

Judges 18

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a deeper faith and being grateful for the things we have, as everything in life is fleeting and not truly ours.

Duration: 1:10:13

Scripture: Judges 18:24, Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Judges", "Faith in Trials", "Gratitude and Contentment"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill delivers a powerful sermon on Judges 18, emphasizing the question of how much one can lose without losing faith in God. He reflects on the story of Micah, who lost his gods and priest, and challenges the congregation to consider their own attachments and the fragility of worldly possessions. Ravenhill highlights the importance of inner faith and the assurance that true treasures, such as faith and peace, cannot be taken away by external circumstances. He encourages believers to cultivate gratitude for their blessings and to recognize that true maturity in faith comes through trials and tribulations. Ultimately, he calls for steadfastness in faith, regardless of life's challenges.

Transcript

The following message was delivered by Reverend Leonard Ravenhill during a regular session at the Christ for the Nations Institute. He is speaking on the subject of how much can you lose without losing your faith in God, based on Judges, the 18th chapter, verse 24. I want to say a word of thanks for your attention during these days.

First, for your attendance. If you weren't here, I couldn't talk to you. And then for your attention.

And if you don't listen well, you can't teach well. So they say. A lady commented yesterday about this marvellous story of Reece Howells and said how much he had to go through in this kind of protracted dying period and wanted to know if everybody had to go the same way.

Well, this is certainly not true. I talked with Mrs. Howells once after speaking at that college and she pointed to a room and she said everybody knows that daddy, as she called her husband, bought this place with a shilling in his pocket. That was 12 cents at that time.

And that was his down payment on this place. I don't know what he gave for about \$200,000. It's a very fascinating story.

But she said what they forget is that in that room, she pointed to the room at the top of the veranda there, and she said in that room, he spent 12 hours every morning from 6 till 6 at night. In that room for 12 hours a day for 11 months. Without missing.

Now I don't know your definition of praying through, but to me that's praying through. You know some of us can't be very nice, we can't even live with ourselves. If we get a spare hour, we've got to have somebody with us to go somewhere.

But to live by yourself, 12 hours a day in a room and really pray, well then you can declare your faith. As I've said, it's not faith to say that God can turn this desk into gold, that's not faith. It's faith if you say he will.

And if you'd like to try it, I'll stop right here and let you pray. So let's again remember that maturing isn't a weekend affair, it's a long while. It takes a long while to really come to maturity in the things of God.

We say we trust him, but I'll tell you something, he doesn't trust us very often. Really, does he? All right, thank you for again coming and listening. I want to try to wrap up this thing this week.

You know I told you at the beginning when I came, there are three results of preaching. Preaching does one of three things, makes people sad or mad or glad. And mine makes people glad.

They're glad when I go. The book of Judges, the 18th chapter, verse 24. And he said, you've taken away my gods which I made, and the priest.

And he had gone away. And what have I more, and what is this that ye say unto me? What alethy. If you reduce this text to the irreducible minimum, I think you'd have to say that it says this.

You've taken away my God, and what have I left? This story is interesting, it begins in the previous chapter. The 17th chapter, it's a story of a woman who lived in the hills of Ephraim. And she had a son by the name of Micah.

Now he's not the prophet Micah, he's not related to him. And somehow she gathered together a fortune of 1100 shekels of silver, worth in that day a considerable sum of money. Now they had no banks, and I don't know where she kept such a large fortune.

Maybe she dug a hole in the ground like Achan did when he wanted to bury his wedge of gold and the garment that he stole. Maybe she hid some of it at the end of the rafter. Maybe she put some of it under the bed like you do.

But I don't know where she hid it all, but she hid it. And then when she needed it, the money had all been stolen. And so she did what lots of other people do, they find God a very present help in time of trouble.

Other times he's not too important, but in trouble they really, really want the Lord. And so she went to the Lord and she told the Lord that the money had been stolen and even while she was praying before she called, he answered and there was a knock at the door. And when she opened the door, her son was there.

And he said, mother the money which you're cursing, behold I stole it. I've taken it away. And she said, the Lord bless thee my son, not for stealing the money, but for bringing it back.

And then she took it down the street and she gave it to a silversmith and he put it in a crucible. And out of it he made a grave image and he made a molten image. And she screened off a part of the house and she had an ephod and she had a teraphim and she had two gods.

Now all she needed was a priest and it happened an evangelist came down the road and he, I don't know how good he was, but nobody wanted him, he had nothing slated. And so they offered him a job. Give you so much wages, give you so much clothes, give you so much in food and he settled and said this is good.

And then they took another relative in the family and they made him a priest. So now you've got the set up. They had two priests, they had two gods, they had an ephod, they had a teraphim.

They had a corner of the house screened off, they had everything required for worship in that day. And then there was an invasion of the children of Dan. They're a type of the children of the devil.

And they came down into the country and they, they, they spied out. And they went back to their lords and they said now we got no problems here. This people have no king, they have no army.

And it sounds like today doesn't it? It says everybody does that which is right in their own eyes. Well that's the law of the land today, we've got back to the jungle. As the broadcaster said two nights ago, a thousand years ago, they ended barbarism in England and Europe, why not end it in America? But it seems to have come back, it's had a revival.

This morning the whole nation is held at gunpoint by a bunch of kids. And the FBI says it's the most serious outbreak ever. And they predict at least attempted assassinations.

Oh they gave a rundown of awful misery just a couple of nights ago on TV. This is the situation we're in. But this is not merely the law in the world, it's the law in the church.

There used to be a time when you joined a church, they put in one hand a Bible, and they put in the other hand a book of discipline. Now if you did that today, somebody look at the Bible and say you know, well we cost \$3.95 anyhow, they get these wholesale. And then the book of discipline, they most likely hit you on the head with it.

They'd say to the pastor who you think you're pushing about. Now when they go to the doctor it's a different story. They go to the doctor and you know with a pain and they say now doctor look, don't hide anything because we've had three people.

I kind of think cancer runs in our family and oh I've had this for about four nights and tell me the worst won't you. Don't hide anything. When they go to church they say to the preacher tell me the best.

When they go to the doctor they say tell me the worst. And the doctor says no you don't have cancer, it's cabbage or something. And so they feel relieved and he says you take this twice a day and you don't eat this and you do that and he gives you a whole routine.

And people follow it, oh I didn't, oh man I didn't take that pill right now, dear dear dear. And they're upset. Now rigidly they follow the discipline of the doctor.

But they won't follow the discipline of the pastor anymore. You start putting harness on and they say well there's another Pentecostal church down the road. I mean don't have to come here and stand for this you know.

Everybody does that which is right in their own eyes. And when these big shots heard that it was easy to take the country they returned. And as the scripture would say they spoiled the country.

They took everything they could. And they snatched the gods that this man had and his ephod and his teraphim. They even took the preacher I don't quite know why.

And somebody ran after Micah in the field and they said Micah they've taken away your god and your priest. And he in return ran after the children of Dan and he hollered after them You've taken away my priest and my God. What have I left? So just a simple thing negative you see.

People always talk about negative preaching. Jesus was negative, very negative. We like to be positive.

We like to be on this side you know. But repentance is pretty negative you know. Leaving all is pretty negative.

Taking, taking up your cross is so negative you won't be there when you've taken it up. And there are certain demands the Lord makes. Now here's a question.

How much could you lose this morning without losing your faith in God? Hmm? Did you give a passing thought this morning to how many Christians there are in China that haven't got a thing? Or Russia? Or other countries? Supposing I say we're all millionaires this morning. You'll disprove that at least you'd challenge it. And yet it's true.

Now look you've got a lot of things that are yours and yet they're not yours. They're fastened to you with the stuff that spiders webs are made of and that's not very strong. About five years ago I said that soon in newspapers you'd see a column.

Instead of advertising used furniture, used automobiles. You'll see somebody advertising in a newspaper and it will have a section you know like human parts. And you'll see something like this.

I'm a brunette. I have blue eyes. I weigh so and so.

I'm so old. And I want to sell my right kidney for \$25,000. I've got blue eyes.

I'm so old. I have this, that and the other. And I want to sell my left eye for \$50,000.

People said you see Ravenhill's got such a fertile imagination. He thinks these things up. But you know one of the leading medical journals in the country said recently that there soon will be a catalog in your newspaper selling spare parts.

Because you see this business of transplanting has come to a wonderful art now. They've transplanted kidneys for a long while and got them to function. They've transplanted hearts.

I heard of one lady who said I hope they start transplanting brains. I'm saving up for my husband. But they're going to do a lot of wonderful things before very long in the area of transplanting.

Now you've got some precious things. They're not precious. I mean maybe you couldn't even remember the last time you thanked God for your eyesight could you? It's a status quo.

You've always had it. And so what? There are about 250,000 blind people in America feeling their way around this morning. You and I have got wonderful eyes.

We can see. We can read. And yet when did you last thank him for your sight? Do you want to sell your eyes? You can sell them even now.

They'll take that little thing, what they call it, cornea off the top and transplant it. A friend of ours had one done last year. And now has better sight than I have.

He doesn't even need glasses or anything. He's hardly had vision all his life. And they took this thing off somebody's eye and put it on his.

And boy he can see like that. And he saw his wife really for the first time and can read. And he's thrilled.

Every day he says marvelous. I can see the flowers. He can't get over it.

It doesn't phase you and me. We've had eyes all our lives so what? Just there. So you have your sight.

When did you last thank God for your sight? And then your senses. You may not have much but you've got some kind of an IQ. Did you ever thank God for your sanity? Oh I was in one place and a lady came running up after the morning service.

She said, Brother Eddie I want to tell you the first thing I do every morning is thank God for my sanity. Because a few years ago I got mentally unbalanced. I was in an institution for about four years.

And every morning I wake up now I say thank you Lord I'm sane. A friend of mine went to the famous institution in Omar. In Omar, in Ireland.

And three stories up a man was trying to get his head between the window and the grill. And he was howling, howling, howling at all. Hi, hi, hi.

My friend kind of sniggered and said well you're the lunatic not me. I'm not going back. But the man desperately shouted after him so loudly that finally he said what do you want? He said sir I want to ask you a question.

Didn't know who he was. He said I want to ask you a question. Did you thank God for your senses this morning? Not this morning I can't remember when I had ever thanked him for them.

You know I'd been round the world he said and he had. I'd been round the world ten times preaching the gospel. And never thought to thank God for his sanity.

Oh the man said I would if I were like you. You see I'm a lunatic. You know what that means he's controlled by the moon.

The Bible is very scientific as I mentioned before. It's frosty in fact in northern Texas this morning it's snowing. And it's 30 degrees.

And this is because a certain constellation of stars which Job talks about. The sweet influences of Pleiades. Happens to control the frost system of the universe.

And so this thing has come into power and now it's controlling the frost system. And it'll be there as long as that system stays there. Now the moon doesn't control the frost.

The moon controls the waters of the world. Just as you take a magnet and pull a piece of steel. The moon pulls the waters of the world.

So if you want to go to any port in the world. All you have to do is go to a shipping office. And say can I get in say you're coming to New York.

And the Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth they don't run anymore. But they were the only two boats that couldn't get into New York Harbor without a tide. See if they come in at low tide they may cut the top off the Holland Tunnel.

And the government doesn't go in for baptizing people in mass you see. And so they wouldn't like to flood the Holland Tunnel. So every time they come in they must know the depth of water.

And they'll tell you five years in advance. There'll be 49 feet 5 and 3 quarter inches. Sure you can get in.

How do they know? Because they know where the moon will be. They know the power of gravity. Now by the same token as the moon pulls water.

The moon pulls some people's minds. They go lunatic. They go off their mind.

And this man said you see I tear my flesh. I pull my hair. I beat my head against the wall.

And I wake up bloody and messed up. And they say well sorry you just had another spasm. But you have your sight.

And I have my sight. Have we really thanked God for them? You again have your senses. Have you thanked God for your senses? And you may not be the fittest person in the world this morning.

But after all you do have, you do have some strength. You're again not on a hospital bed. You're not in some institution.

What about it? You thank God for this? And then of course the precious thing called freedom. There are lots of wonderful Christians that are tied up this morning. In Russia again, in parts of Germany, Spain, Burma.

France. Pardon me. China where there's no freedom.

What's the hardest thing you have to teach your children? A thousand times over. You give them something and you say. And years after they're forgetful and you say.

Oh thank you. Isn't that about the hardest thing to get them to be thankful? The scripture talks about one of the signs of the ends of the day. That people are unthankful and unholy.

Now we may not be unholy but there's an awful lot of us unthankful I think. See I've always had my side. I've always had the average sense.

I've always had reasonable strength. And my freedom and my church and my Bible. And never really known the pangs of hunger very deeply.

Oh you have a lot of things this morning that are yours. No they're not yours at all. A girl in a church I pastored was looking through the window.

Two boys were arguing there. One of them picked up a rock to throw at the other and he held it a second too long. And it went over the boy's head, came through the window and put that girl's eyes out like a light.

Now she didn't ask for it, didn't expect it. Somebody driving down the high road and some idiot drunk comes round just about three inches over the white line. And the next thing I saw a place in Ohio.

Where a Christian family, a man, his wife and three children were wiped out just like that by a drunk who was only about six inches over the line. But he'd come up the wrong ramp and he was going too fast and he just liquidated that family. You see you've got things that are yours, they're not yours.

Your sight is yours, it isn't yours. When I was at college Mr. Chadwick came in with a stack of letters like this for prayer requests. And he said we have one from a very distinguished editor of a British newspaper.

He had one of those very rare daughters, a combination of brains and beauty. You don't usually get the two together. And she was really brilliant.

She studied music in the conservatoire at Milan. She studied painting under one of the modern masters in Belgium. I don't know why the Lord gave her all the gifts.

She could sing like Gully Gertie. She could play the violin like Yehudi Menuhin. She can paint pictures like Van Gogh.

All a little exaggerated but that's an evangelist privilege. But anyhow she had all these marvellous gifts and she was very wonderful and everybody envied her. And when she was 21 he took her on a tour around the world.

This was by boat. And they made a long wonderful fascinating tour. And five years after she came home.

One morning the maid knocked at her bedroom door. She had her own maid and she brought her a cup of tea and some little English cookies. And discovered that the beautiful girl she loved so much was just in the night.

She became as stiff and straight as the edge of this desk. And from that day to this her fingers have never danced over the keys. She's never been able to take the horse's tail and pull it over the cat gut and make everybody happy.

She can't sing. She just lies in bed totally paralysed. Science doesn't find the answer.

Her daddy's pocket isn't deep enough to pay anybody to give the healing. And the doctors say that somewhere on a tour in some part of the world. She took a glass of water or something or she took a germ.

And she inhaled that germ or swallowed that germ. And it holed up somewhere in her. It went to sleep.

It hibernated. And then that one night. That one night this beautiful girl the envy of society.

Lovely Christian girl. Suddenly that thing as the doctor put it. It got onto the throne of power and it paralysed her body.

So that she's in that luxurious home now with her servants and everything. And Rolls Royce's can't use anything. Lies there paralysed.

Just because she inhaled a germ somewhere. So you've a lot this morning but it isn't yours. Somebody could throw a rock at you as he did to the girl and put your eyes out.

Somebody could crash into your automobile and leave you without a limb. Your investments. Oh boy the Dow Jones averages are very erratic.

Your home and your inheritance. A hurricane could get rid of that in about half an hour. I mean we've so much and we've nothing.

You see these things are ours and they're not ours really. Moths and rust can corrupt them. Thieves can break through and steal them.

Wars can come. A shell a bomb could drop. You can liquidate a city in 50 seconds now.

A thousand years of culture can go up in vapour. It's some world really you know. Takes so long to get it.

It takes so short to lose it. No power over it. But do you remember a story Jesus told.

He said what shall it profit a man if he gain the. Oh and then what. Oh I see.

So everything in the world outside external. The devil has power over it all or nature or something else. Right up to my skin.

And then from my skin inward. He can't touch anything. You see there are some things of mine they're not mine.

Again moth and rust can corrupt them. Thieves can break through and steal. But look there are some things that are mine.

And I can shake my fist in the face of calamity and tragedy and adversity. And the world and the flesh and the devil. And say to the whole bunch of them these things are mine.

Ever heard anybody say you know I lost my faith through so and so. No they didn't. Nobody can take your faith not even the devil.

If you lose it you lose it. Nobody can take your peace. If you lose it you surrender it.

Go back a minute. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and if he lose his own soul. Now you may lose your eyesight through somebody else's folly.

You may lose a limb because somebody drives into you. You may lose your possessions or positions because of war or something else. But look there are some things and these things are yours.

And do you know what the first one of them is. Because I don't think Jesus was saying stack all the wealth of the world up as the evangelist does. And then says there's your soul and your soul is worth that.

Sure it is but that isn't what he said. He said what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world. If he lose his own soul.

Nobody can lose your soul but you. Do you remember the haughty Henley that proud pagan defying deity. When he said out of the night that troubles me black as the pit from pole to pole.

I thank whatever gods there be for my unconquerable soul. It matters not how straight the gate I'll charge with punishment the stroll. I'm the master of my fate I'm the captain of my soul.

Exactly who's arguing. Our sister said God is a God of love. And the world says you mean to say a God of love will send men to hell.

No, no, no. God never send a person to hell yet. They send themselves to hell.

They decide they won't have this man to rule over them. They won't take God's redemptive work in Christ. And therefore they perish, they perish.

It's their soul you can't lose another man's soul. It's his soul. He won't be able to charge men or demons or God with losing his soul.

He lost his soul. Now, I say there are things that are not mine and yet they're mine. And the things that look to be mine and yet they're not mine.

There's a, there's a wonderful story in the Bible. And this is what I want to get to really. The other's just merely an introduction.

Oh no, let me, let me switch for a minute here. Some of you go through a rough time, sure. And as I've said you may as well face it, you'll go through rougher.

If you lead anybody to Christ or the baptism or anything show them the small print. Otherwise you're not honest. You know what the Lord has done? He's guaranteed you peace until you go to heaven.

Do you know what? And he's guaranteed in the world you shall have tribulation so you better balance the budget. Otherwise you're not honest. I've come to this conclusion, disagree if you like.

I, I, I think that the sign of prosperity in the Old Testament. God's blessing in the Old Testament is a sign of prosperity. And God's blessing in the New Testament is adversity.

What's your breaking point? Here's a man in the Old Testament and you see him sitting under the door of his tent. And he's shaking the tears out of his beard. And you go up and you say you've got trouble.

He says you didn't hear about my trouble. I got one, I got, I got three big troubles. And you say what's your philosophy? Oh he says I made up my mind about this life in which we live, this world in which we live.

Do you know what it is? I say no I'd like to. All things are against me. Now do you live in that street? You either live in that street or the other street where here is a man who knows ten thousand times more about trouble than a hundred people put together.

He's got tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness, sword, in perils of the deep, in perils of his own countrymen, in perils of robbers, in perils of the deep, thirty-six hours, 195 times he was lashed, once he was stoned, three times he suffered shipwreck. And that boy has had everything the devil or anybody else could put on him. And you say to him do you subscribe to the philosophy of Jacob? I mean look everything's been against you.

And you know what they're going to chop your head off. And he says hallelujah. You say what do you mean hallelujah? He says they're going to chop my head off.

Do you subscribe to this philosophy that all things are against me? Oh no he says. No sir. I just want to tell you before I'm going to die in twelve hours.

Do you know what I want to tell you? All things work together for, oh I say but read the catalogue. All those work, every one of them work together for good in his life. Oh this man almost thumbs his nose at the devil and he says oh pour it on, pour it on.

The more you try the more I'll beat you. Or defeat you. Do you remember what he says a little later on? When it seems incredible that he should say so he faces up to every situation that he's been in.

And do you know what he says? He says well do you know that I clench my fist and grind my teeth and say well I'm filled with the spirit and I'm going to get through. I mean it's horrid but I'm going to try desperately hard. Oh no.

He turns the thing upside down. It's just rubbish to human philosophy. Do you know what he says? I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in buffetings, in rebukings.

He doesn't just bear them and say his grace is enough. I glory in tribulation, in necessities, in reproaches. And I've often heard people say you know I wish I could write poetry.

Well I've written quite a bit. Sometimes I think I'd like to publish it. Other times maybe I think I wouldn't.

But I like to write poetry. It may not be too good. You might call it doggerel but it does me good anyhow.

But you know the greatest hymns like the greatest things in life. Do you know how they come out? They don't come out of swivel chair theologians. And all due respect again I've never heard of anybody composing anything like that in a banquet.

Do you know where they come? They come out of the furnace. Over on the west coast here keep going and you'll come almost to the very house. There was a woman she's dead now.

Not long ago did she die. And no joking do you know that woman was she was a human pretzel. You couldn't tell which end was up when she was in bed.

She started having chronic arthritis when she was 17. And the older she grew the more twisted her body got until she could not do a thing her hands were clawed. And then on top of that affliction God permitted her to have what do you think? Blindness.

And then on top of that the Lord permitted her to have cancer. And she needed the attention of a newborn baby. And God provided a partner who looked after her as though she were looking after Gabriel or an angel.

Just took it as a ministry from God. Nobody ever heard that twisted distorted woman complain. And right when she needed her most her partner died.

And here she is crippled blind with cancer. And she said somebody please get some paper I got something coming would you write it? You know what she wrote? He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater. He giveth more strength when the labors increase.

To added affliction he addeth his mercy. To multiplied trial his multiplied peace. His love that you mentioned knows no limit.

What do you mean his love knows no limit? I live upside down I can't feed myself I can't see. I got excruciating pain. His love has no limit his grace has no measure.

His power has no boundary known unto men. And out of the fullness of blessing in Jesus he giveth and giveth and giveth again. As old Samuel Rutherford said when they put him in a tower on a rock out in the North Sea in England.

And it's the lousiest weather on earth. It's so cold and shivery and the walls were running with vapor and everything was dirty. And they fed him like a dog.

And you know what he said when somebody came in they got permission to see him just once. And they said boy what a place water running down snails it's filthy. Oh he said the walls of this prison to me they shine like rubies.

They flash like diamonds. And he said you know what I've discovered? It's only when you get in the king's cellar you can drink the king's wine. Oh we thought we'd get a drink reading a book eh? Drink a taste of new wine.

Or you wanted to go to a conference again or a banquet and boy I'll get blessed. Oh no no that's very effervescent that just jilts you gives you a shot in the arm for an hour. But when you get down here this is where you'll find the king's wine in the king's cellar.

Now tell me whose property are you? Who do you belong to? Good there's one man does anyhow. Maybe the rest of the school will come on you know you never know. There's one man here knows he belongs to the Lord.

Okay. I was preaching in Ireland and we used to go to the crossroads at this certain town every Saturday night. And an old Methodist preacher used to come wore his dog collar and he'd listen and listen.

And he'd cycle through the country just to come to our street meeting. And one night he said to me would you come to my house next Friday and let's drink some tea and eat some cakes and have a talk. Well if there's anything free I'm usually there and I said sure I'll be along and I went.

When I got there to this big square what we would call a manor house. Lovely house on a hill in the country there. And I remember the hay had been cut and everything was smelling sweet the honeysuckle and everything.

Went up to the house and his wife met me. Oh you're the man that's coming to tea I said yes I suppose so. She said you know my husband's a bit of an oddball.

Well I'd looked her over and I'd just thought she was but I didn't mention it you know being a gentleman. And she said yeah come down this corridor to the room we're going to drink some tea. And you know he's so funny.

I said what's funny. She said he spends all night looking through telescopes and all day looking through microscopes. Now I don't know when he went to bed but that's what she said.

And when he sat down in the course of talking I said you've got marvellous telescopes there. And he said yes I have. And he said I want to ask you a question.

Did you ever look through the eye of a fly? Well I've been asked some stupid questions but I thought that was the king of the whole bunch. Did I ever look through the eye of a fly? And I said no I didn't. I think the chief reason is because I've never been a fly.

Oh he said would you like to look through one? I said yes I would. And he says wait a minute. He brought his microscope a little piece of glass about as long as my finger and half an inch wide and 16th of an inch thick.

With a little dot on it. I usually use my pen which I don't have this morning but just like the end of a ballpoint pen looking that way. You know a tiny fraction of a thing.

He said that's the eye of a fly. Now shove it there. So I did it.

And he said now adjust these things. Now what can you see? I said I don't really know. Tapioca pudding, soap bubbles, frog spawn, little domes of glass.

Well put your watch on. I put my watch on and I still remember of course 25 minutes before 6 o'clock. I said well I can see, I can see, I can see about I guess 350 watches.

No not a bad guess. He said actually 500. He said you know on that little thing, that little dot, the eye of a fly, there are 500 different lenses.

Everyone is set at a slightly different angle. And I said that's a great help. He said what do you mean it's a great help? Well you've solved a problem for me.

I said what is it? I said hasn't a fly got two eyes? He said yes. And you say that every lens is an eye and it can see 500 ways. You see I thought a fly was stupid.

I'm stupid. I go try and catch a fly and the stupid thing can see me coming a thousand different ways. No wonder I can't catch it.

Well then we discovered just recently I was studying a point. Do you know on the eye of a bee there are 3000 lenses on the eye of a bee? That tiny little thing there. Or if you cut half an inch off a butterfly's wing which is so delicate.

And you put it under a microscopic power you'll discover in half an inch of a butterfly's wing there are 3000 triangles. Now you have to send aeroplanes back to get the wings reinforced. But you don't have to return butterflies to the Lord to get the wings patched up.

I've seen a butterfly miles and miles out at sea. Just riding not only the wave but a wave of air over the wave. And I've seen that frail little thing there with no protection.

I said boy you've got 15 miles to go to the next island or 10 miles sometimes when we've been out in a boat. You say what's that got to do with me? I've got problems. Well I'm just asking you whose property you are.

I'm asking you do you think God designs the eye of a fly and your life is a life of happenstance and God has no pattern in it? He designs a butterfly's wing that a little boy may tear off. He puts 3000 different slants on the eye of a fly but your life which he redeemed has no pattern? Come on. Don't let the devil fool you.

Are you a football for the devil to kick that way or circumstances to blow that way like a wind? I don't believe so. Now God has a design for your life. God is doing something in your life and you're not going to do it to anyone else's.

And you know God loves you so much that sometimes when he's shorthanded you may not agree. You're alright, disagree. But when he's shorthanded you know what he'll do? He'll let the devil work on you for a while just to get you into shape.

You know what the scripture is? Hast thou considered my servant Job? This is not the challenge of Satan to God. It's the challenge of God to Satan. Satan what are you doing? I've been going to and fro on the earth.

Why does a man walk up and down when he's restless? When there's something he can't quite master. He can't get hold of it. Why are you restless Satan? I've been going to and fro on the earth.

I can get everybody to doubt you but there's one man and I can't pierce the armour of that man. And that's that fellow called Job. I just can't get in on Job.

Oh listen to what the Lord says. You say you can't walk perfectly before God. There are many in scripture who did.

And the Lord says of Job that hast thou considered me? There's nobody like him. He's perfect and upright. And that was a long way before there was any salvation or baptism.

He's perfect and upright before me. Oh well then Satan says sure he is. Do you know why he's so wonderful? He's the richest man in the world isn't he? The richest man in the world.

There's nobody like him. He's a multi-millionaire. Don't you realise Lord why this man is serving you so well? I'll tell you why he's serving you.

Because you prosper then. His piety is tied in with his prosperity. That you pull all the props away.

And do you know what he'll do? He'll curse you to your face. And what did the Lord say? Oh he says alright go ahead Satan. Touch everything he has but you don't touch his body.

Now I believe that when you and I are God's property Satan can't come in on your life when he wants. Why didn't Satan come in on Job's life? Because he had to get a permit. I don't know about the law in America.

Yes I think I do. They're trying to change it. But in England if a policeman comes to my door and he says I'm coming in to search the house.

I say hold it a minute. Oh no you're not coming in to search the house. Not for a minute.

You see the law doesn't allow you to come and search my house. The law allows you to question me. But unless you get a special permit from the chief of police you're not going to cross the threshold and come in my house.

Now exactly the same the Lord said. Touch everything Job has but you don't touch his body. I've given you permission.

Great. What was the argument of Satan? Do you remember? Look this little book represents Job. And this book represents something else.

Why did Satan quarrel with God? He said I can't get near Job because of what? Right you put a hedge around about him. I can't get through that hedge. Now you take the hedge away and let me blast him.

Do you know what the Lord said? Because the Lord never takes direction from Satan. Here's Job. Here's the hedge.

Take the hedge away. Oh no the Lord said I'll tell you what I will do. I'll pull the hedge in a little bit closer to him.

And you can destroy everything around the hedge. And so the devil came down and had a great time. Job went to bed a millionaire.

He woke up he wasn't worth a dime. Have you considered my servant Job? Yes. I had one blast at him.

What did he do? I made him bankrupt. And what did he do? Nothing. Nothing.

Will you take the hedge away? No I'll pull it in a bit nearer. So he puts it a bit closer and Satan comes down again. The first time was bankruptcy.

What was the second time? Bereavement. Right. He lost all his children.

Would you like to go to seven funerals in a day? And would you keep sweet if you did lose like that? Seven funerals in one day. Have you considered my servant Job? Yes I have. Oh yes the first stroke was bankruptcy.

The second stroke bereavement. What did he do? Well he. Well let me ask you this.

I asked somebody this recently. They'd had a lot of things. And I said who gave them to you? They said the Lord.

And the devil took them all away. Job said I did. I had millions and I lost them.

And I had a wonderful family and they're dead. And the Lord gave and the devil took it all away. Well what did he say? Oh the Lord took it all away.

Oh that's a bit different huh? Well. What do you suggest now Satan? You've had two shots at him and you haven't won either of them. What do you suggest? Well the Lord says I'll tell you what I'll do now.

I'll take the fence away. And I'll let you get at him. Go on have a shot at him.

The first stroke was bankruptcy. The second stroke was bereavement. The third stroke was what? Boils.

Boils. Oh he'll curse you now. He can't stand comfortably.

He can't sit comfortably. He can't lay down comfortably. Well you know there's a saying.

I learned it in America. Never heard it till I came here. With friends like those you don't need enemies huh? And he's sitting there.

He's lost his family. He's lost his millions. He's lost his health.

And Bildad the Shuhite comes and sits here. And Eliphaz the Temanite sits in the other corner. And somebody sits in this corner.

And somebody sits in that corner. And then last of all. Boy, boy, boy.

You see how mean the devil is? He took everything he had and left him with a nagging wife. You'd have thought he'd have taken her. But he still needed a bit of stuff to straighten him out.

And his wife comes in. Curse God and die. You know literally in the Hebrew that really means why don't you just pour out a torrent of hatred against God and commit suicide.

I mean after all you're not suggesting that God's on your side are you? I mean you've lost your home. You've lost your children. You've lost your possessions.

You've lost everything. What are you going to do? He says stay there a minute and I'll show you. And he jumps up on his ash heap and scratches where he's itching the most.

And then he says triumphantly, listen I've just lost everything I know that. But I've got news for you. That if it gets worse than this and even if worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God.

I know that my Redeemer liveth. Now what do you do? You read the last chapter of Job. What did he get? He got as many children as he lost.

He got twice as many camels as he had. He got everything returned with a bonus. Oh but look at the experiences he went through.

Ah yes. But you know this good book says that God is working everything after the counsel of his own will. Oh the heat has been turned on.

Sure enough it has. What does it say? When through fiery trial thy pathway shall lie my grace all sufficient shall be thy supply the flame shall not harm thee I only design thy dross to consume and thy gall to refine. Again I remind you God isn't capricious he doesn't pull tricks he isn't working something just for fun.

I couldn't begin to tell you the misery I believe that the Christians are in are in Russia or in China this morning. And I've an idea that their worship is purer than ours you see they've nothing else to lean on. A dear brother Andrews told me the last time I was in China he went down the street and he got a little sign and somebody said you go to the marketplace there's a little woman on the last stall selling her apples and you go down there and he made a little contact and she's what they call an informer.

And as soon as somebody informs on the informer she dies or he dies. And you know what he said? They have a catalogue this length of teenagers and others all waiting to be informers risking their lives for Jesus. And when he got to the marketplace this lady said you go down the road and there's an arch a

railway arch and you just go through there and there's somebody selling things there and they'll tell you where the meeting is tonight.

And he went to a meeting only nine people can gather ten is illegal but there were nine there. And they had such an exciting time of worship and of praise and of thanksgiving and of adoration. You see the fire soon gets rid of the chaff you only get the wheat left.

And in some countries now God has truly purged his floor. I don't believe there are any hypocrites in the church anymore in China or in Russia. You've got to be the real thing otherwise you can't stand what the press is about in the day in which we live.

Oh yes all the trial came and Job stood up and his piety wasn't married to his prosperity because when everything was lost he was still praising and he was still magnifying the Lord. I like that catalogue of Paul's at the end of Romans 8 you know where he lists all those things what shall separate us from the love of Christ tribulation, distress, famine, peril, nakedness neither things present nor things to come nor height, nor depth nor any other Boy doesn't he lay it on. Oh isn't it nice to read it and it makes good poetry just till you get in the jam yourself and you have to eat some of it and it isn't jam then is it? It's like a mouthful of sand what do you mean? But Paul puts his shoulders back and he laughs at the devil and he says neither height nor depth nor any other thing what is he saying? Devil there isn't a thing you can invent that can separate it.

Now look you can very often lose everything external and true enough and you can be walled in by circumstance and trial and friction and a hundred things you can be walled in but the devil never yet found a way to roof us in. There's no way north, south, east but there's always a way out. Again I say Paul, John if you'd said where is John? He's in the Isle of Patmos and he says I'm not in the Isle of Patmos I'm in the Spirit.

The best things come out of the most excruciating experiences again you've got to take corn and put it in the mill and grind it to get bread. You've got to get grapes and put them in a treadmill to get crush them to death to get wine out of them. You've got a nice diamond on your ring what do you think it was like when they found it somewhere at Kimberley or somewhere in Africa it wasn't like that.

Now I don't know I've been informed that while you can polish rhinestones this way and birthstones there's only one way to polish a diamond you know it is rub it on another diamond. You know when you said Lord I want to shine more for you and your husband got more cranky than ever or somebody got more irritable and the Lord started the process and the first thing he did was pray and say oh Lord do take this away it's getting so rough. And he said well you asked me yesterday to polish you up and I'm doing it.

What do you think he's going to do send Gabriel down during the night and give you the once over while you're sleeping give you a kind of spiritual pummeling and you know like when you go into a massage. Oh no no no no oh no again if you're going to bless it's a law you can't evade it. You can read history read the Bible there's only one way and that is if you're going to bless you've got to bleed.

You had in America here years ago a very famous wonderful man by the name of H.G. Spafford.

Spafford was a multi-millionaire he had four very exceptional beautiful daughters and they were always trying to put him under pressure why don't you take us around the world why don't you take us on the grand tour take us to Italy and through Europe and England and let's come back and one day he came

home and he said there you are darlings tickets for you tickets for mum you're going on the Le Havre you're going to do the grand tour buy what you want do as you like you know the sky's the limit we've got the month and he stood and waved them off in New York Harbour I've often thought of them when I came in there goodbye throws his kisses have a great time he's sitting in his office in New York the phone rang HG Spafford speaking I'm sorry to tell you but your daughters and your wife

they're on the ship the Le Havre yes oh it sank in a collision last night your four daughters were drowned your wife escaped just in night attire and a coat without any money she was pulled out of the water and taken to the coast of Wales and she doesn't understand a word of Welsh of course and so you've got a heart broken stricken wife and she asks two things get to her as quickly as you can and send the money to tide her over thank you he was a praying man he got down to praying while he was praying the phone rang Spafford speaking I hate to tell you the bad news you're too late friend I know the boat has gone down what boat well aren't you telling me about the boat no no no I'm just telling you about the bank in which you have your millions it's failed and you don't have any money boy

two rings of the phone can change your life a lot can't they no family no money thank you he phoned the shipping office found the boat was leaving almost immediately those slow boats sixty seventy years ago he's going over the Atlantic got nearly to the coast of England he said to an officer can you tell me where that ship the Le Havre went down it was a great tragedy sir wasn't it there were only about four or five people yes yes yes oh sorry sir did you nodding his eyes missed the did you lose someone I lost my darling daughters four of them beautiful Christian girls all perished and I'm I'm hasting to see my wife where about did the boat go down oh he said I'll tell you in the morning come on between ten and eleven he went the next day and he said it was in this area about five square

miles it's there where the ship went down and he was holding on to the bar of the ship you know the ship's rail and the waves were beating the ship and he felt he felt so rough and everything was as wrong and as black as it could be and suddenly he said thank you sir and he rushed to his estate room and he got a piece of paper and right off the reel from heaven he wrote a hymn that I asked him to sing the morning I happened to be lying broken with my back my spine my feet and everything and my whole pattern of life destroyed and my picture of going round the world and all the things I thought the Lord was going to and they'd all gone up in smoke and I when Dr.

Tozer's assistant with him said we'll sing a hymn for you I said sing what Spafford wrote when he got in this jam do you know he was writing on that ship as it rolled this is what he wrote when peace like a river attendeth my way when sorrows like these sea billows roll whatever my lot oh boy that's a lot to say isn't it don't say because it may take you up on it next week whatever my lot thou hast taught me to say it is well it is well with my soul if Satan should buff it if trial should come let this blessed assurance control that Christ has regarded my helpless estate and has shed his own blood for my soul it is well it is well with my soul what did David say my heart is fixed nothing else is my emotions aren't my world isn't my friends are not too secure everything can break up it is

well it is well it's not well with my thinking it's not well with my business it's gone down it's not well with my family it's been torn apart it's not well with my emotions I'm just as rocked and as tossed around but I'll tell you it's well with my soul because I've cast my anchor within the veil and it holds somebody has said that the most abject picture of desolation in the Bible is the end of Habakkuk or Habakkuk if you like the third chapter well do you remember what it says though the fig tree shall not blossom though there be no fruit in the vine the labour of the olive shall fail the field shall yield no meat the herd shall be cut off in the stall so I

sit down and cry no I will rejoice in the Lord and I will join the God of my salvation the Hebrew says I'll sing aloud of God and

I'll dance in the presence of the Almighty oh the hymn writer put it didn't he nor vine nor fig tree neither their wanted fruit should bear though every leaf should wither nor flocks nor herds be there yet God the same abiding history has my voice and while in him confiding how cannot I can I but rejoice because he goes to say and listen listen it's he that's you can't call the you as you say you can't call the shots the hymn writer says his wisdom never faileth his sight is never dim he knows the way he taketh and I will walk with him I remember at school as a tiny little boy trying to struggle through a piece of poetry that you would know I suppose well written by or written by an American poet certainly not the best poet in America and certainly not the best thing he wrote but anyhow

every of everybody in England had to learn little orphan Annie but he wrote another song do you remember his other one amongst others he he wrote a song or a poem about the robber the night was dark and the night was late when the robbers came to rob him and the pick the lock of the palace gate those robbers that came to rob him they pick the lock of the palace gate they stole his jewels his gems of state his coffers of gold and his priceless plate the robbers that came to rob him that loud laughed he in the morning read when the robbers came to rob him for hidden safe as he slept in bed when the robbers came to rob him they robbed him not of a single shred of the childish dreams in his wise old head and the welcome to all things else he said when the robbers came to rob him do you get

what he is saying they have taken everything but they can't take my memories they can't steal my experience they can't get to my inward riches no moth no rust can get in there no thief can break through and steal these things are mine the others are not mine they are subject again to change and decay but these things are mine let's put it this way the let's put it in the words of Charles Wesley he wrote a lot of wonderful wonderful wonderful wonderful hymns I was passing what we call a junk shop in England I remember in 1932 a lot of old shoes it was a kind of a salvation army you know place goodwill store and I looked around for a minute and then on the shelf I saw about 15 volumes about this high about so thick all beautifully bound in calf and I went in the shop and it said on

Westley's points and all those volumes were Westley's points but she wanted a lot of money for them I couldn't afford it she wanted a dollar for all the volume but I only got a dollar and a half wage at that time for running the largest church in town it was a time of depression well I was assistant pastor I often wish I'd bought those because I he wrote something like 30,000 poems all together and poetry is very enriching I think one of the greatest ways to worship God in fact a friend of mine a very brilliant man says I only need two things when I go into the sanctuary to pray when I go to pray in my closet one is a good hymn book and the other not not a song book this is a song book not a hymn book songs make you happy hymns make you holy and most of the hymns are theology Westley's

hymns are theology set to music you've got to read they're fantastic read his hymn once once voted in England as the purest thing in the English language on the on the prayer of Jacob come all thou traveler unknown whom now I hold but cannot see my company before he's gone and I'm left alone with thee with thee all night I mean to stay and wrestle till the break of day it's pretty long because you see most of his poems like most of his hymns at that time are 20 to 30 stanzas and and they're all very long that's when they went to church and stayed three hours after all if you sing three hymns with 30 stanzas you've spent a little time you know I often think I wouldn't like to be the middle verse in most hymns would you never get sung but they used to sing 25 30 oh what hymns they had they

were marvellous they're they're meat I get my hymn book out on my office desk some mornings and I just put my feet up there and I just stand there and I sing them now I I can sing oh I can sing I got a better voice than Caruso on the inside you see because it says making melody unto the Lord in your heart it gets spoiled coming out but it doesn't alter the fact that I have to sing in my heart and worship God you see and as I sing and worship him and I go through those matchless hymns sometimes I have to hold my breath and say do I mean it the finest hymn book in the world right now is one produced in England by the Pentecostal church and all the hymns from the Methodist Baptist salvation now it really is the richest of all hymns drawn from about 20 hymn books and it has a thousand roughly

a thousand nine hundred and fifty hymns anyhow it isn't available here that I know of if you're going to get our paper which I suggested some of you might want to take revival fires I'm going to write to England try and get some copies and you can write up there we'll announce it in the paper and you can get a copy it's worth its weight in gold it's worth its in gold as far as I'm concerned no this man says you can steal everything I've got my coffers of gold my priceless plates I've still got rich memories Wesley puts it another way how does the verse begin let me think for a second get my gears carry notes test your patience I can't get it I can get the middle part I can't get the which is though joys be withered be withered all and dead and every comfort be withdrawn on this my

steadfast soul relies father by mercy never dies the only thing I can guarantee you to guarantee to you I can't guarantee your circumstances your emotions your feeling your spiritual life will go up and down you'll be hot you'll be cold and the Lord will have it that way otherwise you'd rest in emotion you'd rest in the satisfaction of your own devotion to him there are times he'll withdraw there'll be times when he's a far-off there'll be times like madame Guillaume he'll let you lose everything and and maybe he'll withdraw his own presence and just see how really steadfast and unmovable you are and after all that's what Paul prayed for wasn't it for the children of God that he preached to that they may be steadfast and unmovable and yet always abounding and then again he prays that they

may be raised up and that they grounded again in love you see what I've tried to suggest you in these days is if you're going to be leaders of others you you got to walk a tightrope because all you say they won't even they won't count a hill of beans they'll watch you and they have a right to watch you very closely and if you're shaky and and just rise and fall and you're moody and emotional and that well well that's not the way of leadership you see he wants us to be steadfast and yet unmovable and yet always abounding in the work of the Lord and I pray that this will be your portion and be mine for the days of the coming and there's a sufficiency of grace for each one of us and he's promised he'll supply all our needs not all our wants not all I think I should have but all our needs

out of his riches in God's name amen amen glory by Christ Jesus we thank you father again this morning for your word we thank you for those who have listened and those who receive and those who reject they stand or fall to thee not to me and I pray for each life here that if in your mercy we should meet again after today that we'll all be further up the road stronger more richly edified more able to bear the burdens of the Lord with that which gives us grace to fight a good fight of faith and be more than conquerors through him that loved us we thank you for the expectation our hearts of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in revival and then coming to live and rule and reign forever and ever we thank thee that we're part of your glorious indestructible kingdom we pray that we may go

forth as bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ that others who take knowledge of us may know that we have been with Jesus for his name's sake amen thank you

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30107.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/leonard-ravenhill/judges-18/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net