

Aaron, Between the Living and Dead

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon explores the themes of Korah's rebellion, Aaron's priesthood, and Christ's rejection, highlighting the importance of understanding God's character and mind.

Duration: 45:39

Scripture: Numbers 16:1

Topics: "Aaron"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing the perishing condition of fearful and sinful people. He compares the image of an old man waving a censor to Jesus Christ on the cross, taking on the wrath of God to save humanity. The preacher highlights the responsibility of believers to share the message of God's grace and redemption with those who have not heard it before. He shares a story of a condemned criminal who had never been exposed to the message of God's love and salvation, expressing disbelief in its truth because of his lack of exposure to it in his life.

Transcript

I suggest you open your Bibles again to Numbers, chapter 16 and 17. By way of introduction, I read one verse from the little epistle written by Jude, Epistle of Jude, the eleventh verse. Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the heir of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.

Now, these things are written for our ensembles. They are written that we might be warned, that we might see what God has done in the past in reference to man's sin. You see, God only needs to speak once, and it is said.

You do not need to suppose that God's mind has changed about the sin of lying to the Holy Ghost, because everyone since the time of Ananias and Sapphira has not been smitten dead on the occasion. And all of those that have usurped the place of God, and taken to themselves that which belongs wholly to the Lord, to distribute and to minister as he wills, have not been dealt with as was Korah and the 250 of the Reubenites. We want to remember that if God says it once, it's sin.

His mind doesn't change, his attitude doesn't change, this is what he thinks about that which he has dealt with. So, we find ourselves facing now the rebellion of Korah, the rebellion of Israel led by Korah. Now, you find his name figuring in that portion that I've read, because he is the Levite.

The others were of the tribe of Reuben. He was related by virtue of tribe and privilege to Aaron, actually Korah, Dathan, and Abiram had nothing in common but their hatred of Moses and Aaron, the only thing that united them. And in this, of course, you can see a little shadow of the time that is to come when the one that Aaron and Moses typify, the Lord Jesus, is to find a religious conspiracy led by the Levites, mind you, by the Pharisees and the Sadducees, gathering the people together against him.

Isn't it interesting that a little by the way that you find that this day when Pilate gave Christ over for crucifixion was the day that Pilate and Herod had resumed fellowship. They had been on the outs with each other, but they met together in their mutual dealings with Christ. And it's strange also to find the fact that in this conspiracy you have the Levites, you have the Pharisees, and the Sadducees conspiring together against Christ.

So in this that you have here, when Korah leads the rebellion in the tribe of Reuben and draws this company, stirs their hearts, and causes them to feel as they do against Moses and against Aaron, you have a picture of what's going to happen to the Lord Jesus centuries later. But we must bear in mind that Proverbs chapter 6 tells us there are six things that the Lord hates. You might like to turn to it, verses 16 to 19.

There are six things that the Lord hates. Then it says, Ay, the seventh is an abomination unto him, literally. So six things God hates and the seventh God abominates.

And do you see what it is? Hatred has to it, added to it, the added expression of abomination, hatred carried to extreme degree as you find here. He that soweth discord among brethren. This had been the nefarious purpose of Korah, leading this rebellion for the sake of his own advantage.

We find nothing in the scripture to bear this out, but with some insight into human nature, you rather feel that this man Korah was jealous of Aaron and wanted to take the office of high priest to himself. And so if he could create dissatisfaction and disaffection in the midst of the people, it would give him leverage for his own wicked ambitions. We find that Korah, as we read on, had argued fallaciously against Moses and Aaron.

And this also must be remembered by you, lest you should fall into a kindred snare. It was true of our Lord Jesus. When you read the accusations that are brought against Christ, you're amazed to find that about half the things that were said were true.

For instance, they said he says he's a king. Well, he did. He was a king.

And he claimed sovereignty over all other kings. But the fact that his kingdom was not of the world of which Herod and Pilate reigned, that it wasn't brought up, that his was a heavenly kingdom to which all earthly mortal sovereigns must ultimately bow, wasn't put in. So what they said was true.

Then they accused him of saying that he would tear the temple down. If it were torn down, rather, it would be built in three days. Now, he did.

He said that. Of course, he was referring to the temple of his body, which men would destroy by means of the cross, and God would raise from the dead. They, of course, literally applied it to Herod's temple, saying this man is a fool.

He's foolish. He said that it took Herod forty years to build it, and he says he's going to do it in three days. How can you trust anything that comes from a mind so completely out of contact with reality as his? They never faced the main issue.

They never entered into it. You see, the problem actually was this. They were the leaders of the religious systems of the day.

Everything hinged upon them. They were the ones who were accepted by the people. Now, as we've seen of the Pharisees in the past, they were fundamental in their theology.

They were evangelistic in their zeal. They were missionary in their fervor. They were devout in their purpose.

They had everything but salvation. Everything but salvation. Now the Lord Jesus comes, and he says that what you have, good as it is, isn't enough.

And I am the only one that can give you what is enough. Therefore, if you do not take what I have and what I am, you shall perish in your sins. Obviously, when the Pharisees found out what Christ had, they either had to seek it or kill him.

But they never brought the issue up. They never said, we're afraid of this man, because if his teaching continues, it's going to show that we have been blind leaders of the blind, and that we're not to be trusted in speaking for God, and that all this great monument that's here, this great religious system of which we're so proud, is the product of our own energies and our own intelligence, and we refused us to be bronDED, and so away with him, crucify him. The real issue is never faced.

Going back to Korah, you recall he said, you took us out of a land that flowed with milk and honey. They had forgotten in these few brief years that they were slaves down there, and they did, they flowed with milk and honey, but they didn't get it, you know. They only had the leeks and the garlic, and that they had to glean for themselves.

The milk and the honey went to someone else. But in retrospect, everything looks lovely. How amazing it is that people pray to be delivered from something, and a few months later, they can't wait to get back.

Grown and agonized and travailed to somehow escape from the very thing that a few months later they're weeping to return to. Well, that's what's happened here. Distance makes everything look more attractive than it is.

Thus, we find that it's true. Where they are is wilderness. What they're eating is manna, and they drink water from the rock.

It is true. Everything that Korah said in this regard is true. He said, you haven't brought us into this land that you promised us.

Obviously, that's right. They're in the wilderness. Now, the fact that he ignores is that they were in the wilderness because of the sin of such men as Korah, the unbelief and the disobedience and the rebellion.

But Korah argued with a certain measure of truth. The most dangerous kind of an argument is the one that has about 50% truth content in it. And you'll recall this was exactly what Satan did to Eve.

The day you eat, you won't die. Well, God said they would die. Did they die? No.

They didn't die physically. The food wasn't poisonous, which was implied in the statement, nor was there a sudden smiting of them by some bolt of lightning from God, as there was incidentally in the case of Korah. But they did die physically, for death became the principle of life.

Then they died legally, they died spiritually, and they came under the sentence of eternal death. But there was just enough truth in it to make it dangerous. And almost invariably, you'll find when someone comes to you, no, the gossip monger that has the wares to peddle will come to you.

The fact of the matter is that almost invariably when that is done, there is an element of truth in it, an element of truth. But the whole truth rightly viewed is so entirely different. Thus Korah was successful in going to Reuben and this tribe of people and raising this insurrection because of the twisted facts.

Now Moses had no other alternative than to present the matter to God. He said the Lord's going to have to settle this issue. Do you know there are a great many things that no one can settle but God? A great many problems that nothing can settle but time.

A great many questions that can't be answered except just by waiting, just by waiting. And Moses could have spent a great deal of time trying to prove that he was right and true and fair and just and God's servant, but he would have been squandering life substance in doing it. He didn't raise a voice.

He said you have sinned against the Lord and I'm going to present the matter to the Lord and we're going to see whether or not you are telling the truth or whether I am God's servant and I am here by his appointment. And it was, of course, the same thing that the Lord Jesus Christ did. He didn't argue with his accusers.

He didn't debate with them. He didn't try to prove by logic and semantics that they were wrong and he was right. He simply committed his case to the Father, left it there.

The Father would prove it. It was just today that I was glancing through a periodical and I saw that Maximilian, the emperor of Mexico, said we can send our armies, we can conquer our nations, we can reign and rule, but there is one thing we cannot do. We cannot alter the evaluation that history will place upon us.

Well, this is exactly what happens. You can't change what history is going to place over you and upon you. And the Lord Jesus Christ didn't.

He simply committed the matter to the Father and said now Father, look God, you must settle this. This is something that only you can solve and only you can answer and only you can settle. The Lord Jesus committed himself to God as a faithful keeper of all that he'd come to do.

And he was, as you know, gloriously raised from the dead, attesting everything he said to be true and everything that he had prophesied would certainly come to pass. Now the strange thing is that Korah and this company were actually sinning against themselves. They were trying to hurt Moses.

Their purpose was to injure Aaron. Their desire was somehow to accomplish their own ends and aims. But all they were doing was hurting themselves.

For they brought fire upon themselves. They brought judgment upon themselves. Someone said just recently to me, if you're right you can afford to wait.

It's the man who isn't right that has to be so anxious to prove that he is. Moses had no necessity of proving. He knew.

He knew what God had taught him. He knew what God had said. And so he knew that Korah and these were simply sinning against themselves, hurting themselves, bringing fire upon themselves.

Therefore we find in this rebellion of Korah dangers which confront every one of us and temptations that we all will sooner or later encounter. First your temptation is going to be to have confused motivation and seek to get something for yourself that is only in the hand of the Lord to bring. Promotion cometh neither from the East nor from the West but from the Lord.

And it is therefore imperative that the wise man totally commit himself to the Lord and trust the Lord to do it because if it isn't done by him, there is no use, no reason for it to be done at all. And the second thing is that one can very likely listen to that which is going to be confused and distort and misrepresent. If you can bear in mind that there are two sides to the question, that you needn't unthink for a moment that anyone who speaks speaks primarily objectively but that there is in the speaking an intention to communicate an opinion.

Objectivity is a rare gift seldom come by and infrequently found. And therefore the wise person is going to reserve judgment. Listen and say there is another side to this, another side to it.

Think of the destruction that came to Reuben because they listened to the gainsaying of Korah who was speaking so that he could gain something by it. How perfectly obnoxious it is, how nauseating it is to find people that are so prepared. At times you find them in the course of your wanderings through life prepared to believe the worst about everybody.

If you can simply recognize that there are two sides to the problem and two aspects to the question and that the one that's reporting is only giving one point of view, it's going to preserve you and protect you from the kind of difficulty into which Korah came. But now we need to see just a few things regarding Aaron's relationship to Israel for he is the one against whom Korah came. The priesthood of Aaron typified the priesthood of Jesus Christ which was bestowed upon him by his Father in his human nature.

Our Lord, as you know, was a priest, not of the tribe of Levi, for he was of Judah. But he was given a priesthood according to, not Levi, but Melchizedek. Melchizedek was a king and a priest.

We see, therefore, that when Aaron stands before Israel, he is representing Christ. He is revealing to Israel something of the function that Christ will have to Israel and to us. Therefore, when you accept this truth that Aaron typifies Christ, then you shall have to accept that what is done to Aaron is a picture of what is going to be done to Christ, as we've already pointed out.

Thus, the revolt of Korah was actually a foretelling, a foreshadowing, of the refusal of Israel to have Christ to be high priest over them. By the way, you might go just a step further. The destruction of Korah is a picture of the destruction that came to the enemies of Jesus Christ who refused to bow and bend to that revelation of God in Christ.

You think of the fact that as he stood there, a living generation of men said, His blood be upon us and upon our children. And you know that it was only about thirty-five or forty years after that, forty years, for forty is the number of judgment, that Titus succeeded Vespasian, who was there as the general putting down the insurrection in Jerusalem. And the armies came against the city, the fortified city of Jerusalem.

And it is just exactly what they said of the temple. Christ prophesied there won't be one stone remaining upon another. Because as the place was set aflame, the gold vessels and implements in the temple melted, and the gold ran down between the blocks of stone, and the soldiers in their greed came with their huge bars of iron and pressed it apart.

And Jerusalem was, the temple was completely destroyed. And it is said that when this happened, there were so many crosses in the vicinity, in the environs of Jerusalem at the time of its destruction, that the Josephus says there wasn't room to raise another cross. And this to a generation to whom God patiently gave witness of the church and its pristine glory and power, and the whole of the thrust of the church in all of the demonstration of the resurrection victory of Christ, but forty years is the number of judgment.

And so you'll see in that which happened to Korah and to Israel some foreshadowing of what actually took place. Now if you have in type and in picture this that is accomplished, certainly you can rest assured that when it speaks of the fact that in that day Christ shall come with angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, that every prophecy that has been made will be fulfilled with the same degree of accuracy and thoroughness. Thus we find that Christ is represented here by Aaron and Korah and Reuben represent Israel and rebels of all ages who will come against him.

Now I wouldn't dwell too long upon that which you've read, the actual facts. I want you to acquaint yourselves with the character and ministry of Aaron, for if he is, as we've pointed out, the picture of Christ, our desire tonight is to see him. First thing I want you to know about Aaron that's so obvious in this is that he was a lover of the people, and so was the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the case of Aaron, the people were envious against him, they were jealous of him, they hated him. We find them conspiring to overthrow him, take him from the position that he had not sought for himself, but God had given him. They had sinned by their murmurings, by their complaining, by their evil thoughts, by their vicious words, and by their determination to destroy him.

They deserve judgment. God had pronounced judgment upon sinners. He had said, And surely these were a people that deserved all that God's wrath could do.

They were living in the presence of the miraculous. They were living under the pillar of cloud. They were living in the column of fire.

They were living where God was. They had absolutely no reason for this save the ambition and vanity and iniquity of their hearts. They were under judgment.

Aaron was the one that was offended. And yet, you find that Aaron is the one that saved Israel. Oh, what a measure of love, what a picture of love, is this man who's had the whole congregation gathered together the day after Korah and the 250 had been swallowed by the earthquake.

There they are, a throng of people, a mob of people, a leaderless company of enraged, wicked men, standing there calling as it were for his blood. And Aaron loves them, the unlovely, the unlovable, those

that had set out to destroy him. And yet, when the plague began to move, Aaron, at the first word from Moses, picks up the censer and runs into the midst of the people, any one of which was vicious enough to have hurt and injured him.

He thus evidenced that he did indeed love the unlovely. The very people that he was saving by the endangering of himself were the people that hated him and sought to take from him that ministry which God had given him. Aaron exposed himself to the avenging justice of God.

He put himself right out there where wrath was moving and anger was in force and where God's thrust of justice was moving. He ran. Oh, you can see in this lovely running.

Can't you see him with the heavy robes, the mitre, the urim, the thummim, all that was there, the gold, the pomegranates, everything in his ceremonial robes. And yet, when there comes danger to the people whom he's loved and God has already said, move aside and let me destroy them, he said, no, no. Moses said, Aaron, take the censer and go.

And the old man takes the censer and runs as fast as he can, for should he have walked, another and another and still another would have perished. Aaron was a lover of the people. And oh, what a picture this is of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was a lover of men, for they hated him, they gnashed upon him with their teeth, they railed against him, and he looked from where he hung on the cross and said, Father, forgive them.

They know not what they do. The second thing we see about Aaron was that he was the great propitiator, for he carried the censer full of incense. The incense spoke of the perfect sacrifice of Christ, the perfect character of Christ, all of the perfections in the Son of God, where you find in the frankincense, in the myrrh, in all of the ointments that were used in the incense, the divine portraiture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the coal that was taken was from off the altar, where the blood of the sin offering and the trespass offering had been poured, and the living, burning coals were put into the censer on the incense. And thus Aaron was sent by God with this which pictured the perfections of the Lord Jesus into the midst of the company of people that were being destroyed. He was ready for the work the moment that the emergency developed.

The moment that the plague broke out, he hesitated not a moment. He went. The people were perishing, wrath had already gone out, and he was ready to save.

And so what a lovely picture we have of the Lord Jesus Christ. Aaron literally, if I may use the word, offered himself. He put himself between the wrath of God against this wicked people, the sinning people.

He put himself between them and the dead. And thus we have the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ as the great interposer. Aaron was an interposer, interposing himself, placing himself between the dead and the living.

How many people there are that feel that the division between the living and the dead is a ceremony? Some will say, well, I was taken into the church. I had this ceremony. I was baptized.

I was catechized. I had this happen to me, or I had that. All of these things may have some value.

None of them are to certainly be discounted as meaningless. And they all have some, at least in a Christian context, some reference to Christ, some reference at least to Bible truth in a Judeo-Christian setting. But, you know, the division between the living and the dead is not a decision.

How many people have thought that the reason that they're on the right side is because they decided? Now, there's a place for decision, but decision isn't the difference. It isn't that you put your decision up and say, Lord, here's my decision. It isn't that you put your baptism up and say, Lord, here's my baptism.

Nor your church membership, nor your knowledge of Scripture. None of these things are sufficient. It was a man that was the division.

It was Aaron running out into the very face of the plague that came from God. Aaron stood there as this plague moved. He stood between the plague, the wrath of God, and the living people.

And the division between life and death is not in an it or a thing or a this or a that. It is in Christ as He was pictured by Aaron. How many people there are that are in our churches that are trusting in the plan of salvation.

Now, I think the plan of salvation is indispensable to salvation. You must understand truth. You must understand reason why.

But, my dear, if you're trusting in the plan and you do not know the person, the plan is valueless, meaningless to help you. It was Aaron that had to rush into the gap and stand there and wave the censer that the incense testifying to the perfections of Christ offered in free sacrifice, the only thing that could satisfy the wrath of God and assuage His vindication of His holiness. Aaron, thus, was the picture of the Lord Jesus who stood between certain death and absolute just judgment and condemnation of you and me.

And if you want to find the correct division between life and death, you find it not in a church or a doctrine or a dogma. You find it in the person of the Son of God, our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus. Then we see also that Aaron was a great Savior, a great Savior.

The plague had started to work, destruction was coming, and 14,700 people had already died. Oh, when you think of the multitudes that have died under the wrath of God, let your mind run back for a moment to the flood and see there the wrath and anger of God as it was manifest against a generation whose minds and imaginations were only wicked continually. Come back to Sodom and Gomorrah and see God's wrath against a people whose morals were perverted to the place where it rose as a stench into the nostrils of God.

Come back, I say, across the years and find the swift, sudden, certain, absolute destruction of God as he has manifest his feelings against sin. And then remember yourself and think of your imaginations and think of your heart and think of your life and think of your words and think of what you were by nature and by choice and compare yourself with Ananias and Sapphira and measure yourself by Korah and the Reubenites and measure yourself by Saul. Take anyone you wish, and I submit to you that if you're honest with yourself, you'll find that you don't come out one whit better than these that have been so dealt with by the swift justice of God.

What does it mean then? It means that if you and I were to receive that which we deserve, it would be nothing but certain destruction and annihilation from his presence. Nothing could save us. The mountain

of our guilt was so immense.

The roster of our sins was so lengthy. The corruption of our hearts was so complete that none of the ointments that men might devise or the salves that they might prepare could serve to heal the grievous wound that sin had made in our hearts. But oh, to see one who's a Savior, to see one who's perfectly innocent, spotless.

He's not entered into conspiracy, not entered into the crime. He has nothing to do with it. But this greater than Aaron, the Lord Jesus Christ, that runs out and stands right there under the sword of God's justice and the arrows of his wrath, and he said, Father, Father, I'm standing here in the place of Mary and Bill and Jane.

I'm standing here in the place of these that I've seen who deserve everything your wrath can do. Now, Lord, do to me, do to me what you need to do to them. Aaron did this.

He opened himself up to the wrath of God. The only thing he had to offer was the smoke rising from the censer, which testified of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ who was to come. And so Aaron stood there as a great Savior, but he was picturing the Lord Jesus who unaided, without any help from anyone else, tread the winepress of the wrath of God alone.

How many people there are that think somehow they've got to weep more before they'll be saved. But my friends, were your tears to flow like a river, they couldn't make you one whit more worthy. And there are those that feel they've got to pray more.

But every prayer you offer in your unregenerate state is but a further insult to a God whose name is holy. There are people that think they should do more, that they should be better. How many there are that say, just let me be a little better.

Let me get this situation cared for. Let me get these debts paid. Let me get my own problems settled.

Let me take care of this or take care of that, do this or do that, and then I'll come to Christ. But it isn't so. It isn't so.

Men aren't going to make themselves one whit more worthy or acceptable or better. As Charlotte Elliott sang so beautifully, there is nothing we can do, just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me. Christ had to do it alone and unaided, but he's an all-sufficient Savior.

It didn't take the rest of the Levites to go out there. It didn't even need Moses out there. When Aaron stood in the front of the plague and waved the censer, he testified to the infinite perfections of Jesus Christ.

And that was enough. And everything is in Christ, the all-sufficiency of Christ, the beauty of his holiness, the perfection of his character, the glory of his righteousness, the measureless depths and heights of his love, all are yours when you and I come broken, hopeless, and helpless. And as Aaron stands there and I see him in mine's eye with the cringing, fearful people, certain of destruction because of their sins, and the fourteen thousand lying there cold in death, and I see this old man standing there alone waving the censer, oh, what a lovely picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, forsaken of all, hanging on Calvary's cross, drawing the very wrath of God from you and me into his own heart, his own bosom, that he might save us, that he might redeem us.

And, of course, we see that Aaron was not only a great lover, a great propitiator, a great interposer, a great Savior, but he was a great divider. He stood between the dead and the living. He stood so that on one side were these that were dead and the others behind him who were spared from death.

And Aaron stands in the middle. He stands in the middle of Israel, but Jesus Christ stands in the middle of society. I've said that the dividing line between life and death is a person, but oh, how my heart aches when I realize that we are facing a day in which everyone that now lives will one day stand before Jesus Christ.

This is the truth that you must recognize. You have unsaved loved ones. You have unsaved neighbors and friends.

You are aware of their unsaved state. But what are you doing about it? Now, in a sense, you are the high priest, for you are a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Can I say this, that God, by his Spirit, wants you to be a great lover of the lost? Will you permit me to go further and say that you too are to be a propitiator? You can add nothing to what Christ has done, but you are to mediate just as he before the cross held a censer and thus held up that which Christ was going to do.

So you come and by your testimony hold up what Christ has already done. That you are the interposer to stand between the dead and the living, between the wrath of God and the grace of God. Can I put it that you are, in a sense, in a limited sense, a great Savior? Oh, I know that Jesus Christ died to provide our salvation, but I also know that everything the Son died to provide, he mediates through his church, and his church is made up of men and women and young people such as we are today.

Are you aware of the fact that you are to be a great divider? You are to stand between the dead and the living? You are. You are. Just as Aaron was responsible to run, so you and I are responsible.

But we lose sight of the danger. We lose sight of their perishing condition. Oh, how easy it is for us to lose sight of the fact that we were saved in order that these blood-redeemed lives and bodies might be vehicles given over to the risen Christ that through us he could meet a generation for whom the Savior died.

I declare these things to you, which are truths, sterling truths, because they are truths of his word. And I hear you say, Oh, yes, these things I've heard, these things I've known. But I wonder sometime how much we've heard, how much we've known.

I recall hearing of the man, the notorious criminal in England that was put into the prison, and he refused to see the chaplain of the prison. It got into the papers, the condemned man going to the gallows who wouldn't see a clergyman, he wouldn't see a chaplain. And so one after another, the clergymen of the city went to the prison to see him.

They were permitted in right enough, but the man seeing the clergymen come would curse and swear so violently that most of them would turn and go after a few moments. But one man who loved Jesus Christ, determined to hear it out, he knew that sooner or later the man would give up in exhaustion, and then he could speak. So he went in, the raging man inside the cell, cursing with all the words that he could bring to his tongue's tip, trying by every means possible to get rid of this thing that stood before him, such a hateful thing as this clergyman, this preacher.

But after a while he couldn't speak any longer. In hoarseness he could only whisper. And the clergyman began softly to tell him about the love of God, tell him about the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as the old story came with its sweet tender revelation of God's grace and mercy and love in Christ, the man sitting now on the stool in his cell began to see, have tears come to his eyes. After a while he looked up and said, Oh, sir, that's the sweetest message I've ever heard. I didn't know that that's what clergymen had to say.

As a little boy here in the slums of London, I used to come and try to earn a half penny holding their horses while they'd go into their churches. And I lived all my life so that the shadow of the steeple of the cathedral came into the barren, dirty little room where I resided. But he said, You know, no one ever talked to me.

No one ever told me. I've never been inside a church. All I know is that if I didn't do things the way they wanted, they'd cuff me and scold me.

And he said, I just figured that you were trying to get some publicity off of my execution, be the clergyman that talked to me. But he said, You know, as tender as this is and as moving as it is, I don't believe a word you've told me. You don't? Why? No.

He said, I don't believe a word you've told me. You tell me about God's love. You tell me about Christ's death.

You tell me about his resurrection. You tell me about salvation. No, I don't believe it's true.

I don't believe you believe it's true. I don't believe your people believe it's true. So what do you mean? He said, Man, this world that I grew up in never heard about it.

These people that I lived with never knew about it. And now when I am here full in my sin and I'm condemned to die, you come and tell me. Listen.

He said, You know, if I believed that, if I believed what you say you believe, if I really did, if I'd experienced this forgiveness, this salvation, this life that you say you've experienced, why, man, with good news like that, I'd walk all over England, and when I saw an aged man, I'd run to him and warn him that he should die before he'd hear. And when I couldn't walk any longer, I'd crawl over all the cinder paths of Britain on my hands and knees to warn people to flee from the wrath to come. You don't believe it.

You don't believe it. You just say you do. And with that, he said, I've talked long enough.

Go. Go. Go.

And the man went, because there wasn't anything more he could say. He knew that most of the people that would have heard what he gave would have said, That's the truth. That's the gospel truth.

But he knew that what the man said was right. They didn't really believe it. They didn't believe the wrath of God was suspended over wicked men, that if they should die, they would be forever in a devil's hell.

They didn't believe it. Oh, they believed it. But they didn't believe it.

Because what you believe controls you and governs you and makes you. And Aaron believed. And Aaron ran.

And Aaron stood in the face of the wrath and drew it to himself that his people might be spared. And if you believe, you will have to run and, as it were, draw the wrath of God to you. The people will be spared.

Oh, what do you see? God took Aaron's rod, and he made a dead rod live and have leaves and blossoms and almonds overnight. A glorious picture of the resurrection of Jesus Christ laid in the grave before the Father as a sacrifice dead, dead under the weight and load of my guilt and sin. And just as God performed a miracle on a dead rod and made it live, and without roots bear leaves and blossoms and fruit, so God breathed upon the form of His Son, smitten in death, bearing all the wrath and anger of God to Himself.

And He lived. And Aaron's rod that budded is the glorious picture of the revelation of Jesus Christ. And my friend, inasmuch as Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead, every prophecy concerning Him is true.

And every dire prediction of judgment to the lost is true. God has sealed it. The Lord Jesus Christ is indeed the Lover of men, the Great Prophet.

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