

The Heavenly Calling



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) August 20, 2018

Your Best Days Ahead Pursuing God's Great Purposes

"Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands" (*Daniel 10:10*).

I made it a study of mine to learn why and how God lays his hand upon certain people. Why does the Lord anoint particular men and women with his touch? Why do certain ones have an incredible urge to pray and seek God, while others in the same spiritual environment go their own way, living a life of ease, complacency, or even compromise?

In the context that this verse appears, Daniel is not a young man. He is a seasoned man of God who no longer has the ambitions of the young. For years, he has been praying three times a day, and has lived separate from the corrupt culture of the Babylonians.

Indeed, Daniel had come to a place in his life where only one thing mattered: he didn't care anything about notoriety or fame. He had tasted authority and power, being elevated to a most prominent position in the Babylonian government. But that kind of position wasn't what he wanted.

For Daniel, it all came down to one desire in life: to speak for God.

His one great longing was to hear the word of the Lord, to be moved to his knees and touched by God's hand. He wanted to have an ear to hear what the Spirit of God was speaking to his generation.

You have to understand what a sacrifice this was for Daniel because of how busy he was. He was the third-most powerful ruler in the Babylonian kingdom, and Scripture says he was about the business of that kingdom. Yet even with all those responsibilities, Daniel was a man given wholly to the Word of God.

I tasted many of the honors that a man can have. I also tasted many sorrows, tribulations, testings, trials, temptations, and incredible pain. And I can testify that after all this, there comes a point in your life when God wants to take advantage of your "seasoning." He's looking for a voice to speak to the generation of your particular time. And that's just what I believe he did with Daniel here.

Daniel was studying the book of Jeremiah when the Holy Ghost showed him that the time for his people's deliverance had come. The seventy-year period that had been prophesied was now expired. Yet, even though the appointed time had come for Israel to be delivered, it wouldn't happen until God found a man through whom he could speak.

So the Lord came to this broken man, Daniel, who had devoted himself to prayer, and said, in essence, "I am going to ask something more of you, Daniel. I want to touch you anew. I want to have a voice that will speak to

this generation to fulfill my purposes. My people have fallen under the spell of Babylon, and there is only a remnant left who remain faithful to me. Yet even that remnant is unable to move. I cannot fulfill my purposes until a voice awakens my people.”

Make no mistake: Daniel had been on his knees for years when God touched him once again.

Daniel declared, “Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands” (*Daniel 10:10*).

He is speaking of being taken hold of by the Spirit of God. Here is how Daniel responded and what followed:

“In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month...I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz!

“His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude. ...my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground” (*Daniel 10:2-6, 8-9*).

This same vision was given to John on the Isle of Patmos. It is a vision of Christ himself, who appears in light that’s like lightning and with a voice that’s like thunder. And its effect is awesome, awakening a person fully in spirit.

When God first called me to New York City, I had an awakening in my spirit that threw me on my face before the Lord. At the time, my wife, Gwen, and I were having an outdoor meal with some friends in the front yard of our home, in a little country town in Pennsylvania. I had been praying for months, seeking the Lord. And suddenly, in the midst of that small gathering, I felt the Spirit of God come upon me.

I fell on my face right there in our yard, and the Lord’s voice began speaking to my heart. My wife and friends just watched as I lay there, until after a while, each one got up and went inside. These were all godly people, but they simply didn’t know what God was doing in my heart.

This kind of experience happened to Nehemiah in the Old Testament. A godly man, he asked his brother to bring him a word about what was happening in Jerusalem. The report came back: “The city is in ruins. The gates have fallen, the walls are down, and there is backsliding among the people.” Scripture says Nehemiah wept for days after hearing of the ruin in God’s house. He was overcome the way I was on our lawn that day, broken in front of others who couldn’t understand.

It is an awesome thing when God gets hold of a seasoned man or woman of God, speaks to that person, and touches his or her life.

I was a young man at that time when God touched me, just twenty-eight years old. But I had been touched and called by the Lord years before, when I was barely a teenager. And now this second touch from the Lord caused my spirit to awaken to the things of God afresh.

This all happened at a time when I had become tired of going through the motions. I had been pastoring a little Pentecostal church, and I had come to a point of frustration. I prayed: “Lord, if this is all there is of Pentecost, all there is of your Spirit, with people just coming to church and going home without being transformed by you, then something has to change. Please, Lord, show me what you would have of me. Take hold of my life for your purpose.”

I wrote about this experience in my book, *The Cross and the Switchblade*. Every day I would study the Scriptures and then spend a full hour in prayer. But there was no brokenness in me, no fire. Finally, the Holy Spirit spoke to me, saying, “I want to speak to you, David. But you’re going to have to pray diligently and seek my face. If you

truly want to hear from me, it's going to cost you something.”

You may know the story from this point. God called me to go to New York City to witness to several boys involved in the murder of a young polio victim. That was the beginning of a ministry that has flourished to this day. It started with one gang member leading me to another, and then to other gangs. That, in turn, led me to encounter drug- and alcohol-addicted youth, all disillusioned with life and in despair, with no purpose. The gospel of Jesus Christ changed multitudes of those youth, and today the Teen Challenge ministry that came from this work has over 1,400 drug centers established worldwide.

I was a seasoned evangelist when the Lord stirred me once again to seek him anew.

In the mid-1980s, I was living in Texas and traveling as an evangelist when I was moved to seek the Lord in prayer. For what purpose the Spirit was stirring me, I had no clue at the time. Then, after spending weeks in prayer, the Holy Spirit spoke to me: “I have a new work for you to do, David. You are well seasoned for this work I am calling you to. But you're going to have to seek me with a diligence such as you've never known.”

Some months after that, I was walking along the streets of New York City late at night when I came to the famous corner of 42nd Street and Broadway. The place was packed with pushers selling drugs, and it happened to be the same week that the promising young basketball player, Len Bias, had died of a cocaine overdose. Some of the pushers that night were crying out, “I've got the stuff that killed Len Bias!”

I was shocked. They were selling death as the ultimate trip. I started weeping and prayed, “Oh, Lord, this is a society in chaos. Raise up a church here in Times Square, in the middle of this hell. If you will call some young preacher to come here, I'll raise money to help him.”

That's when the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart: “You know this city, David. You do it. You raise up a church here.” I was fifty-eight at the time, and I kept thinking as I prayed, “Lord, I'm too old to do that.” But the Holy Spirit kept breaking my heart over the city. On another trip to New York, the Holy Spirit whispered to me:

“David, I'm going to give you a theater at the very crossroads of the world, and I will fill it with people. I have a remnant here in New York, and they are hungry for the message I have anointed you to preach. If you will continue to seek me diligently, you will see me do a work that's going to take your breath away.”

Whether you are a minister or a lay Christian, it doesn't matter how long you have served the Lord: your best days may be ahead.

In my seventies, after another season of diligent prayer, the Lord called me to yet another work. I began traveling the world alongside my oldest son, Gary, ministering to pastors in mainly poor or developing nations.

Take it from me: Your best days as a servant of the Lord may still be before you. You have been well seasoned, and God hears your prayers as clearly as he did when you first cried out to him for salvation. Yet, if you want him to fill your days with his fresh touch, you can be sure it is going to cost you something. God doesn't distribute his anointing heedlessly. And he won't give it if you're not willing to go intensely into his presence.

Never in our history has this nation needed to hear God's voice more than now. Never has the Lord needed broken men and women to seek him more than today. I urge you, no matter what your age, no matter how long you've served Jesus: give yourself to prayer, to seek the Lord for whatever his purpose may be for this time. Pray as I do: “Lord, use me once again. Touch me, bring me to my face, put me on my knees, and let me hear your voice instructing me. Then use me as you see fit. I am willing, Lord.” Amen.

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