



The Sermon

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Genesis 46:1-7

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"Moving Out with God"

TRANSCRIPT

So I want you to take your Bible and turn with me to Genesis chapter 46, and today we're going to look at the first seven verses, Genesis 46:1-7. The title of this message is "Moving Out with God" or "On the Move with God." So I want to read the passage. It begins in verse 1, Genesis 46.

"So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.' And he said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will close your eyes.'

"Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob and their little ones and their wives in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. They took their livestock and their property, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him: his sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt." What a great passage of scripture. Let us go to the Lord now in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we love Your Word. We hear Your voice in Your Word, and Your Word speaks truth to us. We live in a world of lies; we need to
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hear the truth. And, Father, I pray that You will give us grace and faith to follow the path that Your Word sets out for us. You've written Your Word upon our heart. We love Your Word; we drink it like milk, we eat it like meat, we follow it like a lantern that sets the light in front of our way. We unsheath it like a sword and we use it to fend off temptation and the lures of this world. Lord, Your Word is so precious to us. And I pray that now as we look into Your Word, that You would give us ready ears to hear what You say and faith that's quick to follow what is laid out for us.

So Father, do Your work now by Your Spirit within us. Lay Your hand upon me for good. Use me as a tool, as an instrument, as a mouthpiece for Your Word even here this day, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. [End]

In these verses which I have just read we see Jacob packing up his family and his possessions and leaving Canaan where he has spent his entire life, and now traveling to Egypt where he will be for the rest of his life. This is a major life move for Jacob. All this is simply so that he can see his son Joseph. That is the magnet that is drawing him down to Egypt is to see his son Joseph whom he has thought to be dead for the last 22 years. And he has just received word from his sons who have returned from Egypt that Joseph is alive. And so he must come down and see his son Joseph before he dies.

And as he comes down to Egypt, he will be there for the rest of his life. This is really an unprecedented move for Jacob. This requires a huge step of faith, to leave home to go to a foreign land, to leave the world of the familiar to go to the world of the unfamiliar, to leave where he has spent his whole life – there's a sense of security and familiarity with that – to go off into uncharted territory there where he will encounter a different culture, be surrounded by people who speak a different language, and all of this at his advanced age. I mean, the longer we live, really, the more tied down we are to where we are, and there is a sense of security for us to be in a familiar place. And so we can only imagine the emotional experience this was for Jacob to now leave Canaan, the Promised Land, and to go down to Egypt, which is really a godless land.

I think we have to ask ourselves the question before we begin to walk through this passage, "So what is the practical relevance of this for me?"

What should be my take home from this? Why should I stay focused on these verses?" And I think the answer lies in this, that you and I all have major life decisions that we make. We come to certain intersections of life and it requires making hard decisions that involve change in our lives. It may be the change of a job. It may be the change of a career. It may be the change of a school. It may be the change of geography. For some of you here today it might even mean becoming a missionary and leaving the comforts of this country and going overseas to the land of a different culture where they speak a different language, and perhaps God has been tugging on your heart and causing you to give serious thought to this.

That this passage here speaks directly to each and every one of us, because we all are subject to having to make choices that require change. And so as we look at this passage, we all need to be like Jacob. We all need to be willing to pack up and go and do whatever God requires of us. Now I don't want this whole church to leave, OK. So you've got to stay here. So for you it may just be moving down the block. But whatever it is that is God's will for your life, Jacob here becomes, really, a role model for us as someone who is willing to go and to do what God requires of him. So let's walk through this passage. I originally had intended to preach through the whole rest of the chapter, if you can believe it; but I'm going to restrict myself to just the first seven verses today.

So I want you to note, first, "the departure." That's at the beginning of verse 1. This whole chapter begins with this departure from Canaan. And we begin reading in verse 1, "So Israel set out." Israel is Jacob, and he set out from Hebron in Canaan to head south and then west to Egypt. It will take him through difficult terrain. It will take him through barren wasteland. It will require a lengthy period of time, 250 miles back in these days where travel is very difficult.

And we read that "he set out with all that he had." That tells us there's no going back. He's packed it all up. He's moving down to Egypt for the rest of his life, and there he will die in Egypt one day. So he set out with all his personal possessions, he set out with his extended family, and we could call this really the first exodus, because there will be 70 family members, and they will all be listed by name in verses 8 through 25 for us. We'll look at that next Lord's Day. But this entourage, this caravan, this exodus of 70 people, this tight family unit, they all set out.

The second exodus will be in 400 years when Moses will lead the children of God out of Egypt back to the Promised Land. But this is the first exodus, and it says, "They came to Beersheba." That's intentional. Beersheba is about 25 miles from Hebron and it's on the very southern border of the Promised Land. Later in Scripture the dimensions of the Promised Land will be characterized as from Dan to Beersheba – Dan up at the very northern part and Beersheba at the very southern rim or border of the Promised Land.

But so much has already taken place in Beersheba. And no doubt that as Jacob makes his journey and stops here at Beersheba, there's a flood of memories that will come back for him. This is a very special place, it's not just another stop along the way. It was here at Beersheba that Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech in chapter 21. And it was here in Beersheba that Abraham made the decision to take Isaac his son, his only son, and to go to Mount Moriah and there to sacrifice him. Beersheba is where Isaac built an altar in chapter 26. And Beersheba was where Jacob once lived in his early days.

And so as he comes to Beersheba it's almost representative of all that God has been doing through Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in these formative years. And it has been well said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step. And for Jacob, this is the first step of a long journey that will take him 250 miles down into the very heart of Egypt. And I think we can also say that the first step is the most difficult step, because it's when you let go of the past, it's where you let go of security and where you've been, and when you take that first step you're like a ship now that has been loosened from the dock and it begins now its drift and its flow to a new destination. That's what this is for Jacob.

This leads us, second, to "the devotion." Beginning in the middle of verse 1, while Jacob and the whole family are at Beersheba something very important happens: Jacob will stop to worship God. And it is in this context of worship that there will be a divine intervention, and God will speak to Jacob and affirm to Jacob what Jacob needs to hear.

And so we continue to read in verse 1, "and Jacob offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac." These are not burnt offerings that will be later

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prescribed in the book of Leviticus as necessary to enter into the presence of God, these instead are offerings of thanksgiving in an act of adoration offered to God for the many blessings that have been bestowed. And Jacob has so much for which to give thanks to God. He thought Joseph was dead, and now Joseph is alive; he can give thanks to God for that.

But a door has been opened. A door of opportunity has been swung open for him to now come see his son Joseph. He can give thanks to God for that. Pharaoh has sent these impressive vehicles, these wagons to come literally pick him up and have him chauffeured down to Egypt; he can give thanks to God for that. And he has his whole family with him, and we'll see that outlined here. And so Jacob's cup is filled to overflowing, and he has so much to give thanks to God for; he has a grateful heart. And so even on this journey, he must stop in the midst of his progress and give thanks to God. And surely there's something for us to learn from this, that we must be continually giving thanks to God and not be so consumed and caught up with what immediately lies in front of us that we forget to give thanks to God.

Even as I drove up this morning for the early service, for the eight o'clock service, I usually come fishtailing into a little parking place pretty fast and they have to move cones to make ready for me. And Jim who was to remove the little cone apologized for being a little late. Jim, there's a lot of grace here, I mean a lot of grace. No, I said, "Listen, I have so much to be thankful for. I'm thankful I have a car to even drive here. I'm thankful that there would be a place to park my car. I'm thankful that I have health. I'm thankful that someone didn't have to drive me to church today, that I still am able to drive myself to church. I'm thankful that I'm not sick as I was a couple of weeks ago and that I have my health back and my strength back, and that I can pull in here and step out and preach. I'm thankful that the rain has stopped and that I can walk in dry now." I mean, I have so much for which to be thankful.

And I think that we need to be regularly pausing and stopping and offering thanks to God for even the most simple things in life, that it has all come from God. And as he offers this sacrifice he no doubt is also pledging himself to God, committing his future to God. And God here in verse 1, you see it: "offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac." God: G-o-d.

There are many names that are used in the Old Testament for God. This name for God is Elohim. E-l means the Powerful One, and the ending is a plural, and sometimes it's translated "gods" (small g), like the false gods of the Canaanites. But here it's used of the one true living God in the plural. It's intended to communicate the unlimited supremacy and sovereignty of God: God who is all-powerful, who has no boundaries, that nothing is impossible for God, that God is a make it happen God, that God brings to pass the fulfillment of all of His promises.

That's the name for God here: Elohim. It's what we call a majestic plural. And it's the most used name for God in the entire Old Testament – you just need to know this. It's used 2,310 times in the Old Testament. And there are other names for God: Yahweh, Jehovah. But this is number one. In fact, it is used in the first verse of the entire Bible: Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth," and He just spoke everything into existence out of nothing. It was Elohim who said, "Let there be light," and there was light. It was Elohim who spoke the stars and the planets into existence, and heaped up the mountains, and formed the oceans, and created the first man out of dust.

That's the name for God here, "and he offers sacrifices to Elohim, the God of his father Isaac." And by saying, "the God of his father Isaac," there is this transgenerational aspect of God, that He towers over the generations, that the God of a grandfather is the God of a father, is the God of a son, is the God of a grandson. He is the same God from age to age, forever the same. And it is in the midst of this worship of God – and this should also underscore for us the priority of worship, that he's not so busy on this trip, but that he must worship God. I think this says something to us even as we go on our trips and on vacations and we find ourselves out of town. Is the Lord's Day and worship still a priority? Is God still number one in our lives? And so it is in this context of giving thanks to God and offering sacrifices.

And I guess I need to say this as well – I keep trying to get to verse 2. But let me say this, that all true worship requires sacrifice. Worship is not about, first and foremost, me coming to church to get something from God. No, worship is about us giving something to God, and something not that is easy, but something that requires sacrifice, giving up. And when we come to worship God, we give Him the sacrifice of praise, do we not? But more than

that, we give Him the sacrifice of our lives. Romans 12:1 says that we are to be a living sacrifice, that this is our reasonable service of worship.

And so as you have come today, the only way you'll get anything from this worship service is if you come and first give to God, if you give your heart, give your soul, give your life to God. And if you leave this service and you shake your head and you go, "You know, I didn't really get anything out of that service," I'll just go ahead and tell you why you didn't. It's because you didn't come to give a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, even your own life to God. So all true worship requires sacrifice on our part.

And unfortunately, we do live in a day in which coming to church is all about being catered to and people giving things to me. And we want to be hospitable, and we want to take care of so many things, of course; but that's secondary. God is primary; and the sacrifice of thanksgiving and worship, that's number one. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added unto you." So have you come today to church to give your sacrifice to God?

Now, verse 2: "God spoke to Israel." This must have been unexpected. This is the audible voice of God. God actually spoke to Jacob. And we see here again that God is a speaking God. God has not remained anonymous, God has not remained silent, but God takes the initiative to reveal Himself to us. And that is what God is doing here. And as God speaks, He speaks in a strong and sure voice that addresses Jacob in unmistakable language.

"He spoke to him in visions of the night." Please note it's "visions" in the plural. It speaks to the enormity of this vision, and perhaps it may have been a series of visions. A vision is different from a dream. In a dream the recipient is asleep and remains asleep, and in his or her subconscious you see and you hear while you remain asleep, and there may come a point where you wake up and come out of the dream.

But a vision is very different. A vision, you're wide awake and you see a panorama of a scene, and you hear the audible sounds that come from it. We have no record here of what would be seen, we just have the record of the voice that would be speaking in this vision, and he says, "visions of the

night." Most probably, Jacob is awakened by the voice that he hears, and the voice says, "Jacob, Jacob." It's repeated for emphasis to awaken into arouse Jacob. And by repeating the name it conveys a sense of authority, it conveys intensity and fervency and a sense of urgency that "I must have your attention now." It's how God called out to Abraham when He said, "Abraham, Abraham." It's how he called out to Moses at the burning bush, "Moses, Moses." And so when God speaks, God speaks with supreme and sovereign authority.

I think of Revelation chapter 1 and the vision of Christ that was given to John on the island of Patmos, and in the midst of that vision Jesus spoke as with the sound of many waters. If you've ever been to Niagara Falls and stood at the base of Niagara Falls, the roar of the rushing river as it comes crashing down and hitting the rocks, the noise is so loud you can't even hear the person standing next to you. That's the idea that when Jesus speaks to His church in the book of Revelation He drowns out every other voice in the world, that He alone would be heard, because He alone is Lord and head of His church. The idea here: God is speaking, "Jacob, Jacob," and He is speaking as with the sound of many waters. "And he" - Jacob - "said, 'Here I am.'" There is a note of attentiveness and lowly humility, and even availability, much like in the book of Samuel, "Speak, Lord, Your servant listens."

Verse 3, "He" - God - "said, 'I am God, the God of your father.'" What strikes me about this is after calling Jacob's name twice back to back God now calls his name twice back to back. And that too is emphatic. "I am God," number one, "the God of your father," that's number two. "Jacob, Jacob, I am God, God."

This, no doubt, arrests the attention of Jacob. This is a dramatic moment. This is a theophany. This is a divine intervention. This is God breaking through and speaking from the throne above. He says, "I am God." It's the name El (E-1), which means the Mighty One. Many of the prophets had "el" at the end of their name: Daniel, Ezekiel.

"I am El. I am the Mighty God." And then he underscores that by saying, "the God Elohim. I am El, I am Elohim," - there's a building crescendo about this - "the God of your father. I'm the God of the covenant that I

made with Abraham when I called him out of Ur of Chaldees; and when he came to the Promised Land, I entered into a covenant with him," in Genesis chapter 12. "I am this God, and I am the God who has ratified this covenant with Abraham, and then again with Isaac."

And you'll also note in verse 3 "the definite article" before the second mention of God or the use of God: "I am God, the God." That's very important to have this stressed to Jacob before he arrives in Egypt, because Egypt was plagued with polytheism, with many, many gods. There was the god of the Nile, there was the god who was the guardian of the Nile. There was the god who manifest himself as a frog. There was a God who manifest himself as a fly. There's a god who manifests himself as a bull. There was a god who manifested himself as a cow. There was a god with power to heal. There was a God who protects the crops. There was the sky goddess. There was the sun god. There was the god of the setting sun. There is the god who gives life. And Pharaoh himself was deified. Many, many, many gods in Egypt.

And by the way, when Moses performs the ten plagues upon Egypt every one of those matches up with one of the Egyptian gods to show that the one true God in heaven is greater than the god of the flies, greater than the god of the Nile, greater than all the way down to the taking of the firstborn son, greater than the god who gives life supposedly in Egypt. No, there is only one true, living God, and there is no other God, And that is how God identifies Himself. This is the exclusivity of the one true, triune God of heaven and earth.

And so after this dramatic beginning, God becomes very pastoral and very shepherding and says, "Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt." The reason he says this is because there is fear and apprehension in Jacob. He is driven by his desire to be reunited with Joseph. But nevertheless, there are so many questions that are left unanswered that Jacob has no idea how this is all going to work out, what all awaits him, and he feels an enormous sense of responsibility of bringing all of his other eleven sons and all of their spouses and all of their children and even grandchildren. The weight of responsibility is resting heavy upon the trembling shoulders of Jacob. And God speaks this word of comfort and assurance: "Do not be afraid."

I've not counted them, but I am told that the most repeated imperative in the Bible is, "Do not be afraid." It certainly reveals how fragile we are, how easy it is for us to worry and to be filled with anxiety, that we need to have the repeated refrain spoken into our ears from heaven again and again and again, "Do not be afraid." Whatever would be troubling you this morning, God is saying to you, "Do not be afraid."

And God gives the reason why. He says, "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt with all of its uncertainties, with all of his godlessness, with all of its spiritual darkness, with all of the unknown," - here's why - "for I will make you a great nation there, that this is a necessary means to a far greater end, that this whole journey down is there's something far greater than just you seeing Joseph is that God has plans and purposes for what will take place in Egypt that go far beyond one father's love for one son. It will involve millions of people. This is a necessary link in the chain. I will make you a great nation." This is an echo and a reaffirmation of what God said to Abraham in the Abrahamic covenant that "I will make you a great nation. I will make you great in size, I will make you great in influence."

The most amazing word to me is this last word in verse 3, it's the word "there." "I will make you a great nation there." It would be easy to believe that God would make them a great nation in the right zip code, in the right location, in the Promised Land. But that's not what God is saying. And God delights in working in the most unusual places, because He alone gets all the glory.

"I will make you a great nation there in Egypt, where you'll be surrounded by idolaters, where you will be surrounded by a world of religious superstition, a world of spiritual darkness and oppression, a place where the devil has set up his shop for business and has blinded and captured the minds of the Egyptians. No, I'm going to throw you into the very midst of Egypt, and there I will make you a great nation. I will make you a great nation in the middle of a great nation."

At this time the Egyptian Dynasty is the greatest nation in civilization. It is the nation of the Pharaohs and the Pyramids, and luxuries and advancement in education. But in the midst of this God says, "I will make you a great nation there." And we're reminded again, God never has to have the

circumstances just right to do His work. God delights in building a church at the gates of hell. God delights in setting up His camp in the most difficult places so that His witness and His name will become great there. This is God's design, this is the way God does this.

And so in verse 4 He underscores for Jacob "a great assurance." He says, "I," and the emphasis is upon that first-person singular pronoun I. "I," meaning God and God alone. "I will go down with you to Egypt. You're not going down on your own to make this work." God says, "I am with you every step of the way. I will go before you and remove every barrier that would hinder your progress. I will go before you and swing open every door of opportunity that needs to be opened. I will go before you and thwart your enemies. I will come behind you to protect you from any rare attack. I will come under you and hold you up and support you. I will be over you to watch over you and to be on the lookout. I am with you."

And all that God is will be with Jacob. God is not restricted to work in one location, in one territorial area. But God is omnipresent, God is everywhere present, and He makes His presence known more so in some places than in other places, and God has sovereignly chose to be with Jacob and with his descendants in a mighty and powerful way, and that guarantees the success of God's plan for bringing them down to Egypt, a plan that Jacob would have never designed, would have never come up with. But God's ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts.

And in the middle of verse 4 He then says, "I will also surely bring you up." Again, again, I is emphatic. "I and I alone will be with you as you go down to Egypt, and I and I alone will bring you back up again." God is a make it happen God.

And what does this mean, "I will bring you up again"? Well, there's a two-fold meaning. The first is, as it relates to Jacob himself, that when he dies his body will not be buried in Egypt, his body will be carried back to the Promised Land; and the God who brings him down body, soul and spirit into Egypt, will be taken back to the Promised Land in his dead body and buried there.

But there's another layer of meaning here and it is a foreshadowing and a prophecy of the second exodus, that after 400 years in Egyptian bondage, as the nation of Israel will grow and grow and become a great nation there, and they will build bricks without straw and perform hard labor, at the appointed time God will raise up a deliverer whose name is Moses, and Moses will confront Pharaoh, and Moses will be the instrument in the hand of God that will bring about the release of the people of God from their bondage in Egypt and lead them through the wilderness and lead them to the very precipice of a land flowing with milk and honey, the Promised Land. And please note, there are no conditions to be met here. This is what God has determined, this is what God has predetermined, this is what God will execute, this is what God will bring to pass.

And then at the end of verse 4, "and Joseph will close your eyes." What does that mean? This means, "You will die in peace with Joseph at your side, and your last sight will be to look in the face of Joseph and your eyes will see him as you leave this world and enter into the world of heaven. And with that last gasp of breath Joseph will lean down and he will pull down your eyelids and he will close your eyes. You will die a sweet death, and Joseph will be at your side, whom your eyes have not seen for 22 years. He will be your last vision in sight."

So wherever God leads us, He's with us. Even where God does not lead us, He is with us. Ask Jonah when we get to heaven. But God is with us to carry out His purposes. And I think about my life.

Seven years ago I retired from my pastorate in Alabama where I had been for 20 years and I moved to Dallas. I sold my very nice house, moved into a little, small apartment, sold my car, took the DART to the airport. I was the only person with a coat and tie on the DART. Didn't have an office, just set up shop in a room that was built to hold furniture and having no idea how God would even take care of me, use me, no idea what the future held. But the Lord is with me, and the Lord worked out His purposes for me. And with no intention of even being here with you today, here it is that God has planted me.

God is with us to bring about His plan and His purposes. And especially in settings and situations even like in Egypt, God is a make it happen God.

Think about that for your life. Think about that for you that God is with you; and He is with you not just to observe you, He is with you to enable you and to guide you and to protect you and to provide for you and to support you and to uphold you every step of the way. "The steps of a righteous man are established by the Lord, and he delights in His way. Though I am hurled headlong, I am not forsaken, for the Lord is the one who holds my hand. I have been young and now I'm old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread."

Well finally, I want you to see "the determination," beginning in verse 5, because Jacob is determined to go all the way to Egypt. He cannot stop halfway or not even halfway in Beersheba, he's got to go all the way to Egypt. And how easy it is to start a journey, how difficult it is to finish a journey. It's not how you start the race, it's how you finish the race. And so Jacob is determined to finish this race, this course.

So in verse 5, "Then Jacob arose from Beersheba," - he woke up the next morning, he packed up, he broke camp, he moved out for Egypt, he headed south, he headed west over wasteland in the direction of Egypt - "and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob." That underscores that he's an aged man, that he needs the assistance of his strong and muscular sons to help him along the way. They are at his side, and they will help him get into the wagon that Pharaoh has sent, and they will help him with provisions along the way. That's what a son does for a father.

"And they're little ones" - we read in verse 5, that refers to the children of the eleven brothers - "and their wives" - that refers to the spouses of the brothers - "in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him," these vehicles with wheels. I mean, Jacob is almost being carried along on wings of angels down to Egypt. God's gracious provision even working through an unbelieving Pharaoh to provide for the people of God to bring them down to become a great nation.

Verse 6, "They took their livestock" - meaning their herds of cattle - "and their property, all their personal possessions which they had acquired in the land of Canaan," - this is a dramatic relocation of everything - "and came to Egypt," probably three weeks later Jacob and all his

descendants with him. And as Moses writes this, he keeps underscoring everybody, all his descendants; none were left behind.

Verse 7, he begins to, really, itemize all of his descendants, and in verse 7, "his sons and grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt." They got to go all the way to Egypt. They can't pull up short and kick a field goal, they've got to get to the endzone; that's Egypt. They got to go all the way. And that's how this section concludes.

Next week we'll look at these next verses, and there actually is some important lessons for us to learn from this list of names. I was asked a couple days ago, "Am I really going to preach this list?" And I said, "Well, of course, it's in the Bible; and all Scripture is profitable." So I want you to be here; we'll finish out the chapter next week.

But I want to conclude by saying this. We just studied the first exodus, and I told you about the second exodus that will happen under Moses. But you need to know that there is a third exodus that's coming, and it's going to affect you personally and directly, that Jesus Christ is coming back to this planet. And everyone who knows Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, there's going to be a gigantic exodus from around the world, and we're all going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and He's going to take us to the Father's house. You know that. First Thessalonians 4 says, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Every believer who has already passed away, that grave is going to open up, and their body will be immediately resurrected, and they will have a glorified body and will be reunited with their glorified soul and spirit, and their whole person will now be with the Lord. No sin nature, no illness; just perfect bliss, perfect peace; and we will be taken to the throne of grace, the Lord Himself. "And the dead will be raised," and then Paul says, "and we who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air."

Truth is stranger than fiction. And it may be at your house 4 out of the 6 will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. It may be at work, 2 out of the 20 who'll be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There's going to be a great getting up morning, and there's going to be this exodus, and we're going to depart this world and go immediately into the presence of God; and we have never been so close to this third exodus as we are this morning. Go home and read Matthew 24, the signs of the times, the signs of the end of the age. It should cause us to really give careful thought about where we are in human history.

But others here today have never committed their life to Christ, have never believed upon Jesus Christ, who have never let go of just empty religion and dead religion and trying to work their way to God and trying to be good enough and attend church enough, on and on and on, be baptized enough, give enough money, do this, do that, do this or that, but you have never come to the place to cross the line and to surrender your life and to embrace Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And when Christ comes back, if you're not one of His, you're not going up, you're going down. You're going down into the lake of fire in brimstone, that place where the worm never dies, that place of eternal torment.

It's one or the other. So you have great reason to believe in Jesus Christ; otherwise, you will suffer eternal destruction of your soul forever and ever. You don't want to be a part of that exodus, you want to be a part of the one that will take you up to glory. God sent His Son Jesus Christ into this world to die a sin-bearing, substitutionary death upon a cross, to bear the sins of all those who would believe in Him. And there is no other way of salvation, there is no other way for you to be accepted by God other than for you to be clothed in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, and for His shed blood upon the cross to wash you and to make you perfectly pure and clean in God's sight, to have your name recorded in the Lamb's book of life. It's the only way.

And so if you've never believed upon Jesus Christ, you need to know there's this third exodus that's coming. And you must have faith, true faith, a committed faith, a real faith, a living faith, a repentant faith, a humble faith, a submissive faith, an obedient faith, a surrendered faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. So I call for the verdict in your heart. Have you believed in

Christ? And if you have not, then do so this very moment for the eternal good of your soul. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father in heaven, thank You for what we have learned today. Stamp eternity upon our eyeballs. Cause us to take the eternal look and to give great concern for our soul. We want to be on the move with You. Bless each and every one here today, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Would you stand for the closing benediction? And as you leave church today, may you hear the voice of God in this benediction, and may it go with you. "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine on you; the Lord be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance on you and give you peace." May this be your possession this day. God bless you.