

The Redeemer Shall Come Out of Zion

by Paul Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the active and powerful nature of the Redeemer who comes to reclaim His people and the necessity of spiritual vision and waiting upon God for His intervention.

Duration: 37:56

Scripture: Psalm 46:4, Proverbs 29:18, Isaiah 52:9, Isaiah 59:20, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:23, 1 Corinthians 13:9

Topics: "Spiritual Redemption", "Healing Ministry"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of taking back areas of our lives and bringing them into alignment with God's perfecting. He highlights the darkness and hurt that exists in the world, both in advanced countries and in impoverished ones. The enemy's tactic is to sedate us with our culture and Christianity, preventing us from fully experiencing the life and spirit of God. The speaker also discusses a ministry of healing and the need for a vision of God as the Redeemer, emphasizing the importance of individual relationship with Him.

Transcript

I'm in pretty bad shape tonight, I guess, favorite preacher. I'd like to read just one verse, you don't need to look for it, you don't want to take the time. You all know it.

The Redeemer shall come to Zion, six little words, the Redeemer shall come to Zion, thinking as we sang that hymn tonight, though the darkness hides me, so much darkness in this world. As I said before here, the Arabs have a saying, that there are some people that know and there are some people that don't know, and there are some people that don't know that they don't know. The worst situation to be in is to not know that you don't know.

But I think it's true of all of us when we come to the things of God. The Apostle says, we know in part, we prophesy in part, we perceive in part, and we participate in part. We know in part, we prophesy in part.

Everything is partial in this side of eternity, we don't quite know how to say it. One famous Scottish preacher, Alexander White, used to say to his people, he said, we read the book of Psalms, we think we understand it, but we don't know anything about it. We don't know anything about the depth, the height, the breadth that the psalm is talking about.

I think it's true, but I think he could have made it a little bit more extensive in its scope and applied it to the whole Bible. We read, I'm conscious, years pass by, and many times I read a verse and it seems like the first time I read it, I may do that at goodness knows how many times, it didn't mean anything until that time, relatively. I think one thing that God wants to give to his people, and this is not really a message, I mean, maybe it's a message, it's not a sermon, it's just some thought.

One thing that God wants to give to his people is vision, understanding. Proverbs says, where there is no vision, the people perish. There is no middle ground, there's no alternative, it's one thing or the other.

This verse has been on my mind this last couple of weeks, the Redeemer shall come to Zion. Zion is the place of the presence of God. Zion is the place to which the people of God gather.

I think in that sense we understand it in this verse. God is coming to his people, God is coming to those who are gathering unto him, and he's coming as a Redeemer. Like I say, we read the Bible many times, we just read chapters at a time.

The verses pass by, we don't really stop to think, we don't really stop to let the light of God shine upon it, but God is not haphazard, he's not careless in his expression, uses the word Redeemer, he could have used any one of twenty, thirty, fifty other names of God in the Bible, yet he uses this word. Not Redeemer, I think, in the sense which we think of it, redemption, salvation from hell, forgiveness. We tend to think of the Redeemer as the lamb that was slain, the meek one who was led to the slaughter.

The word that's used here, I understand, has a sense of aggressiveness in it. The Redeemer who violently retakes that which belongs to him, the Redeemer who is the mighty in battle, the Redeemer who is the Lord with his garment stained in the battle, this is the Redeemer. This is the one that's coming to Zion.

Not the Redeemer in a passive sense, but the Redeemer in an active sense. Once again, redemption, far greater than what we usually think of it. There's a restoration that God wants to bring to his church, which is very much ahead, very much removed from my present experience as a church.

There's light, understanding, grace, participation of fullness that he wants to bring to us. He wants to reclaim that which is his own. Maybe I'll get off on a sidetrack here, but I think there's a lot of teaching nowadays in the Church where we want to reclaim that which we would like to have.

In other words, man is seeking to claim something. You lay your claims in God, and you get your position in God, and you form your personality in God, and you get rid of your hang-ups, and you get rid of your hurts, a great word which has entered into the Church. It's a self-human centered process.

Man is in the middle, and all God wants to do is put Band-Aids on all over until I'm totally covered with Band-Aids, all my hurts, and then teach me that I'm worth something. We get the wrong end of it. We've got to start the other end of things.

We're not worth anything, neither before nor after, in ourselves. We need grace. We need life.

I think when he told his disciples to pray, give us this day our daily bread, it's not just something natural, it's something spiritual. We need a daily participation, a daily reception of that life. We can never see the positive until we see the negative.

We can only see the positive, we can only see the world of God in the measure in which we've seen the negative, and the measure which we've seen our own worthlessness, the measure which we've seen our own need, the measure which we've really seen our own hurts, but not hurt in a superficial sense, hurt in the sense that I'm totally destroyed within, that all my thoughts, all my understandings, all my capacities are no good when it comes to the things of God. I have a letter a short time ago from a young boy in Argentina, an exceptional person in the church, a real call of God, a real grace of God, a real consecration in his life, and he wanted to come and help us in Paraguay. He went back to Argentina, at this time Argentina was in the midst of a revival move, and in this revival spirit the Lord started talking to him, and he said, I don't want you in Paraguay.

He said, Lord, I want to give you my youth, I want to give you my strength, I want to give you everything I can do, I want to give you this personality, I want to give you all my capacity. He has a lot of it. And the Lord said, I'm not interested in your youth, I'm not interested in your strength, I'm not interested in your personality, I'm not interested in any of it.

It's kind of like, Lord, then, what do I do? I've got nothing else. I want to give up. I have another boy in Argentina, in Paraguay, came down from the States to help us for a while.

He started seeing the same thing, and he comes from a real good school, a real good church, and he said, you know, and it surprised me that he'd say it, coming from where he came, he said, you know, up there in the States, they build us up so much, they build us up so much. Going back to where we started, God wants to give us a vision of himself, the Redeemer. He is the beginning, he is the ending.

Must be on an individual basis, if he's not, everything is in vain. Not just missing a certain percentage in vain, one hundred percent in vain. This is a Redeemer that comes to his own with violence.

The God who Moses says is a jealous God, will not let any man touch his glory, will not let any man touch his work. He's coming to a people that wait for him. Maybe a hundred and fifty years ago now, almost a hundred and fifty years ago, in the south of Argentina, seven missionaries starved to death.

They'd gone out to evangelize the southern tip of South American land, which was at that time in the Indian Territory, very degraded, backward people. They went out there, didn't find a reception among the Indians. The ship that was supposed to have brought supplies to them, disobeyed orders, didn't go.

Another ship, disobeyed orders, didn't go. They starved to death. One by one they passed away until the captain of the ship and one other was left.

They had a little boat there on the seashore, a little cave by the boat. One was in the cave in the last days, and one was by the boat. In order that his friend in the cave be found, the captain had painted on a rock there an arrow pointing to the cave, and together with the arrow he put a scripture reference, Psalm 62, verses 5 and 8. I think it's symbolical for us in South America, marking that arrow, not only pointing to the cave, but also, as it were, the scripture reference pointing to the future of the church in South America.

I think it has application for us in North America. Psalm says, My soul, wait thou only upon God. It goes on with this thought, verse after verse.

Wait only upon God. My salvation is from Him. The reference was Psalm 62, verses 5 to 8. My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him.

He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defense, I shall not be moved. And God is my salvation, my glory, the rock of my strength and my refuge, and God trusts in Him at all times, ye people.

Pour out your heart before Him, God is a refuge for us. His last words, His last testament, God is a refuge for us. Pour out your soul before Him.

God's coming to a people that wait for Him. I think He never comes to any other kind of people. He comes to a people who wait for Him.

I'm out of touch with church life in the United States. But let's take it this way, let's go back. I don't know if we realize how much alone we are without God.

Don't know if we realize what it means to be alone. You've heard it said that if God would withdraw the Holy Spirit from the church, that most of the church activity would go on as it always goes on. I'm sure that's true.

Yet at the same time, I think there's a degree of separation in all of our lives. God wants to bring us into a new thing as a church. I'm generalizing from what I see on the mission field, I'm generalizing from the people that I see come down to the mission field from the countries which send missionaries.

But I imagine if the ones who go to the mission field are the way they are, then those who are left at home must be similar. I see a tremendous lack of awareness of the reality of spiritual things. We talk about God, but it finally ends up, Lord bless me and guide me and show me the way and I've got it all mapped out.

I know where I'm going to go and I know what I'm going to do, and I know how far I'm going to go in this direction, I know when I'm going to turn around and when I'm going to go in the other direction. I've got my life planned. I said to somebody the other day, whenever God moves in revival, the percentages change within the church.

Whereas in a normal church group, maybe one percent of the people are called to preach or called to the mission field, 99 percent of the young people go into jobs, marriage and whatever, whenever the Spirit of God comes upon a place, whenever the veil is drawn aside in the spiritual world, then the percentages change. Then all of a sudden we find that there's not one out of a hundred that's God's calling, there's many, many, many, many, many, many more. I don't know what the percentage would be, but it's many more, and I think even to a degree almost all of them are caught up in that.

I have a friend down there in South America who was born again in a tremendous revival years ago in the north of Argentina. He told me at that time, he said, you know, we go to the church, he said, on Saturdays we'd go to the meeting, he said, Sundays we'd go out into the country, we'd go out and preach, we'd go out and testify, he said, then the people would invite us to their homes and we'd go and we'd eat, and by that time he said there was no bus home, and he said sometimes we'd come walking home through the night and we'd get to the church, goodness knows what hour of the night, and then he said, well let's pray, and they'd all pray, and then he said we'd get up and then we'd go and change and we'd eat our breakfast and go to work, and he said we wouldn't think a thing of it. All day and all night he said we wouldn't think a thing of it.

He said you're just caught up in the move of the Spirit of God, and it's not one in a hundred. Maybe the percentage is reversed, one in a hundred who doesn't enter into this. And the rest of the church is caught up in something.

God wants to catch up his people, he wants to catch up his church, like I said at the beginning, where there's no vision, the people perish. We cannot know, going back to our Arab proverb, we cannot know that we don't know unless God shows us. It's, I think, maybe part of the curse, or part of the results of sin, that since the day man disobeyed and took of the fruit, he always thinks he knows.

There's not a person on earth that doesn't think that he knows, as long as I'm here let me underline it. I'm visiting the States, I've lived down in South America, but for me it's striking that the United States has such a tremendous appreciation of individualism. Maybe it comes from the time that the individuals took their decision over there in Europe to leave everything they knew and everything they owned and come to a new country for the freedom of their conscience.

Maybe it was strengthened as they went out and took over the new land, pioneered. And we today value the pioneer, we value the individualist, the person who's not bound by convention, the person that does his own thing, the person that doesn't care what people think, what society says. Not only is there a tremendous amount of that coming over into the church, maybe I shouldn't be telling you this because you're not going to see it from where you're sitting, but when you're on a mission field you do see it.

You talk to, where we are, a South American young person, and you say, Mary, I feel God wants this and this and this in your life, and if a pastor or somebody that they respect as a servant of God comes to them and says that, it rocks them back on their heels. They say, I'd better find out if God is saying this or isn't saying that, and everything stops until you find out. You know, we get young people down from the state, and they're out of touch with the culture and out of touch with the language, and maybe somewhere along the line they say, listen John, I want to tell you something, and it's like, OK, and they put together what you tell them together with what they've read in a book and together with what somebody said in a seminar and together with what they learned at last day's, and together with, or wherever it is, nothing wrong with last day's, but you know what I mean? And they got all this input, and then there's a whole big area which is my personal outlook, and by the time you get through telling them what God wants, it's kind of like one little thing less.

Well, thank you. One little thing more. Thank you.

I'll think about it. And they file it in the garbage can, practically speaking. I don't know how to talk about awareness.

I think it's something we need to find before God, I think it's a sensitivity which God wants to bring us. Going back to our verse, the Redeemer shall come to Zion. Down there in South America, we're so conscious of what it is when a land is alone, alone before its enemies, alone before the forces of destruction.

To dwell in a land which, as the Scripture says, devours its inhabitants, where evil is rampant, uncontrolled, where man is helpless against it, where the church is weak and just hanging on to life. Yet down there, looking to God for his intervention in this last time, it seems that somehow this verse that is echoing in my mind, heaven proclaimed it, the prophet repeated it, somehow it seems to me a couple of weeks ago down there, as though there comes a time when even nature itself becomes aware. Maybe this doesn't fit in with the Doctor's theology here, but anyway.

Nature becomes aware of God's time drawing near, that nature which the Apostle says groans and prevails, somehow starts to hear the announcement of heaven. I don't know how to transmit it, I don't

know how to say it, but it seems to me that there is a time when there starts to be an announcement, as it were, floating in the air, the winds are carrying it, as though one leaf on a tree is saying it to the other leaf. One flower is repeating it to another flower, the Redeemer is coming, the Redeemer is coming.

To a land which has dwelt in a spiritual vacuum for generations, to a place where darkness has taken its captives and destroyed them, where the enemy has come to kill and to destroy and he has done it time after time after time, there starts to be a change in the atmosphere, starts to be a different sound in the air. God starts to click in the heart, the Redeemer is coming, the Redeemer is coming. The prophets in the Old Testament were called seers, the man who could see beyond the physical, the man who could see beyond the natural, the man who had a vision beyond.

I feel this is what God wants to bring us into, cause us to see, unless there is a vision beyond, this world is all we've got, unless there is a voice beyond, this mind is all I've got. And yet God has promised it out there. God has promised vision.

He is the light. God has promised through his own that they will not walk in darkness. You can look at a couple of verses ahead, it says, "...arise, shine, for thy light has come, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

So behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon thee, his glory shall be seen upon thee." The Lord will give light. When we see a promise, it's not enough. We need to reach out and take it.

We need to fight until that becomes our possession. We tend to want to telescope the processes of God. We tend to want to see the promise, I believe that, that's mine, great, that's my life, that's my position, that's my circumstance, I've got it all.

But there's something very different when we really possess within us that which satisfies, when all the emptiness is taken away. When we start to see, when we start to hear, when we start to know, the Redeemer is coming to reclaim his own. He's not coming to make me a nice personality, he's not coming to take away my hangups, he's not coming to change my defects of inheritance and my weaknesses, he's not coming to make me physically better looking or anything of that nature.

He's coming to do his work. He's coming to make me into that which he wants me to be. He's coming to shed himself out through me, pour himself out through me.

He's coming to raise up a people who will be like, come out as a yearning, with pain, with hurt, a yearning on God's part, not only this earth groans and travails, the Spirit of God groans and travails, there's a yearning on his part that our understanding be complete, that our fighting not be a fighting in the air, that it not be a self-centered thing, that it not be going through the mind, through the act, that spiritual reality take on substance. Thy kingdom come on us, that's the hardest thing, I think very, very few of us ever get there, thy kingdom come on us, that the God who has all power, all might, all dominion in heaven project onto the earth some of that power, some of that might, some of that dominion. We didn't sing it.

Somebody asked for the hymn, There's Power in the Blood, in the revival that I talked about in the north of Argentina years ago, that was a hymn they'd sing time after time after time, and at that time it had meaning. For those people, they'd sing that hymn and it would carry them along, there is power. Why? They were singing it.

I remember this friend of mine praying for a blind person, and the person's eyes were open, and it was an earth-shaking thing for the poor blind man. There's power. The next time, it's the next day, he's in a meeting, how is he going to sing that song? You know, there is power, power, or is there a little bit of something else? Yesterday he was blind, today he can see, there is power.

The devil, forget the devil, there's power in the blood. I mean, it's reality, it's impact, it's made a difference, my life's changed, there is power in the blood. The Redeemer's coming.

God wants us to live and dwell and express certainty. You know, I think a lot of times we pray and we quote belief, and if it doesn't happen, did we believe or didn't we believe? I think the first thing our belief changes is, changes inside of us, the power, the power of God, the redemption. God reclaiming and starting, first of all, as I said, to reclaim from within me as an individual that which is his own, take out the unbelief, put in faith, take out the apathy, put in a quickened spirit, start to make his own, as the Scripture says, a flame of fire.

Start to take away the natural, reemplace it with a spiritual, so I'm not so worried about, you know, like, going back to the same thing, perfecting my human personality because I don't need it. God's given me something better, God's given me his spirit, God's given me his mind, God's given me his anointing, God's given me his power, I don't need to, you know, run around worrying about myself. I just move into God, move into the redemption process, let him reclaim with violence, let him stand up in my life and rebuke the enemy, take back area after area, bring it all into a perfecting.

It's all the difference. It's all the difference. The Spirit of God and the life of God start to flow out.

God's got a world, got a creation, that's tremendously dark outside, a tremendous amount of hurt. He's given me more advanced countries, a lot of it's covered up, in some of the other countries the squalor, the poverty, the sickness, the death, the violence is out on the streets. Yet it's the same process.

Somebody can die screaming in pain in the middle of a jungle or die totally sedated in a hospital in Thailand, and it's the same process. Only difference is one is aware and the other is unaware. I think one thing the enemy wants to do is sedate us with our culture, sedate us with Christianity, sedate us with the songs and the emphasis on that aspect of God's work which has to do with, God wants us to carry his burdens, the Redeemer.

He who reclaims that which belongs to him is coming. It's a glorious vision for those who want his redemption, it's a glorious vision for those who are looking for him. If we're looking for earthly things, if we're looking for natural processes, we won't understand it at all.

I think even for this whole world, not only South America, but for this whole world our time is short. The Redeemer is coming. He's going to come.

But he's going to come as he is. He always comes as he is. He never comes limited in his power.

He never comes different than his essential nature. He comes as he is. He comes as Redeemer.

He comes as the one who will take care of us. of unrighteousness. He comes as the one who is against all forces of destruction.

He comes as the one whose life cannot be contained in himself, must flow out, must reach, must touch, must transform. As we open our hearts, as we open our lives, only God can give us awareness, only God can give us faith. Only God can give us the physical, material things of this world.

Participate of the powers of the world to come. He wants to do it. He wants to do it.

Let's pray. Argentina is right on the border of Paraguay, or Paraguay is right on the border of Argentina. This last two years, I suppose, there's been a tremendous quickening of the work of God in Argentina, principally through a man by the name of Carlos Anacondia, the owner of a nut and bolt factory in Buenos Aires, the capital.

The Lord called him out of the nuts and bolts, put him in the nuts and bolts, spiritually speaking. He's been having campaigns, different places in the country. You can hold campaigns.

We've all seen campaigns. There are campaigns and campaigns. But in this campaign, Anacondia has been moving around and God's been backing him up.

Thousands upon thousands upon thousands of people have been attending these meetings in Roman Catholic country. I've not been in real close touch in recent months, but the last campaign I was there passed by one night just when I was on a trip. But there were up to 40,000 people standing out in the open air.

It wasn't a stadium. It wasn't anything. It was just a couple of, well, one or two, yeah, one or two square blocks there that they bulldozed off beside a highway.

They set up lights and some loudspeakers and there were thousands and thousands and thousands of people. And basically what the ministry that this brother has is a ministry of healing. There have been some tremendous healings, and yet the emphasis is not on the healing and the whole thing is in a very low key, very much controlled because you get that many people and it could be a riot.

But rather than trying to get everybody in, he explains very well what salvation is. He explains that those who came forward yesterday do not come forward today. He takes their names and they apparently follow them up in a whole process.

But there's a beautiful atmosphere in the meetings, an atmosphere of respect, an atmosphere of just the presence of God. And it's made big changes in Argentina. The Roman Catholic Church is very much tied in with the government, still is, and that whole structure has started to yield.

It used to be very hard for the Protestants to get on radio programs or television. They'd give you a bad time slot. They weren't interested.

They couldn't do it, I suppose, because of the pressure of the Roman Catholic Church. Now the television is open. A pastor friend of mine is on television down there in the middle of Argentina.

Another friend that's been invited by one of the television stations in Buenos Aires, the capital, to go on TV. There was a project or some talk about changing the national constitution to allow a Protestant to become president, which for a country like Argentina is an earth-shaking thing. These things are not so important in themselves that they are important in that they show the penetration of awareness in the minds of the people and in the government.

Things are wide open. I talked to a friend, oh, 500 miles from the capital, right in the center, north central part of the country, a little while before I left from Paraguay. He said things are just moving.

There's a conference. Some other people I know went up to the north of Argentina. They had a bus that they'd just overhauled the motor and they wanted to go and run the motor in the diesel bus.

So they decided, well, when we're up there, let's have a few meetings. They called the pastor up north and they said, well, have a few meetings. He rented a great big place and he called back to tell them.

They said, well, what are you doing? We've never had a third of that number in any of our meetings there. He said, well, I don't know. He said, but we'll do this.

They had a far bigger crowd than they'd ever had. Many, many people. And not only the number, but the thing that impressed them was the measure of God's moving and the depth of the move of the Spirit of God, the response from these people in the north who are traditionally very hard.

And as I said, all over, different cities, different areas, different people, different churches, different visions. And yet God is moving. There's a quickening.

There's a responsiveness. The sense in which, in the words of our verse tonight, the Lord has come, the Lord is visiting Argentina. I think it's the answer to many prayers, many years of prayers on the part of many people.

A lot of sacrifice, a lot of suffering, a lot of long road that the church has walked. Now the Lord is meeting them. I feel in Paraguay and maybe other countries too in South America, the Lord is going to start that same work.

Bring that same awareness. Bring that same quickening. Bring that same breaking of the Spirit of God.

The revival move is not everything. As I said, it's a healing move. There are other aspects of the work of God.

There's a more complete work God wants to do in the church, but it's the beginning of something. And with it all is, as it were, a breaking of the spiritual clouds, the sunlight shining through, the churches rejoicing, the people are reaching out in faith. Some young people I know that have been moving along for years on a certain level are now stepping out.

There's one pastor who, how can I say, the little I know of him, very sweet, but very almost ignorant you could say, personally fell to the Lord and he rented a great big, for him, a great big hall. I don't know how many people. He had 50 or something and he rented this hall for about 300.

And the people that were working with him told him, no, don't do that. We're getting out way beyond ourselves. What's needed in the Lord is sending in the people.

And I think for many it's not only what the Lord is doing out there in the streets and in the unsaved, but also within the church. The people are starting, the pastors are starting to believe. They're starting to reach out.

And as they step on the water like Peter, they're starting to find that it's solid and the Lord is holding them up. So it's a great time in Argentina.

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