

#21 Desperation

1 Nehemiah 1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, **2** Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. **3** And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. **4** And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I broke down and wept, and mourned for days, and I fasted, and I began to pray before the God of heaven, **5** And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: **6** Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. **7** We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commanded thy servant Moses. **8** Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commanded thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: **9** But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. **10** Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. **11** O LORD, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.

2 Let us pray,

3 This morning I want to look at the condition of the church today. I want to focus on what the prophet of God saw in His vision, where he saw the church of america, and in fact the church of the world in such a hideous condition that she looked like a street prostitute. I want to show you her condition, because after all, He also saw a Bride, but just because you claim to believe the Message doesn't automatically make you a bride. And if not Bride, then what does that make you? It places you in the church, and being placed as a part of the end-time church places you in a most hideous position.

Choosing of a Bride 65-0429e **75** A few weeks ago I was in a vision, and I was standing upon a high place, and I was to see the preview of the church. And I noticed coming from my, I was standing more like this way, facing the west, and coming this way was the lovely bunch of women, real nice dressed, long hair fixed nice in the back, sleeves, and skirts down neatly, and they were all in a marching tune, like "Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going on before." And as they passed by, I stood, and there's something there, some Spirit was God, and He said, "There is the Bride." And I looked and my heart was happy. And she went around this way, and passed around behind me. After while when She come back this a-way, It said, "Now, the modern church will come into preview." And here come the Asian church up. I never seen such a filthy bunch. Here come the other churches up of the different nations. They looked horrible.

76 And I say this because I am duty bound to tell the truth before God. And when He said, "Here comes the church of America now to be previewed," if I ever seen a bunch of devils, it was that. Them women were stripped naked with a old gray looking thing like a color of an elephant's hide, and they was holding it in front of them

with no upper part on it at all, and they were doing this kind of stuff that these dances that these kids do out here, that twist and stuff and that kind of music going on. And when I seen Miss U.S.A. come up, I almost fainted. Now, this is THUS SAITH THE LORD. If you believe me to be His servant, you believe me now. I wouldn't say that for nothing in the world; there's not enough money in all the world to get me to say that if it wasn't true. And when she come by, that was the filthiest looking thing I ever seen. I thought, "God, as hard as preachers and we brethren have labored to get You a Bride, and that's the best we could do." She was twisting, holding this in front of her like one of these hula skirts of a thing, holding it in front of her parts, her lower parts like this, dancing and twisting like these kids do out here on these vulgar shows that they have, twisting. That was Miss Christianity of America.

77 So help me, by the help of God, that's what it looks like in His face. I thought of all the trying, and the preaching, and the persuading: every one of them with bobbed hair, and they were twisting and carrying on, holding this in front. They come around where I was standing there with this supernatural Being. I couldn't see Him. I could hear Him talking to me. He was right around me. But when they turned this way, they was just twisting and laughing and going on, carrying on like that, holding this in front of them. Now, me standing in His Presence there, and His servant, and of all I'd tried, that's the best I could do. I thought, "God, what good did it do me? What good did it do? All the crying, and begging, and persuading, and the great signs and wonders and miracles that You showed. And how I stood there and go home and cry after preaching to them and things, and what good did it do me? And then I have to present something like that for You for a Bride."

78 And as I stood there looking, she passed on by, and you could imagine the back part of her with nothing on, holding this in front of her as she went shimmying by like that to this twist, throwing her limbs out like that in her... Oh, it was vulgar how she was carrying on, her body shaking around like that. Now, I... You say, "What does it mean, Brother Branham?" I don't know. I'm just telling you what I seen. And when she passed by like that, I looked at her, and oh, I just got real faint. And I just turned around. I thought, "God, then I--I'm condemned. There's--there's no need of me trying any how. I just might as well quit." Mrs. Carl Williams, if you're setting here, and that dream that you told me about awhile ago that you had the other night that's been bothering you; there it is. The steering wheel is taken from my hand.

79 Then I just thought I just might as well forget it; I was gone. Then all at once, I heard them coming again, and coming upon this side come the same Bride that went around this a-way. Here come them little ladies again, and each one of them was dressed in their national garb from where they come from, like Switzerland, Germany and so forth, each one wearing that kind of garb, all long haired, just exactly like the one at the first. And here they was coming, walking, "Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war..." And when they had passed by the preview stand where we were standing, you just all at once every eye went that way, and then they turned back, and on they went marching. And just as they started to going right up into the skies, this other one went up to a brink of a hill and went down like that. These started marching right up into the skies. And when they went to marching, I noticed a couple of little girls from the back (looked like they might be of some foreign girl, like Sweden or Switzerland, or somewhere's,) they started looking around and got... I said, "Don't do that. Don't get out of that step." And as I screamed like that, I come to in the vision, standing there with my hand out like that. I thought, "Well..."

4 Now, brother Branham said the reason they got out of step is because they were looking at the Church and began to mis their step. Oh, people, When I look out at the church today, all I can see are organizations and ministries of man and flesh. Even among us in this Message, the Word of God has become powerless in the lives of the people.

5

You can preach the truth and compel the sinner to repent until you are blue in the face and yet the Word of God,

The Doctrine of Christ, The Message of the Hour seems to have no impact on the way people live. With our modern technologies, the ipods, computers, and Mp3 players, the people have more access than at any time in history to hear the voice of God and yet they spend more time watching movies or viewing Facebook.

6 Now, listen, ... that little bride got out of step because she lost her focus. She had her eyes on the church, the way they were dancing to the music, and swaying their hips like street prostitutes. But Br. Branham shouted "Stay in Line" to get the little bride to focus on her own walk, not the swaying of the church. Yet with all our technology so we can hear the Voice of God, the people are becoming deaf to The Voice of God and it seems to have become powerless in the lives of the people. Just look around and open your eyes. It is not hard to see that the world is coming more and more into the church, instead of Christ coming more and more into the church. Instead of the Bride impacting the world, the world is impacting the church.

7

Jesus said the church is supposed to be the light of the world. He said we are supposed to be the salt of the earth. But he also said, if the salt loses its savor, then what good is it? He said the light we have should shine like a beacon on a hill. Yet where is it shining? Where is the Light in the people today? All I see is entertainment, and escapism. The people are running from God as fast as they can go. They're running, running, running, and they're getting no where.

8

Music has taken over the House of God. Entertainment has taken over the house of God. The churches have become obsessed with entertainment in God's house. I used to laugh when we would drive to church down in Anderson because on our way we would drive past churches advertizing Bingo on Wednesday nights. Bingo! That's gambling! Right in the house of God. Anything to make money, just like the money changers that Jesus plaited a rope and drove them from the House of God. Saying "My Fathers house is supposed to be a House of Prayer, but you've made it a den of thieves."

9

But that gaming spirit has even come into Message churches with card games right in the church instead of all night prayer meetings, ... And bowling parties, and skating parties, all in the name of Jesus!!! Paint ball, four wheeling, anything to get the people together, except when it comes to the Word of God. Then mysteriously they aren't there. Other things are more important.

10

Paul warned the early church in Hebrews chapter 10.

Hebrews 10:22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. 26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

11 And yet when the people come into the churches, where Paul said, correction begins in the house of God, what are they coming for? Not for correction. No, they hate correction, and they hate reproof. Nobody wants to hear reproof or correction any more. Yet Paul told us that is what the Word of God is for. In 2 Timothy 3:16 we read, All scripture is God breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

12 And in Proverbs 15:10 we read, Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.

13
And Peter told us correction begins at the house of God.

14
But the Laodicean spirit has blinded the people to their condition. They are lukewarm, and poor and miserable, and naked and because they are also blind they don't know their own spiritual condition.

15
Whatever happened to Desperation in the believer? What ever happened to anguish in the house of God? Whatever happened to Desperation and anguish in the ministry? You don't even hear any more about desperation nor do you hear of anguish in this pampered age we live in. tell me, when is the last time you have even heard it preached, or the last time you have seen someone at the altar in great anguish before God?

16 Desperation is a state in which you hang on for dear life to the one thing you think will help you in your present state of emptiness. Desperation at least holds out the possibility that there may be one remedy to help you in your present state of negativity, and Anguish is the extreme pain and distress you go through because of your desperate situation. Your emotion have become stirred to the point of pain and deep sorrow. (a)

17
From his sermon Birth Pains P:15 [65-0124] 15 brother Branham said, "Now, I want to speak this afternoon upon a subject that I announced: "Birth Pains." Now, that sounds very bad, but it's in the Bible. I believe that Jesus here was speaking of, as He said, "You will have sorrow, but your sorrow shall be turned to joy," speaking to His disciples here, knowing that the birth of Christianity was coming into existence. And now, the old has to die in order that the new is born. Anything that gives birth has to have pains of distress, and they certainly was going to go through the pain of distress and anguish to get from the law unto grace. Normal natural birth types the spiritual birth."

18 The new birth is not accepting a doctrine and you've made it. It's not shaking hands with the preacher and saying I'm born again? Then new birth comes from anguish of soul, from desperation for God to change your wretched life and to save your soul.

19
From his sermon, Desperation P: 53 63-0901E Brother Branham said, "We know it is true that God will meet a desperate soul. Now, we all know that. But it usually takes something to drive us into that despair, to the desperation. It takes something to do it."

20
But the church has held on to our religious rhetoric and so called talking about the Message, until its become so passive, that they don't do anything, they just go through the motions of going to church and perhaps talking the Word, if they do that any more. But we've talked so much we've lost our passion, we've lost our reality, we've

lost our fire for God in our belly and in our hearts.

21

Did you know that all true passion is born out of desperation and anguish. And true passion for Christ comes out of your being immersed in desperation and anguish. Search the Scriptures and you'll find when God set His heart to save his people from a ruinous situation, He would share His own anguish for what God saw happening to His church and to His people. And He would find a praying man and He would take that man and literally baptize Him in anguish.

22

Job said in Job 7:11 "Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul."

23

And so in his anguish he began to pray to God for an answer to what he was going through.

24

And in Proverbs 1:23 we read, "Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. 24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; 25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: 26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; 27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. 28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: 29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: 30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. 31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

25

You find it in the Book of Nehemiah, Jerusalem in ruins. How is God going to deal with this? How is God going to restore the ruined city?

26

Now, listen... Nehemiah was not a preacher, he was a career man. But he was a praying man. And God found a man who would not just have a flash of emotion. Nor did he find a man who was capable of a sudden burst of concern and but then who would let his concern die.

27

No, that's not what happened with Nehemiah. He said in verse 4, when I heard these words, that I broke down and wept, and mourned and fasted for days, and then I prayed night and day to the God, because He is the only One who could do anything about my sorrow. He's the only one who could do anything to change my situation.

28

Why didn't these other brothers who came with the news, why didn't they have the answer? They knew about the problem well before Nehemiah? Why didn't God use them to restore the city? Why didn't they have a word? Because there was no sign of desperation or anguish in them? No weeping, not even a word of prayer. They were just factual. The cities destroyed.

29

Does it matter to you today that the church is slowly dying? Does it matter to you at all that God's little bride has taken her eyes off of her own walk and has her eyes on the church? Did not Br. Branham warn us about getting

that church spirit?

30

Doesn't it grieve you that the church is now married to the World instead of to Christ? Didn't Paul tell us that he that is joined to a harlot is one with that harlot? Then is not the church joined to the harlot? Doesn't that grieve you? Does it not grieve you that such a coldness is sweeping this Nation, the world and the church and even the Message churches? Is not your heart grieved to see that the spirit of dullness and indifference has overtaken the people, and they have gotten lax and are drifting? Does that not bother you my friends?

31

Brother Branham said in his sermon, Expectations P:80 61-0308 80 "Clergymen, could you mark out on your hands ten people tonight in this city that's sighing and crying, day and night, for the wickedness and things that's done in the city? Does anybody in this audience know where you could put your fingers on five people that sigh and cry day and night for the sins and things of the city? Well now, the Bible said set a mark upon those who sigh and cry for the abomination did in the city. That's right. That's it. See? No more burden for lost souls; it's all gone. We've joined church and settled down. "That's all that's necessary." See? That's how we get... let's come back to God; come back to the altar; rebuild the altar again that's been torn down. And build up your home. Take them cards off the table, and all of them old love story magazines. And open up the Bible, and read the Bible, and pray. And just don't get down and say, "Bless my family, Mary, and Joe, and John, and all of them," get in the bed. No, sir. Stay there with God. Oh, my."

32

More importantly, does it matter to you what is in or not in your own heart? Can you honestly say you have a passion and fire burning inside for the lost? For your family members? For your friends to be saved? Or has the Blindness and lukewarmness of Laodicea taken control in your heart?

33

Desperation P:48 63-0901E 48 I believe that the reason we don't have desperation is because it's a lack of love, the love of God. I think that the love of God causes desperation. If God is in you, the Token inside of you, and you see the conditions of times and people wading in sin the way they are, it'll throw you into desperation. I believe it will.

34

You see, the devil wants to put that flame out that was in your soul. He wants to kill the fight you had in you to stay true and on fire for your God who is a Consuming Fire Himself. Has the devil gotten to you that you won't labor in prayer anymore. You don't weep before God anymore. I would like to ask you when is the last time you wept before God to change your ways, to change your life? Or are you pretty satisfied with your life, just like the rich young ruler who ended up in hell?

35

Do you sit and watch television or entertain yourselves on the internet while your family is going to hell?

36

Is what I am saying even registering in your soul? If I have learned anything over the nearly 40 years I have been preaching, it is one thing I know for certain, I know that until I get desperate for God to move in my Life, I am just going to set there and do nothing, and rot away my life.

37

If it is not born in anguish, if it has not been born by the Holy Spirit. When you get desperate, when you have

anguish of heart and soul, then God will come on the scene and begin to reconstruct you the way He wants for you to be. When is the last time desperation drove you to your knees, where you began to weep and pray and to seek God for a reality in your life?

38

Desperation P:65 63-0901E 65 One time there was a man named Hezekiah, had been told by the prophet, "THUS SAID THE LORD, you're going to die." Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and in desperation he wept out, "Lord, consider me. I've walked before You with a perfect heart, and I need fifteen more years." After God had told him that something was going to happen; he was going to die. And in desperation he changed the program of God. Desperations, he wept bitterly in desperation.

39

All the church programs, all the missionary projects, all the ministries, everything we do, if not born from desperation to go where He commands you to go, and do what He commands you to do, it is all in vain.

40

Was it not desperation and anguish of heart and soul that got Isaiah in the right condition to be used by God?

Isaiah 6:5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: 7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. 8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. 9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed. 11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, 12 And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

41

Was it not desperation and anguish of heart and soul that got Jesus ready to fulfill his foreordained role as the lamb of God? Didn't brother Branham tell us that Jesus greatest victory took place right there in Gethsemane when he battled in anguish before God?

42

Then, where are the preachers today that weep over the people knowing they are not hearing and thus preparing their souls for a rapture, and they will be left for tribulation or perhaps hell like the rich young ruler?

43

You see brothers and sisters, a true prayer life begins at the place of anguish and desperation. You see, if you set your heart to pray, God's going to come and share His heart with you.

44

Your heart will begin to cry out, Oh God I see your name blasphemed and your Holy Presence mocked, and your children ridiculed in every country today. I know the enemy is trying to destroy the testimony of Your Faithfulness. And Father, something needs to be done. There will be no awakening of the Bride until we are willing to let Him once again break us.

Jesus said if you throw yourself upon the Word it will break you, and Lord you know we need to be broken.

Psalm 34:18 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

45 Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

46 The hour is getting late. The Resurrection will soon come and he which is filthy will remain filthy. Come while the light is still with us, come and dash yourself against the Word of God that might mold and shape you while there is still time to be molded into the image of the first born son.

47

Please don't tell me you're concerned when you're spending hours on the internet viewing Facebook or watching videos. Don't tell me you are ready for a rapture when your soul hungers more for hollywood and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

48

Lord, there are some that need to get to this altar and confess, "I am not what I used to be, and I am not where I'm supposed to be. God I don't have your heart or your burden . I've wanted it easy, I just wanted to be happy. But Lord, true joy comes, true joy comes from your presence, so bring me into your presence and like Isaiah take your burning coal from your altar and touch my lips and my heart and my soul and set me aflame with a love for your word in my Life. Grant it Lord.

49

And as Samson said when he came to his point of desperation and anguish as he sat rotting in that prison, eyes blinded, spat on, made mockery of, but in desperation he cried out, "Once more Lord, Once more Lord" may the people see your strength, your majesty, and your salvation in this earthen vessel. Once more Lord.

50

In closing, let me read to you one last quote from brother Branham's sermon, Desperation P:34 63-0901E 34 In time of death, I've heard people when they knew they were dying, and things that they kept secret all their life. In desperation they were trying to confess it. See? And trying, "Take this... and... make it right. Go!... Please. Go... Do!" See? In desperation. They ought to have done that beforehand (See?), not wait till the time of emergency. "Will you do so-and-so for me?" The emergency causes desperation when we ought to do it without the emergency.

51

Let us pray, ...

52

53

54 I would like to Thank God's End-time Prophet William Branham and Pastor David Wilkerson (both who've gone home to be with the Lord) for their insight concerning the "Desperation" and "Anguish" that is necessary and needed in our Christian walk but which seems to be thoroughly missing in the End-Time Church people.

(a) dr. Martin Israel