father.

It means he's the archetype, or the prototype, the first of a kind. What happens to him, happens to his descendants. Abraham goes into Egypt in a famine, doesn't he? In that famine situation, he goes to Egypt for refuge.

God judges Pharaoh. Pharaoh gives him riches. When God's judgment comes on Pharaoh, Abraham takes his family and flees from Egypt into the Promised Land.

What happens to Abraham, later happens to his physical descendants, the Jews. The sons of Jacob in a famine, they also go into Egypt, don't they? Once more, when they come out of Egypt, they take the treasures of Egypt with them. And God judges Pharaoh once more, a wicked Pharaoh.

And then they leave Egypt, and they go into the Promised Land. In 1 Corinthians chapter 10, we come out of Egypt. Egypt in the Bible is a symbol or a figure of the world.

Pharaoh, who the Egyptians deified, is a figure of the devil, the god of the world. Jesus said, Satan's the god of this world. That's why it's so evil.

It's a type or a foreshadow of Jesus. Moses makes a covenant with blood, sprinkles it on the people, so the Lord Jesus makes the covenant with blood and sprinkles it on the people. And as Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, through the water into the Promised Land, that's the picture of Jesus leading us out of the world, through baptism into heaven.

One is the picture of the other. Ultimately, coming out of Egypt has to do with the rapture and resurrection. But first, let's look at Jesus.

Jesus comes out of Egypt. In Matthew chapter 2, when King Herod dies, it says, Out of Egypt I called my son. And it quotes from Hosea chapter 11.

It takes something that happened to the Jewish people in the Exodus and applies it to Jesus. Once more, God judges a wicked king, this time the Pharaoh. And then Jesus comes out of Egypt.

So Abraham comes out of Egypt when God judges Pharaoh. His descendants, the Jews, come out of Egypt when God judges a king, Pharaoh. Jesus the Messiah, the seed of Abraham, comes out of Egypt when God judges Pharaoh.

And then we get saved and we're born again. We come out of Egypt and God's judgment will come on Pharaoh. There's a future Exodus to come.

They brought Joseph's bones with them out of Egypt in the book of Exodus because it's a type of the rapture and resurrection. The dead in Christ rise first. We come out together.

Those same judgments that you see on Egypt in the book of Exodus, the darkness and the blood, well those things come back in the book of Revelation, don't they? Those same judgments. The way that Pharaoh's magicians counterfeited the miracles of Moses and Aaron, that's the way the Antichrist and false prophets are going to counterfeit the miracles of Jesus and his witnesses. These are future events.

We all come out of Egypt, or else you perish in Egypt. But it all begins with Abraham, the father of all who believe. And in this chapter 12, God gives him five promises.

He tells him he makes his name great, which it is. All these monotheistic faiths look to him. He tells him that I will bless the ones who bless you and curse the ones who curse you.

Now that has certainly happened historically. You know, my family were originally from Britain. If you told my grandparents the time would come when the sun would set on the British Empire every 24 hours, it would have left us here.

But something happened. Great Britain revoked the Balfour Declaration. After promising to let the Jews return to Israel, they revoked it so the Jews went to Auschwitz.

The Jews burned. So did Coventry. So did London.

So did Plymouth. Britain has never been a world empire since then. So did the Germans.

Until Dwight Schindler's list, you saw the Germans built the wall around the shtetl, the Jewish ghetto. And any Jew who tried to climb over that wall was machine-gunned. So what happened? A wall was built around the once glorious capital of the Reich.

And any German who climbed over that wall was machine-gunned. Not until Hess died in Stendhal prison and the last German of that generation responsible for the Holocaust was dead did that wall come down. God does this, not for the sake of Israel, but for the sake of his covenant with Abraham.

Most importantly, however, I'll bless them that bless me. You know, I have no doubt whatsoever that the judgment of God would have come on America a long time ago. Except for two things.

The United States still sends the most missionaries and gives the most money for Christian charity. But it also treats the Jews in Israel better than other countries. Similarly, Holland.

Holland is a wicked, wicked country. God does not destroy Amsterdam, he owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology. Yet they treated the Jews well.

They protected the Jews in the Holocaust. I'll bless them that bless me. I will curse them that curse me.

Not for the sake of the Jews, but for the sake of God's covenant with Abraham. But finally, through him, all the tribes and all the people of the earth will be blessed. Through him would come the Messiah to bring salvation to all people.

It all begins with Abraham. Now something happens in the book of Genesis. The book of Genesis tells us the following.

Genesis tells us that the saga of Abraham begins in Haran, which is in modern Syria. Very top, Haran. That's when his father Terah dies.

However, in the book of Acts chapter 7, in Stephen's apology, when St. Stephen is going to be martyred, St. Stephen tells us something different. And he said, hear me, brethren and fathers. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran.

So Genesis tells us it begins up here. But the New Testament tells us it begins here. The Tower of the Chaldees, where the Tower of Babel had been, that area.

Also where the Babylonian Empire would eventually arise, in modern Iraq. It was not until a crisis point in Abraham's life, when his father dies at Haran, that he comes to his first response to God. He doesn't respond to God until a crisis point in his life.

That is so common of people. In times of bereavement, family death, crisis, business setback, career setback, financial setback, everything going wrong, when people are on the skid. So often that's what it takes to cause people to turn to God.

That's why it's easier for poor people to go to heaven than rich people. Why? It took a crisis, the death of his father. We have a sermon in Hebrew, Nehito Beres, to mourn.

The Lord is near to those who mourn. When people see the death of a loved one, they're more aware of their own mortality. God first begins calling him an heir of the Chaldees.

When somebody gives their life to Jesus, when they're born again and they become a new creation, not only does their presence make sense, not only does their future make sense, but even their past begins to make sense. When you get saved, when you first are born again, when you first come to your true knowledge of Jesus, you realize it was God calling you to himself all along. Even from the earliest days of your childhood, things that happened to you, impressions you have, things you can't quantify, the kind of thoughts that went through your head before you fell asleep that night as a child, but all quick, that was Jesus.

When somebody gets saved, not only does their future make sense, not only does their presence make sense, but even their past. God was calling him from the earliest days of his youth. We read in the Scriptures, I knew you from your mother's womb.

The Scriptures tell us, those before you from before the foundation of the world. God only knew. But it doesn't quit until we have our first personal responsibility.

With Abraham, it takes place at Haran when his father dies. God was calling him all along. This land I'll show you, this is the journey I'm going to put you on.

But it takes the death of his father. And he comes to a place called Shem. Shem.

Shem is near the modern city of Nablus. And Shem in Hebrew means shoulder. Not shoulder in the anatomical sense, but shoulder in the sense of carrying a burden.

If you were to go to Jerusalem and stand outside of Damascus Gate in the Old City, you'd see camels, donkeys, blind beggars, religious hypocrites, oriental merchants, the lot. Looks like a scene out of the New Testament. But you also will see people carrying fat burdens on their shoulders.

He comes to Shem and he lays his burden down. And he builds an altar under the oak of Moreh. Now I have to explain something about trees in the Bible.

Trees are figures or symbols of different things in the Bible. But let's talk about when someone dwells under a tree. Whenever you see somebody dwelling under a tree in the Bible, it alludes in Jewish Midrash to a statement about their spiritual state.

For instance, when Elijah was in a state of despair, he was under a juniper tree. Right? When King Saul was going to be destroyed, he was under a tamarisk tree. But here Abraham is under the oak of Moreh.

After acacia wood, which the Ark of the Covenant was made out of, oak, we quote Elonim, is the hardest kind of wood known in the Middle East. The only acacia wood was harder, and there's not much of that. It was oak, the strongest tree.

Oak is a hard wood, it's a very strong tree. Dwelling under a tree. A Jewish Christian, a Messianic Jew, at the end of the 1st century, was reading John's Gospel.

John 1, John 2, John 3. The story of the new creation. He would have said, this Gospel of John, which he would have called Habeshora b'al Teh Yochanan, that's what he would have called the Gospel. He would have said, this story, or this narrative of the new creation in John chapter 1, John 2, and John 3, is the

Jewish Midrash.

On Genesis chapter 1, chapter 2, and chapter 3. The book of Genesis is the story of the creation, but the Gospel of John is the story of the new creation. And he would have said, well, God comes to separate the light from dark in the creation, in the book of Genesis. Remember? Now God comes to separate the light from dark in the new creation, in John's Gospel.

Genesis, in the beginning, was God, and the darkness does not overcome the light. So God separates the light from dark in the creation, in Genesis, but now he separates the light from dark in the new creation. This Jewish Christian would have said, well, the Spirit moves on the water and brings forth the creation, in Genesis, but now in John chapter 3, born of water and the Spirit, God's Spirit moves on the water and brings forth the new creation, in John.

He would have said, well, you have the small light and the great light in the creation, in Genesis, but now you have Yochanan HaMatvir and Yeshua HaMashiach, John the Baptist, the little light, and Jesus the Messiah, the great light, in the new creation. He would have said, the Word became flesh, God walked the earth in the creation, in Genesis, remember Adam heard God walking in the garden, and now God walked the earth in the new creation, in John. He would have said, well, God began human creation with the marriage of Adam and Eve, and on the third day, God did a miracle with water.

Well, Jesus begins his public ministry at a wedding, and it's on the third day he does a miracle with water. Now, the rabbis tell us that the tree of life that was in the garden, that appears again in some context in Ezekiel 47, and it's at the book of Revelation at the very end, the tree of life is represented by the fig tree. So, when you read the Gospel of Saint John, and Nathanael says to Jesus, how did you know me? And Jesus says, because I saw you under the fig tree.

We tend to think that just means Jesus saw him under some literal fig tree, which he did. But mythologically, in Jewish metaphor, Jesus was saying to Nathanael, I knew you from the garden, I knew you from the creation, from the foundation of the world. That's what he was really saying.

He was under the tree of life. For here, it is the oak of moreh. When somebody is under a tree in the Bible, it means something about their spiritual state.

Moreh is a modern Hebrew word, which is the biblical Hebrew word for knowledge, particularly spiritual knowledge or knowledge of God. When his father dies, Abraham comes to Shem, weighs down his burden, and comes to his first knowledge of God. And there he builds an altar.

In Hebrew, we call an altar a Meshabeach. Meshabeach. We know from the epistle to the Hebrew, that the altar is a type or an Old Testament picture of the cross.

For instance, when Jesus was hanging on the cross, he was the high priest making atonement for our sins on the altar. You see, Jesus never said, I'm going to go to a cross and die for you, and that's all there is to it. When Jesus went to a cross, God took my sin and your sin and put it on Jesus.

And took his righteousness and put it on us. The just for the unjust. That's true.

He took our sin when he went to that cross. But he never said, I'm going to die for you, full stop. He said, pick up your cross and follow me.

You die with me. The old creation must be put to death. The way he gets rid of sin is he gets rid of the sinner.

Build an altar. At no turning point in your Christian life, and at no turning point in my Christian life, can there be any progress without an altar. No altar, no progress.

Something is going to have to go on the cross. Whenever you are going to come to a point in your life as a Christian, a point of growth, there has to be a decision. The altar.

God will require you to build an altar. Something is going to have to go on it. No altar, no progress.

For me it was money. That was my problem. I made a lot of money when I was a kid.

When the Lord called me to leave my money and go into the mission field, I didn't want to do it. I was a nice guy. I was very generous.

But the Lord didn't want my money. He wanted my heart. There was a famous rabbi who said, Where your heart is, there your treasure will be also.

Someday the Lord will restore the fortunes of Judah. Maybe he won't. But all the money in the world couldn't bring me eternal life.

Couldn't buy me a ticket out of hell. Jesus did that. He comes to his next stop.

What is hell in Hebrew means? The house of God. He comes, as it were, to church. To a place like this.

Bethel. Hell is a place called hell. Hell means a heap of ruins.

A heap of ruins. And what turn? Sacrifice, no progress. Hell becomes a heap of ruins.

These things change it. Association with your old friends. Friends now are people who need to get saved.

Your whole reason for associating with them is to give them the gospel. To have company. Show up to good morals.

You wind up making new friends. Either you're going to be used by God to drag them up, or they're going to drag you down. Now there's some people who come to shred but go no further.

They're shred dwellers. I used to preach when I lived in London, England. I used to go to Hyde Park Corner.

It's Jesus Corner in Hyde Park. And there was this guy, one of the street preachers, who had a big sign, a sandwich board they call it in England. On the front or on the back? And it said, Christ died for our sins.

And his name was Robert. He was a nice guy. And I said, look, I've got to get going now.

It's time for the evening service in my church. He said, what church did you go to? And I told him what church I was going to, which was a Baptist church at the time. Even though I'm a Pentecostal, I went to a Baptist church.

I asked him, what church did you go to? And he said he went to a high Anglican church. And I said, well, why do you go to a church that's high Anglican? Why don't you go to an evangelical church? A

Pentecostal church, a Baptist church, a Brethren church. Why do you go to a church where the people are not born again? And he said, well, I went to an evangelical church once.

But everybody was already saved. There was nobody to preach to. He was totally sincere.

Praise God for the gospel. But the gospel is the beginning. It's not the end.

Jesus said to make disciples, not convicts. He wasn't an evangelist. He was a friend-dweller.

You have to come to Beth-El. In Beth-El, have you turned your back on I? There's people who come to church on Sunday. Then they walk out the door and light a cigarette.

Then they go out with their unsaved girlfriend or their unsaved boyfriend. They live with a foot in the world. And on Sunday, they get religious about it.

You see, there's two kinds of backsliders, people who fall away. There's two kinds. There's the obvious kind who go down to Egypt.

But then there's the kind who come to church, but they haven't turned their back on I. A backslider of heart would be filled with his own ways. When you see people whose lives are filled with their ways instead of the ways of the Lord, that is a backslider of heart. The epistle of Jude deals very sensibly with that subject.

Oh, they come to church. They sing the hymn, but that's it. They get no service.

Then there's another kind of backslider. They're the ones who leave the church. They go back out into the world.

They go down to Egypt. Satan and the refuge of Pharaoh. Now, Pharaoh is a type of the Antichrist, but he's also a metaphor for Satan, the Egyptian deified one.

They look to the things the world considers strong. Satan cannot get a Christian to fall away because of the lust of the flesh or the passions of youth or something like that. So try to get to you the way he got to Abraham and make you think God has abandoned you in a crisis and you have to look to the things the world considers strong.

Turn with me to the book of Isaiah, chapter 30. Woe to those, I'm sorry, verse, woe to those who doubt your children, in verse 1, he prays the Lord, who execute a plan but not mine. Isaiah was under a lot of pressure strategically.

He was being threatened by the Assyrians and the rise of Babylon, and he was being pressured to make a plan, but it was not God's plan. When we're in trouble, when we're facing a crisis, health, finance, business, career, marriage, a combination of things, it doesn't matter when we face a crisis. We need God's plan, not man's.

Rebellious children who execute a plan but not mine. They make an alliance but not of my spirit. In order to add sin to sin, put the seed down to Egypt, the world, without consulting me.

Whenever Christians get involved with the secular world, you need to have God's guidance in it. I don't care if it's legal system, it's school system, it's health system, whenever we get involved with the world, be careful. They seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt.

Therefore, the safety of Pharaoh will be to your disgrace, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt, your humiliation. Sliding will lead people to open humiliation. What happened to Abraham in Egypt? He wound up in a state of total humiliation.

What happened to the prodigal son? He wound up groveling with the swine, in a state of total humiliation. There is no such thing as a successful backslider. No such thing.

You cannot meet Jesus Christ and be the same. You're going to be better or you're going to be worse. Look at Abraham.

He became, he prayed. He was actually able, willing, to give his life over to another man's flesh. Nobody will go as low as a backslider.

You cannot meet the Lord Jesus in Egypt. And he winds up seeing, you know, the soldiers on the way to the Lord's garden. He can speak to one face.

I don't pay for it right now. When Jesus made the last supper, there was no safety in town. How can you go to your enemy for protection from your enemy? But the flesh will always look to the things the world considers strong.

The world is there and the flesh will always look to the things the world considers strong. The all creation will look to horses and chariots. It'll look to Mercedes limos and bank accounts.

It'll look to the things the world looks to for security. That's how it looks. Abraham winds up like all backsliders.

As it were, in a state of humiliation. Back to in chapter 13, verse 1. You pick up where you left off. Those people that have wasted years of their lives.

That's for them. Oh, God can forgive them. For eternity.

The 80 years of whatever we have in this fallen world. At most, if Jesus doesn't come back. Nothing.

But compared to what we have. Wasting 3 years of your life, 4 years of your life, 5 years. That's a lot of time to waste.

If you go back to Egypt. You actually waste your youth. You waste your life.

You wind up in a state of humiliation. You come crawling back like Abraham or like the prodigal son. That's the best you can hope for.

At worst, you're dying in Egypt. But Abraham comes back. All the way back.

Then, he continues his journey. He comes to Hebron. Hebron.

Hebron comes from the Hebrew word for fellowship. Meaning, Ki-chabrut. Ki-chabrut.

Hebron comes from Ki-chabrut. There's a lot of trouble there today. You see about Hebron in the news all the time.

Brut or fellowship in Hebrew. Means, cemented together. Brut.

Cemented. Together. That's what fellowship means in Hebrew.

There's another word. Ki-chabrut. But the main word is Ki-chabrut.

Brut. Cemented. Together.

Look at 1 Peter 2.5. You are the living stones of the holy house. The holy house or the temple is the church. We are the stones.

A church is not a building. It's Christians. Understand? Cemented together.

Just to tell you about the Jewish Midrash. OK? The stones of the temple are huge Herodian stones. The biggest one is 44 times heavier than the largest stone of the Pyramid.

The Great Pyramid of Cheops in Giza. That's how big these stones are. Jesus comes into the Temple Mount on Palm Sunday.

The people are singing out to Him from the Halleluah Bar in Psalm 118. They're singing to Him in Hebrew. Choshana Choshana.

Baruch Haba B'Shem Adonai. Barach Nuhem Mi Bet Adonai. Hodu L'Adonai Tipov.

Ki Le'Olam Chazdo. Choshana Choshana Le'Ben David. Choshana Choshana to the son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Understand? He didn't become indignant. And they say, tell these people to be quiet.

But Rabbi Yeshua Bar Yosef. Better known to some people as Jesus Christ. But His real name was Rabbi Yeshua Bar Yosef.

He never said it. He says, If these remain silent, the stones will cry out. If the Jews don't proclaim me, the Gentiles will.

Most Christians are Gentiles. All the first Christians were Jews. They were up against a similar problem.

They fought because they were circumcised as Jews. That meant they were cut above the rest. Hmm.

In and out of speaking. They got me when I was a kid. They wouldn't get me now.

Yohanan Matthew said God could raise up Abraham's children out of the stones. Where are the stones? Christians are the stones. Not on the basis of race, but on the basis of faith in the Jewish Messiah.

Bricks cemented together. For both I visited your church for the first time, as I'd done. And I came in and I said to the pastor, Pastor, this is a nice looking church you have.

But I notice there's bricks missing here, there's bricks missing there, there's bricks missing there, there's bricks missing where are these missing bricks? And he says, well here they are. Stacked up in the middle of the floor. You see, it's one thing to come to church.

It's something very different to come to fellowship. If you want to come to fellowship, you have to build an altar. It's going to cost you.

Nothing wrong with coming to church. That was the right place to be at a certain time in our Christian sojourn. It's the right place to be.

So it's the place to pitch a tent, not to build your dream house. We can say how Abraham lived as a sojourner in the land promised him, the meat shall inherit the earth. Right? We will get this in the millennium.

Or how he brought the wealth of Egypt out with him. Right? The meat will inherit it. But he comes to Hebron.

And at Hebron, he dwells under the oaks of Mamre. Mamre. Mamre in Hebrew means firmness or vigor.

A place of strength, real strength now. Not just knowledge, but power. Firmness, vigor.

Under the oaks of Mamre, as we read on in the subsequent chapters, that he's able to rescue his kinsmen from the wicked king. You see, the Canaanite was in the land. Well, the Canaanites are in your land.

Islam is growing. New Age is growing. The cults are growing.

And your kinsmen are in bondage. Let me tell you something. I lived in the Middle East for years.

There's not a church in the world that can take on a mosque and win. See what I said? There's not a church in the world that can take on a mosque and win. If you want to beat Islam, it takes a fellowship.

There's no church in the world that can take on the Mormon. They have a strong sense of community, a lot of money, and they're very well organized. You want to take on the Mormon cult? That takes a fellowship.

What is it for you to rescue your kinsmen? So let's understand something. It's going to cost. Let's talk about Beth-El dwellers.

Most Christians I know are Beth-El dwellers. Have not even turned their back on I. They'll be off with their unsaved girlfriend or whatever. Relatively easy journey and a close journey from Shem to Beth-El.

But it's a longer, more arduous journey from Beth-El to Hadan. It's not as bad as going all the way through the Negev and the Sinai to Egypt. But it's a longer, more arduous journey through the hills of Judah.

It's easy to come to church. Not so easy to come to fellowship. Let's pick out a Beth-El dweller.

Somebody will come to church once a week and do their bit. Somebody unless they're asked. Don't go to a mid-week Bible study or a prayer meeting.

They just do their bit. Look at the book of Amos chapter 4. Verse 4 of the prophet Amos. And sin.

By transgression. All these names mean things in Hebrew. You are tithed every three days.

Offer a thank offering to Matt with his legend. A freedom of organization. A life to live.

Delete your reputation. Always do good works because they want to get saved. Goodness in the Bible means not having the garments of salvation.

They sowed fig leaves together. It was a tree of life. Nobody's going to buy a fig tree.

Don't eat the leaves. The leaves of the tree are the beginning of the nation. Fig leaves are a figure or a symbol of good works.

Man will always try to justify himself with good works. Sowing the fig leaves together. Jesus said no.

Love sacrifice. Those animals were figures of him. Those lambs, those goats, they were symbols of the Messiah.

Would come and purify his flesh. The flesh will always try to justify itself by sowing fig leaves together with religious observance. Look at Amos chapter 5. Do not resort to Bethel.

Come to Gilgal. Do not cross the Dan of Sheba. Will certainly go to captivity.

And Bethel will come to trouble. You see that? Bethel will come to trouble. Pay attention.

I absolutely positively guarantee you. Bethel will come to trouble. You can be absolutely sure.

Pay attention. The church will let you down. You hear what I said? Sooner or later, the church will let you down.

I guarantee the church will let you down. The reason the church will let you down is because the church is made up of people who are just like you. And just like me.

The church will let us down. Bethel comes to trouble. And in the last days, in an eschatological framework, it's particularly true.

No. It's a fellowship that will stand in a crisis. Not a church.

Cemented together. Pastor. Tell me, Dormini.

Nice building, but where's all the mixed and bricks from the walls? Well, here they are stacked up in the middle of the floor. Most people don't come to fellowship. Most people come to church.

In most of the congregations I visit, 85% of the praying is done by 15% of the people. 85% of the giving is done by 15% of the people. 85% of the witnessing is done by 15% of the people.

85% of all the ministry together is done by 15% of the people. 85% of the practical things around the building and the property is done by 15% of the people. 15% of the people, at most, come to fellowship.

The rest come to church. They pay their tithe. They give their offering.

They sing the hymn. They do their bit. Bethel will come to trouble.

Talk of a Bethel dweller. You've been saved five years. You've been saved ten years.

And you do not know if you are an eye, a foot, or a hand. You don't know what your gift is. You don't know what your ministry is.

You don't know if you have the gift of evangelism. You don't know if you have the gift of teaching. You don't know if you have the gift of philanthropy.

You don't know if you have a music ministry. You don't know what your gift is. You come to church.

You're never going to rescue your kinsmen. As good as a body with hands missing, an eye missing, ears missing, foot missing, it's numbered. When you come to fellowship, it will cost you something.

It will always cost you. No sacrifice, no sacrifice, no progress. Something must go on at all.

In this room, it says in one of these locations, he doesn't realize it, but that baby is an heir of the Calvary. Bring that baby to a saving knowledge of the truth through the faith of a parent. Now there may come a future time.

These things will go on in the baby and there will be a crisis point where that baby will make a decision. One way or another. He's being drawn by Jesus now.

Maybe you are in Haran. You are here tonight and you are not a born again Christian. I'm not talking about the television evangelists, the money con men.

I'm not talking about religion. I'm talking about the true gospel. God becomes a man and a person of Jesus and takes our sins and gives us his righteousness.

And as he rose from the dead, he gives us eternal life. Co-death and co-resurrection with Jesus. A decision to turn from sin and follow him.

He'll give you the power to do that. If you are here tonight and you are not a Christian, you are in Haran and you are here for a reason. Jesus said, with two or more I've gathered in my name, I'm in their midst.

Jesus Christ is here now in his spirit. And if you are listening to my words, you are not hearing me, you are hearing him. I'm nothing.

I'm less than nothing. You are hearing him. That personal knowledge of Jesus.

Give him your burden. You know, there is only one deathbed conversion in the entire Bible. You know who gets saved on their deathbed? People who would have given their life to Jesus if they heard the gospel sooner.

This idea, we'll put it off till we get old, till we're ready to die. Everybody gets religious when you get old. Then God's not interested.

Now is the appointed time. Today is the day of salvation. So smart about tomorrow, you know not about what tomorrow may bring.

If you are here tonight and you've never given your life to Jesus, if you've never come into that personal relationship with him, if you've never given him your burden, the burden of sin, the time to do it is tonight. I'll stay here till two in the morning, but please don't leave this place without speaking to the pastor or myself. It is as though you're in Bethel.

You come to church. You're a good church-going person. Somebody in the supermarket asks you, you'll tell them the gospel.

A particular problem in this country. You don't know what your ministry is. You don't know how you fit into the wall.

You're just a brick. Most Christians are bricks in the floor. They're not cemented into the structure.

The likelihood is there's even people here who are in Bethel but don't go out that door, change gears. You see, the real test of somebody's spirituality is not what they're like in church. It's what they're like when they walk out of church.

It's what they're like at home. It's what they're like when they're working. It's what they're like when they're driving in a traffic jam.

That's what tells you what your faith is like. Anybody can be religious in a church. The biggest hypocrites in the world come to churches.

Even the world sees religious people as hypocrites in their life. An unsaved boyfriend, an unsaved girlfriend. Are you thinking of getting divorced from your husband or your wife? God hates divorce.

Unless the unbeliever leaves you, you have no business getting divorced. Maybe you're the saddest of all life's creatures. At one point in your life, you put your faith in Jesus and you knew his love and his forgiveness.

But this life and this world got to you and now you're in Egypt. The man of Pharaoh, you're under his dominion. The world has got you.

You've trusted in the things the world considers strong and now you can't get free. At best, at best, you can hope for humiliation. At worst, death in Egypt.

See yourself a big pager. Wasting what remains of your life. Forever is a long time, but this thing is too short to waste.

Nothing here. I'd rather be fat broke and in God's will than be a multi, multi-billionaire and be out of it. The only thing I'm taking with me when I leave this place is what I give to Jesus on my life.

The rest stays. There's no hope in this world. The rich and poor alike end up in a coffin.

The point that the man wants to die after this is the judgment. You know, Jesus was either telling the truth or he was a liar. If he was not telling the truth, if there's no hell, if there's no judgment and if he's not the only way to escape that judgment, he deserves to be crucified.

But if he was telling the truth, there was a missionary from the States. All born-again Christians from the States are not con-men on the television. The real Christians are different.

There was a missionary from America who went to South America and he was killed, martyr for his faith, with five other people. His name was Brother Jim Elliot. And he said in Ecuador before the Indians killed him, No man is a fool who gives up what he cannot possibly keep in order to gain what he cannot possibly lose.

Nobody is a fool who gives up what they cannot possibly keep in order to gain what they cannot possibly lose. You can't keep this life. If you're in Egypt, stop wasting your life.

Come back to the Lord. Return to his people. The Canaanite is in the land.

To say that the Christian future of South Africa is precarious, that would be a gross euphemism. It's Islam, it's muti, it's the cult. There's no Christian future in South Africa now.

Not now. And unless there's a return to Jesus, there won't be. The landslide, the crime, the rise of paganism, Islam.

These things are never going to be saved as long as churches remain churches. If there's going to be a bulwark, if there's going to be a way to rescue your countrymen, your kingmen, if there's going to be a way to give your children a Christian future in this country, it's going to require you building an office. I don't know where you are.

The only one I'm sure of is that baby. That baby's in Earth. Maybe you're in Haram.

You haven't accepted Jesus. You need to tonight. Maybe you're in Shem.

If you're here tonight because it's the guest speaker, you'll be somewhere else having your ears tickled next week. Bouncing from church to church with no commitment? Forget that. Maybe you come to church because you go out the door and light a cigarette? My prayer for you people, my prayer for this church, is that if I ever visit this church again, it will not be a church.

My prayer for you people and this church is the next time I come to it, it won't be a church. It will be a fellowship. If you want to talk to the pastor or myself, we'll be available after the meeting.

Haram, Shem, Shekel, Egypt, you're going to come to trouble. If you want to be safe, that's the place. God bless you.

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