

While They Slept

by J.C. Hibbard

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of being spiritually prepared and vigilant for the imminent return of the Lord, as illustrated by the parable of the ten virgins.

Duration: 54:06

Scripture: Deuteronomy 8:7-20, Isaiah 1:4-6

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the coming of the bridegroom, who represents Jesus Christ. He references various parables and scriptures to illustrate this point. The preacher warns that those who do not obey the voice of the Lord and turn to other gods will perish, just as the nations before them did. He also discusses the concept of slumbering, explaining that God can put a spirit of slumber upon those who reject Him, causing them to lose their ability to see and hear spiritually.

Transcript

Then shall the kingdom, then, he's earmarking a specific time. Now, he is connecting this then shall the kingdom, he's connecting that with the chapter right above it, and the things that occurred. And the one right above it, verily I say unto you, he that he will make him ruler over, blessed is the servant whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall so find doing.

Verily I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all of his goods. But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming. Now notice, he's talking about a time when the Lord would come and the servant would either be ready or not ready.

And he says that he should say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming. And begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and to drink with the drunken. Now he's talking about here, drunken.

Now that is not natural drinking. It's not talking about people that are going out and eating and drinking with people that drink liquor. He is talking here about a spiritual drunkenness.

Because all the way through he talks about be sober. He wasn't saying get off of your liquor. Because the Bible tells the Christian be not drunk, you see.

But he talks about being sober. Now the difference in being sober and drunk, when you're drunk you're not dead. But when you're drunk, things take on a different perspective.

You look at your problems entirely in a different way. Your personality changes and you're not capable of using your intellect as you really should, because you do a whole lot of things while you're under the effect of liquor. That when you get out from under it and become sober, you think of what you've done, you cry, you tell your wife you'll never do it again, and you find yourself broke.

You've done a lot of things. Maybe they'll say, did you know you hit that guy last night? And they've got him in the hospital and he's filing charges against you. And just a lot of things.

He'd have never done it had he not been intoxicated. But it's said here that eat, drink with the drunken. That means spiritual intoxicated.

And I'm talking about people that can, that are supposed to be professing Christians, that reach a place, they lose control of their right thinking and the decisions they should make, and doing the right things. So it says here that take heed, and it said, who then is a faithful servant? Blessed is that servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Now, and he shall begin to smite his fellows, and his fellow servant, and eat, drink with the drunken.

And the Lord of that servant will come on him, in a day that he looketh not for him, and shall appoint his portion, when he is not aware of, and will appoint him asunder, appoint his portion with the hypocrites, and there will be weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Then the next verse says, and then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto. Meaning, that when the Lord comes, and he finds some that are eating and drinking with the drunken, they're smiting their fellow servants.

They're saying, my Lord, delayeth his coming. This has nothing to do with sinners. It has nothing to do with the man of the street.

It has nothing to do with the unchurched man. Because this is not applying to him. It's applying to the ones in the church.

It's applying to those that come to church, that have started out, intend to make heaven, but this thing can happen to you. First of all, in your heart, you say, my Lord's coming. He's my Lord, I'm his child, and he's coming, all right.

I can said to that, but he's not coming right away. My Lord is going to delay his coming. Now then, when you say that in your heart, you begin to smite your fellow servant.

Bickering, fussing, finding fault, and things like that creep out. How many has ever heard of anything like that in churches over the country? Sure you have. And how many have been upset, or maybe your feelings hurt, and you found yourself almost ready to lash out at some of God's children.

But it says, the master is going to come in an hour that he is not aware of, and point him his portion with the hypocrites. And where he goes, there'll be weeping, and gnashing of teeth, because he eat, and he drank with the drunken, and because he thought the Lord delayed his coming, and all that. Now, Jesus is giving this.

He doesn't change the subject. He goes right on, takes a breath, and finishes up. It's not the next day, it's not a sermon, another sermon.

He merely pauses and said, and then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto this. So, when he gives this that I'm reading, he has just got through giving the other, and he earmarks when this occasion, when this thing I'm talking about now, when it's going to happen. It's going to happen when the Lord comes, and catches his servants unaware, and they're thinking, I'm going to delay my coming, but I'm going to blow the trumpet and come.

Now, he said this, then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and they went forth to meet the bridegroom. Now, I've preached on this a lot of time, but not the way I'm preaching on tonight. I want you to see what the Lord laid on the heart.

And they went forth to meet the bridegroom. Now, all the way through, it tells us there's going to be a wedding. Jesus gives more and more parables on that.

The king shall give a wedding for his son, and we are the bride. He's the bridegroom, and there's going to be a wedding. That's going to take place in heaven, while the great tribulations taking place here.

Now, it said, then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened. And the ten virgins went forth with their lamps to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

And they that were foolish took lamps, and they took no oil with them along with them. But the wise took oil in their lamps along with their vessels. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go out to meet him. And all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps, and the foolish said unto the wise, Give us your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, and so it said, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you.

But go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in, and into the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward also these other virgins came along, and said, Lord, open unto us.

And he answered and said unto them, I know you not. Watch therefore, for you know not what hour the Son of Man cometh. Now I want to comment on one thing here tonight.

This is a true happening. Thirteen verses Jesus gives, and he says the kingdom of heaven, then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto. He's taking an Oriental wedding to describe a condition that is going to exist right when the Lord comes.

How many believe surely that this parable is taking place in Dallas? It's taking place all over the earth. It is not a parable that could have been interpreted a hundred or two hundred years ago, because other things had to happen. And he says then, what is he talking about? When the Lord actually comes, right at that time, just before the trumpet blows, there is going to be a certain thing take place.

Now, we often say, what does the lamp mean? What does the oil mean? What does this other mean? It means an Oriental wedding. It has, it is taking a natural thing to convey a spiritual. The whole thing is this.

We're not going to an Oriental wedding, but Jesus is taking the highlights of something very important that took place back in his day at any Oriental wedding. And he applies it to the time when he's just getting

ready to blow the trumpet and come. Now let's see what it is.

All ten virgins are all ready to meet the Lord. They all had lamps, they all had their robes, and it says their lamps burned. Now we know the ten burned because the five said later, our lamps have gone out.

So they filled their vessels with oil and it burned, and all ten of them burned just exactly like they all had robes on. And they all were going out for the same purpose. They had separated themselves from all the world as a peculiar or as a complete separate group that is going out for the purpose of meeting the bridegroom.

Many people back there didn't prepare, they didn't get the robes, they didn't get the lamps, and they didn't light the lamps because all those things are necessary. So we find this parable has nothing to do with a sinner. It has to do with you that sit right here.

There is a warning to us that are here in the church tonight, and this is exactly what we'll find. Now when they got there, they could have all said, well Hammond has got lamps. We all have lamps.

Hammond has got a robe on. We all got robes on. Hammond has come to meet the bridegroom.

All right now. Now then, suppose he'd come in three minutes. They'd all said we're ready to go, and they would have been.

Can anybody anywhere at any time ever say that any one of those ten were not ready when they arrived at the place to wait? Now the Bible tells us that there is a period of time here where the bridegroom tarried. I'll quote it again. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

I want to talk just a little bit on this slumbering. It says that there was a period of time that the bridegroom tarried. May I make this statement? While you sit here tonight looking at your pastor, that's exactly what's happening right this minute.

The bridegroom is tarrying. The bridegroom is tarrying. Now what is the professing church doing? Right up at the very end, they all began to slumber and sleep.

Slumbering is sleeping, is you go down and snore and you're out. Slumbering and sleeping is this. You close your eyes, or you open them up, and you really go to sleep with your eyes open.

And you kind of get glassy-eyed, and then all at once you lean over a little bit and you kind of straighten up, you know, give a little grin, see if anybody saw that. You almost went to sleep, but you slumbered. It means that you're half here and half there, and you're not really any good either place.

You're just kind of in the middle. And so you get a little glassy-eyed, and the preacher's talking, you know, so-so, and you almost go to sleep again, and you look around, and you catch it and straighten up, and the first thing, you know, you lean back. You've had it.

Now that's what happened. That's what Jesus said. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

But here's what the Lord spoke to me that Friday night. He said, son, all of them was ready, just a little before, for the glory, for the marriage, becoming kings and coming back and reigning. But all those that were ready, there was half of them that become unprepared while the bridegroom tarried.

While the bridegroom tarried, in the state of sleeping, while they were sleeping. You say, well now, wait a minute. I'm a Christian.

I couldn't sleep. My brother, I'm going to tell you, you'd be surprised if God told you how many times he's had to wake you up. And if you don't watch yourself, you could be guilty of sleeping between now and next week.

I'm talking about a sleep that's real. I'm not talking about laying down on your bed at night. I'm talking about a spiritual sleep.

Now, the Word says they slept. Now, when they got ready, and they were just about pass out. Wait a minute, just a minute, getting sleepy.

Hammond is ready. We're all ready. Lamps burning, robes on, going to meet the bridegroom.

We've separated, we've paid the price, we've come out, we've said we want to go, and we're here. Everything is ready. But after a while, while they slept, it all happened.

That's what the Lord said. While they were asleep, they become unprepared to go. So all at once, at midnight, a herald gave out a sound.

Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go out to meet him. You never know when the cry is going to be made. They arose immediately, trimmed the lamps, and they went out, and the others rose.

But the lamps had gone out. You can't go out with your lamp. You say, what's a lamp mean? It means being ready.

You had to have to be ready. Now, what do you, that was an Oriental wedding, you're going back with the Lord. What do you have to do? Be ye therefore also ready.

It means whatever you're to do to be ready. When Jesus comes, you're to be that way. When you awake, if you have a little slumbering, you are to be prepared and ready.

But here's the thing. While they slumbered, they went to sleep ready, they woke up unprepared. Am I right? Is that the main thing that the whole parable hinges on? The main thing is this.

What was the result? Five got in and five didn't. Why, Lord, didn't the five others get in? It was because they woke up unprepared, and they were not ready to come out. And this all happened while they were asleep, for when they went to sleep, they were ready.

When they awakened, they were not ready. In the state of slumbering, they become unprepared. That's what the book teaches.

Now, let's see something else. Jesus said, talking about his coming, and he was telling about how that he went away and he would come again, and he had trusted into us certain things, and he said, therefore, watch and pray, lest, lest coming suddenly, and that's the way the bridegroom came. He came suddenly and said, behold, a bridegroom cometh go out to meet him.

Jesus said in Matthew, in another place just above this, he said, watch and pray, lest coming suddenly I find you sleeping. Was he talking to the world, or was he talking to his children? He was talking to his own

children, because the parable had to do with his servants. Now, we find that sleeping is a thing that you could very easily do.

What causes people to sleep? While I'm talking about it, I'm going to give you all the information I have on it. Jesus, one place, he said, because I have done all these things for you, and you've rejected them. He said, I've put forth every effort I could on you, and you wouldn't listen.

He said, the ox, he knoweth his master, and the ass, his master's crib. You see, the ox knows his master, and the ass, his master's crib. The ass don't know much about the master, he just knows that the master gives him something to eat.

But at least the ass knows the master's crib. But he said, my people Israel doth not consider. They have forgot me days without number.

Put yourself in God's shoes. How do you believe he felt when he said the ass over there knows his master's crib, and the ox knows his master, but my people don't even consider. They forgot me days without number.

Now, he said, cross over the river and see if the nations have changed their gods. 10 years ago, 50 years ago, 100 years ago, they had God Baal, or a hundred other kind of gods. Go and see if one of them has switched their gods.

All of them are still hanging to their gods, which are no gods. But is the only one that has the real God. But my people have changed the glory for that which doth not profit.

My people have committed two great evils. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and they have hewn out cisterns, broken cisterns that will hold no water. And may I just mention here, I want you to read it when you get home.

I'd like for you to read it. It's found in the seventh, in the eighth chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, and the seventh verse going on through to the 20th. I'll not take time to read it now.

I wish I could. But I want you to read it, Deuteronomy 8, 7, and finish out that chapter. Deuteronomy 8, 7. I'll tell you what it says here.

God said, I will do this, I will read that last verse, just that last verse here. It said, As the nations which the Lord destroyed before you, before your face, so shall ye also perish, because you would not obey, be obedient under the voice of the Lord your God. Now notice the 19th verse.

And if ye shall be, if thou shalt at all forget the Lord thy God, which walked, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify unto you this day, that ye shall also surely perish, as the nations which the Lord God destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish also, because you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord thy God. Now that was the word of Moses to the children of Israel, and that is the last two verses. But all the verses above it starts off here.

He said, I brought you out of a land of bondage. I brought you out a land of cruel bondage. He said, I led you across a wilderness without water, and I struck the flinty rock, and gave you rivers of living water.

He said, I brought you out in a place of no food, and I fed you with angels' manna forty years, and I caused your feet not to swell, and I caused your shoes not to wear out. I covered you in the day with a cloud, and

at night with a fire that would give you light. He said, I bore you and carried you in, and all your afflictions I was afflicted.

And I brought you into a good land, and I let you possess vineyards that you did not plant. I let you eat of the fruit of the trees that others planted, and I brought you into a land of milk and honey, with figs and with wine and grapes. And he went on to tell them all the things, and he said, I gave you goodly houses to dwell in, and I gave you protection, and I suffered not one to fall before the enemy.

As I brought you through, I let you conquer the enemy, and no man could stand before you. But when you came into my land, and you were filled with good food, which the Lord thy God gave unto thee, you had houses that you were comfortable in, and he said, when you came in and become full, you settle down, and then you began to forget the God that brought you out. You permitted your hearts to go whoring after the gods of the nations around about you, and to grieve the Lord God when he brought you out of bondage.

He fed you coming through the wilderness. He brought you into the walled city, conquered the giants and broke down the walls, gave all of you plenty of land, and gave you milk and honey, and gave you all kinds of fruit, and he let you enjoy the labor of others' hands, because I loved you and pronounced my love upon you. But when you got in and become comfortable, you forgot me.

That's how I wound up. And then he goes on to say, if you'll go ahead and do this, I'm going to forsake you, and just exactly like I conquered the enemy before your face, that's the way you're going to be destroyed, because you forget me. And let me say this, how many believe that America came in, we put in God we trust on our dollar, and how many believe that we had a respect, we had a standard of holiness, we had a standard of right and wrong, and how many believe that God in his goodness has blessed America above every nation on earth? Now, how many believe that many a church member today has come in with an experience, and God brought them out of slavery, brought them out of the hands of the clutches of the devil, he delivered them from the pit of sin, he forgave their guilt, lifted the heavy load off of them, and brought them into a glorious experience, and gave them the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and gave them Christ in their heart, and give them a new birth, put their name in the Lamb's book of life, and give them peace of heart, lifted the heavy load, and then according to God's word, God said no good thing will he withhold to them that walk uprightly, and here in this very one, when you go home and read it, it said for it is the good Lord that makes you to prosper, and to have riches, that's in that very thing, it's God that makes you to prosper, but I will deprive you of all these things, and you will go into the land of the enemy, and there I will turn and fight against you, just like I fought against the countries that you came into, and before your eyes I conquered them, you shall have the same thing meted out to you, you're my children, you're the seed of Abraham, but you must put me first, and when you are full, and your stomachs are full, and you're living in lovely houses, you're enjoying the fruits of the trees, remember it is the good God of heaven, and don't forget God, but God came on the scene later, and it said the ass remembers the master's hand, and the ox remembers the master, but my people Israel have forgot me days without number.

Praise God, thank you Jesus, oh hallelujah, hallelujah, anyone has the interpretation, glory to God, thank you Jesus, God is present. Praise God, amen. God in his mercy is stretching forth his hand, he loves us, but if we turn from him, he tells us what he'll do, in the first chapter of Isaiah, he brings a charge against Israel, I want you to listen real quickly, it said all sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, seed of evildoers, children in whom there is your corruptors, they have forsaken the way of the Lord, and they

have provoked the holy one of Israel, their anger, they have gone away backward, why would you be stricken more and more, why will you revolt more and more, the whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint, from the sole of your feet, until your head, there is no soundness in it, wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, you have not mollified them, you have not bound them up with ointment, your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, your land strangers have devoured in your presence, and you are desolate, overthrown by the strangers, and the daughters of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodging of a garden of cucumbers, except the Lord of hosts had left a very small remnant, you would have been as Sodom and even as Gomorrah, hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom, give ear unto the law, the God of Gomorrah, to what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord, I am full of burnt offerings, I am full of rams and fat beasts and goats, I delight not in the blood of bulls and of lambs and of goats, then when you come before me to appear before me, who will require this at your hands to tread my courts, bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me, the new moons and sabbaths and the calling of assemblies I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the sabbath meetings are abomination, your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth, they are trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them, and when you spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you, yea, when you make many prayers I will not hear you, your hands are full of blood, wash you and make you clean, put away the evil of your doings before mine eyes, and cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fathers and the widows, and come before me, and come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

This is God speaking to Israel after they have done exactly what he told them they would not do. He said, but if you will come now, I don't want you to bring incense, I don't want you to bring oblation, I don't want you to bring a new feast or new moon, and all the hundreds of ceremonies and things that you're going through a ritual, forget it. He said, I want you to come now to the God of heaven, open up your heart, and I want you to reason with God and get to the core of things.

Forget sacrificing, forget blood sacrificing, forget incense, forget new moons, come and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet. But you know what? Right after that, they did not heed. They turned their deaf ear to God.

Now we come on the scene. God, as a last resort, sent his son, Jesus. And Jesus was rejected of the same people.

Then Jesus stood on the mountain and cried and said, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thee, but you would not. Now your house is left desolate. Now I'm coming to the point.

He said, your house is left desolate, and this is what will happen. You'll fall by the edge of the sword. You'll be led away captive.

Paul the Apostle in Romans 11, here's what he said, Wherefore, God, for as it is written, and you go back to Isaiah, you'll find these very words that God said, If you go away from me, after I have given you all these good things and I've taken you out of the hand of the enemy and I brought you out, I will put a spirit of slumber upon you and it shall be drowsiness. It will be fatigue and it will cause you not to rationally think and I will close your eyes and close your ears so the eyes that could see and the ears could hear will no longer function. Now then, in Romans 11, Paul said, For it is written that God said, I will give them a spirit of slumber, eyes that they shouldn't see and ears that they shouldn't hear, because they had a chance to

use their spirit, they had a chance to use their eyes and ears, but they rejected.

And now he said, God hath given them the spirit of slumber. Now he said, Behold the goodness and the severity of God. On the Gentiles, goodness, but on Israel, severity.

Why? Because he has rejected, your house is desolate, you shall fall to the edge of the sword, your place of worship taken down, you will be scattered and you will have a spirit of slumber that I told you I'd put on you. Why? Because you forgot your God when I blessed you and you let the blessing stand between me and you, I will give you a spirit of slumber and I will put you back in the hands of the enemy. Now he said, Take heed, Gentiles, for if God spared not his own, take heed, lest he spare not thee.

How many believe that the Gentiles, it said, be not high-minded, but fear. For if God spared not his own chosen people, but give them a spirit of slumber, how many believe in the end time right now, God is giving many people a spirit of slumber because they've taken the good things that God's given them and they're letting that stand between them and God and they're having pleasure, they're letting the things, the blessings that God gave them stand between their worship and their praise like it should and it's separating them from God and it's caused God's heart to grieve. Now, let me say this.

Notice it was a spirit of slumber. You could go up to any of them and speak, they'd speak intelligent to you, but they were asleep. I'm talking about a spiritual sleep.

Now, Jesus said, Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. Another place it said, Let us not sleep as others, but let us watch and be sober. Don't be drunk.

That's spiritual drunkenness. And it said, Let us watch and be sober. But in Ephesians, it speaks to the church and said, Let us not sleep as do others.

Now, Jesus used this word. He said, Men ought always to pray and not faint. Look up the word faint.

What is it? It is you're not dead. Your heart is still beating. All parts of your body is functioning perfectly.

But you are not rational with what's going on around about you. Now, what is the difference? What is the thin line between fainting and want to sleep? We'll go to one person that faints out. He's on the floor.

He's not dead. And he'll be up and at it in just a little while. But right now, you can say anything you want to say and he doesn't hear you.

He's not a bit of good to anybody around about him. He's still got good brains. His heart's beating all right.

He's not sick. He just fainted. It means that temporarily he cannot function normally.

And what he's doing, he's just passed out. And he's not a bit of good to anybody around about him. You see what I mean? You're not good to nobody if you're fainting.

Now, here's another person that's slumbering and sleeping. Their heart's all right. It's not going to be a permanent thing.

They're going to get up after a while and go on about their business. But while they're laying there, they're asleep. They're out.

They're not conscious of what's going on around about them. Jesus Christ, in referring to this, He was referring to the same condition that happens to people if you're in a fainted condition and you're sound asleep. You're both exactly on the same category.

Why? Because you're going to come out in a little while. He's going to come out in a little while. But while you're there, you can't whistle.

You can't sing. You can't lead anybody to God. You can't think normally.

You can't think rationally. And while you're laying there, there's dangers around about you if you're fainted or asleep. Jesus, instead of saying men ought always to pray and not go to sleep, but He knew that one is just like the other.

He said men ought always to pray and not faint. Now that if it calls it fatigue, and you reach a place that you just feel that thing coming over you, a kind of a spirit of sleepy lack. You don't feel like praying because you're feeling that way.

You just kind of go along. But now what does the Bible say? They that wait upon the Lord. That's praying.

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up as on wings of eagles. They shall run and not be weary.

They shall walk and not faint. That means through prayer it is a therapy to the soul. There is nothing under heaven.

If you are guilty and the Lord comes along and says, Honey, you're asleep. And if I come, I'll catch you asleep. Well, what must I do, Lord? Read a chapter in the Bible? Or what should I do? Just get up and wash my face real good? Put cold water on it and say, Now, I'm alright.

I'm awake. He said, Oh no, you're just still sound asleep. It's not that kind of sleep that you have when you go to bed.

It's a spiritual sleep that comes upon you, and brother, things are happening around about you, and they're not having any effect. The preacher can preach, my brother, any kind of a message, and God tries to reach you, but He can't. Why? You're asleep.

And I found this out. There's only one thing I know that will bring you out of the sleep if you're in it, and that's to get right down on your knees and pray till that thing is broken. Men ought always to pray and not faint.

Whoever heard of anybody just fainting out, pass out in the natural, I'm talking about. He's not talking about natural faint. And somebody said, Well, that person just fainted there.

If they'd have prayed this morning, they wouldn't have fainted. That's a natural faint. You faint because of weakness.

Am I right? You faint because of the wrong environment. You faint because someone comes up and said, Your husband just got in a wreck down there, and it's too much for you. The pressure is too much.

You pass out. That happens all the time. People faint.

Doctors will tell someone to sit down. Now, I've got something to say to you. They're afraid they'll faint.

That's in the natural. There's a spiritual faint. How many believe that? Now, there is a spiritual faint.

And Jesus said, Watch and pray always that you might be accounted worthy to escape. And I'm going to say this. There are people here tonight that may be asleep spiritually.

And this may not get through as it really should. But if you can let your intellect listen to what Brother Hibbert is saying, and you get down on your knees, and you begin to pray, not just pray because you promised to pray a certain amount, but you get out and begin to pray, as sure as you do, there is a strength that comes from heaven because God said so. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up as on wings of eagles. They will run and not be weary. They will walk and not faint.

You get out and you pray. It may take a full hour the first time until you really touch heaven and the joy comes in. When you do, you will begin to see things in a perspective you've never seen it before.

You will become conscious of things you have neglected and you have left undone, that all at once you will become under the conviction that I must do these things. There are opportunities that you have been blind to that will open up. You will see the privileges of God.

The promises will become more rich to you. It will be easier to trust God and to lean upon Him. You can mount up.

You can run and you can walk and you'll not be weary. And God can take care of that condition. Jesus said, they slumbered and they slept.

And while they slumbered, it all happened. They become unprepared to go in the rapture while they were asleep. When they went to sleep, they were ready as much as anybody on earth will ever be ready.

But while they were sleeping, they become unprepared to go in. That's exactly what the thing teaches us. If it teaches one thing, while they waited and the bridegroom tarried, Jesus is tarrying right now.

He hasn't come. How many believe it's just before the sound goes out, the bridegroom coming? If we're asleep. I'm going to tell you, if you're one tonight that's praying, you're putting your prayer time in, you're reading the Bible, you're seeing sin on that television that you'd never seen before.

You'd see sin in the paper that you've never seen before. You'd watch the news and you'd see things in our country. And I'm going to tell you the truth.

I served God and I've loved God for 50 years. But since we've been putting this hour in early when everything was quiet, I have never been able to see the conditions of this world. I have never been able to feel the pulse of the people of God as I have since I have awakened and I've come before God.

I see things in a new perspective. His Word becomes rich. It begins to speak to me.

It begins to juvenate me. When I get up of a morning, I feel a strength. I feel lighter.

I feel a strength, a health that I haven't felt before. Why? Because God said, when you wait upon Me, He that waiteth upon Me, I will renew their strength and they shall mount up as on wings of eagles. How many

here tonight realize there is a possibility, no matter how your lamp burned at one time, and God said to me the other day, and I'm finished now, in that room, in a dream, I was in that room, and God said to me, Son, go out and tell them to keep their lamp trimmed and burning.

And I waited a few minutes and He said a second time, Son, go out and tell the people to keep their lamp trimmed and burning. I've told you this several times because it meant something. And while I was in there in my dream, I was hurrying to get a scripture.

He said, Son, now go out quickly. He was just like that. He said, go out quickly and tell them to keep their lamp trimmed and burning.

You know what He was saying? He was saying, go out and tell them to stay ready. And if you're asleep, you're not ready. You cannot carry the load of the church if you've gone to sleep.

You can get lukewarm very easy if you slumber, and if you go to sleep. You can lose your first love very easy if you go to sleep. You can think the Lord's going to delay His coming very easy when you go to sleep.

You can smite your fellow servant easy when you go to sleep. But we need to be alert, awakened, not in a stupor, not drunken, spiritually intoxicated. God said to me, Son, I've got a message for this woman.

She can stand here and tell you what God performed on her was a New Testament miracle. Her life was completely gone. It was wrecked.

She couldn't be a mother. She couldn't be a wife. She didn't ever want to go out.

She never wanted to fix a meal. She didn't want to go out to eat. She didn't want to fix anything.

She had just lost control. And God said, I've got a message for her, but don't deliver it until she gets off from the sedative that she's in. You wait until she gets completely out from under the effect of the sedative before you deliver my message.

Because her mind is not able to function and think. Well, that is a new one on me. God knew more about it than I did.

So I went up to her and I said, I've got a message that God gave me to give to you at Methodist Hospital. She said, Brother, I've got the uttermost confidence in you and I want you to give it to me. I said, I can't give it to you now.

I said, God spoke to me and told me to come up here. And here's what he said. He said to tell you to get completely off of the sedative that you're on before the message is delivered.

I don't want you to deliver my message to people that can't think normally. And that's exactly what those things do to you. That's right along with sleeping.

You don't have to take them to sleep spiritually. You can do that, but you're in the same fix. God can't put things over to you.

You've got to wake up for it and talk to it. And awake thou that sleepest it said. Awake! Get out of your sleep.

He's not talking about natural sleep. He's talking about spiritual sleep. Right now, people would have a compassion for souls that's going to hell if they were wide awake spiritually.

How many believe that? Now, I went to her and I said, What sedatives are you on? She said, I'm on thallium. I said, What power? She said, Five. Five.

Five grams, whatever it is. How many do you take a day? She told me. She said, Just very little.

She hadn't been on too long. And I said, All right. I got that information, went to the doctor, and I said to him, I said, Doctor, I've got to have a question answered for me.

If a woman is on thalliums and she's on five grain and she takes so many a day, how long would it take her to be completely out from under the effect of that to where she could think perfectly normal? He looked up at me with a question as to say, Why do you want to know? He paused a minute. He said, There are five grain? I said, Yeah. Two or three a day, I think he said.

Two days, something like that. I said, Yes, that was it. Hmm.

Well, he said, It may vary just a few hours, but he said it would be between three and four days before she is able to think normally and react rationally. People go around all time, week in and week out on thalliums. They change your whole nature, and it's amazing what some people do, and they'll eventually, they'll kill you if you fool around with them.

But that doctor told me that. I went back and said, Cut them out, and when you get through, I'm going to bring a message to you. She went home.

She got completely off of them. I went in, and I told her after three days was up. She listened to me.

She raised her hand and prayed. God healed her. And overnight, she was a brand new woman.

She was up and going and bright and tending to the children, fixing three meals a day. She was normal, but she was locked in that thing, and that's the same thing that keeps people not working for God, and God can't get things to. They have gone to sleep spiritually.

I'm not talking to those that have not, but how many believe there's a possibility of no matter what you have had, there's a possibility of you going to sleep, and as far as I know, one thing, brother, will cause it to awake is to have a good old-fashioned prayer meeting until you feel the glory come in and the Holy Ghost take over. And then you begin to think like you should. This is what I've delved into, and I know what I'm talking about.

It gives you just like a person fatigued that can't keep their eyes open. They're just like spiritually, you have a heaviness that comes over you. We're at the closing of the Gentile age, and because many have neglected God, we have permitted the nice home and money in the bank and everything else.

We forget Wednesday night. We forget the prayer service. We forget to feed ourselves on the radio.

We find ourselves feeding on the wrong things, and we're enjoying the good things that God gives us, but we're forgetting God. Now this is not to everybody. It's to individuals here that have found time for everything but to get down and really pray as we really should.

I'm going to ask us tonight to do this for me. It's about eight minutes to eight. I'd like to have us go in the back.

I've held you just a little lengthy tonight, but this has been heavy on my heart. And as we go into this tenth week, how many believe that there's going to be, if we stay faithful to God, there's going to be people, and you know why hundreds of backsliders are out there that are not coming to church and they weren't here this morning? You know why? They've gone to sleep. I said they've gone to sleep.

But how many of you do not want to go to sleep? You want the Spirit to keep you awake. Lest, coming suddenly, He find you sleeping, and half, half of the crowd that was going out to meet the Lord did not go. Half of the group got unprepared while they were asleep.

That's Jesus saying in this end time, my Pentecostal holiness, church of Christ, our church of God, our four square, our, we would say, God's people, Baptists, that are really born again and all, God's church as a whole, half of the ones that were really ready and on fire, half of the group, because He spake of those that were designed to go out and meet the Bridegroom. Not the world, but the church. And that means half.

One out of every two is going to go to sleep, and when the Lord comes, they'll wake up and find that they're not prepared and ready. Have I interpreted this right? Is it true that Jesus said while they were asleep, they woke up unprepared, they went to sleep prepared, but they woke up unprepared. He tells us to stay ready.

Five of them had wise, they were wise enough to see to it that they were going to stay ready. It's up to us to do that. Let's stand to our feet tonight.

Oh, hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah. How many here again, you'll say, Brother Hibbert, I do not want to go to sleep spiritually.

I want to stay awake. Let me see your hand. All right.

You'll find it the easiest thing in the world to do, to go back there and to kneel and to have a real good prayer before we go home tonight. And I want us to open our heart and search it and say, God, I want to fit into your program exactly as you'd have me to fit. I want to be ready at any time you want to use me.

Would you come? Let's come right on through these arches. Let's go in the prayer room. Hallelujah.

Oh, hallelujah.

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