

Rapture #14

Knowing This First

December 18, 1983

Shall we pray? Heavenly Father we're grateful that we can be here this morning and singing the truth that often we don't even realize how true it is when we sing "All things are possible, now that You're here", because so many things have already transpired that we know to be true; and yet, how much faith do we place in them? How highly does the world place these things, and especially those who ought to know better? We know, really, that we're singing in the truth, but we're a long way from realizing it as we ought to with the simplistic understanding that it is truth by vindication.

Help us today, Lord, to know as never before this prophetic reality. We know that everything is in You. You're present, and You're here to wind everything down even as You started to wind everything up. And we know that all things are of You; and they are from You, they are by You, they're for You, all these things, Lord. And we ask You to help us now, this morning. May it be a sweet, blessed service for Your glory. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

1. We're going to go back to 2 Peter, where I want to just deal with this portion again because it is very vital. Now he is speaking, of course, concerning our hour in which we live, because the First Resurrection has not yet taken place, and it is in this portion of Scripture's fulfillment that we are now living. He said in 2 Pet 3:3:

- (3) Knowing this first, ("Knowing this first." Now this is what you know first in the sense of what is coming first.)

Now you just stop a minute. Go back to 2 Peter 1.

- (1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, (That's verse 1, of course.) to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:
- (2) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and Jesus our Lord. (Notice, there are two persons spoken of there.)
- (3) According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:
- (4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
- (5) And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;
- (6) And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and patience godliness;
- (7) And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. (That's love, which is God.)

- (8) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that you to be* neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (9) But he that lacketh these things is blind, (Now, that would be the Laodicean Church Age.) and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.
- (10) Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: (How do you do it?) for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:
- (11) For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Now, this is the key to the whole thing.

- (2) Grace and peace (are) multiplied...
- (3) According as his divine power hath given unto all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and (to) virtue.
- (4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these (we) might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Now he's building you right up to the entering in of the Kingdom, which is at the end of the last age. So, this is the forerunning passage to the Kingdom. Seven church ages of those virtues and each person has those virtues in progression, until all are finally capped off by God Himself, both the ages and the Bride itself. Even as God takes every one of us that dies, places us, caps us off, and at the end time everyone also is placed, sealed and capped off. You've got to be born again first to have that. That's why the Lutheran's potentially had the Holy Ghost, and only today do we actually have the Person of the Holy Ghost. It's very strange. Remember, I'm not talking about being born again; I'm talking about the Holy Ghost Himself because your re-birth does not constitute the Holy Ghost, only a minute portion of a sealing back to God.

- 2. (12) Wherefore (He's speaking of the everlasting Kingdom.) I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know *them*, and be established in the truth (which is presently before your scrutiny).

And the present truth is the abundant entrance into the Kingdom; he's talking about the Kingdom and we are going to go into it. Now he says, "I want you to know these things before I die, and I'm going to tell you again, so you won't forget them." Verse 16:

- (16) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming (the Presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

Now he's talking of the Kingdom, and you're not going to get there, yet you've got to be raptured into it and brought back to it having gone through your change.

- (17) For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
- (18) This voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were in the holy mount with him.
- (19) We have also (the words) of prophecy (made more sure).

Now, what he saw there, and what happened, was not the word of prophecy made more sure. No way, shape and form. It was a vision, and you don't settle for visions. A vision will point you in a direction, a vision can reveal, but a vision is not the real thing. Now the real thing can be in a vision, but what does it do for you? Just foretells See? It's not the ultimate. It must be fulfilled.

- 3. (19) ... whereunto you do well that you take heed (Unto what? Whatever this is at the end time that comes into realization.) as a light shines in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.

Now, remember; the eyes of the heart have got to be illuminated according to Ephesians, and that can only be done when the Spirit of Wisdom comes to the Bride.

- (20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy... (Now, notice; "Knowing this first", over here, "Knowing this first, Knowing this first." This is the thing you've got to know above everything that deals with the Kingdom: how you're getting there.) ...that no prophecy of the scripture (And this is one of them.) is of any private interpretation.
- (21) For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man.

So, this man, Peter, is not prophesying. He is reiterating a prophecy of which he has foreknowledge, and he's telling you that you watch out that you don't miss it, so that you have an abundant entrance.

Now, all of these virtues back there look good, but let me tell you everyone can be counterfeited, except number eight, which is God. You can't counterfeit God, but you can have dynamic faith; you can have dynamic virtue which is power and the gifts. You can have every single one of those.

Now he said, "There's something you've got to know first, and the first things are first. That no prophecy of the Scripture (And he's referring to this hour.) comes by a private interpretation." Now, let's get that clear.

- (21) ... but holy men of God spake...

That's how prophecy came in the old time: they spake by the will of God. They didn't have a will of their own. They didn't have a word of their own, and, when it came to understanding another prophet's prophecy, they had to be as Spirit swept upon in their revelation as was the man that gave it.

- 4. Let's go to Isaiah 40 for just a little tiny bit and just take a look at what I am illustrating. He said:

- (3) The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Now, Isaiah who said it was absolutely wind-swept by the Holy Ghost outside of his own will, outside of his own understanding, and he screamed it, and he couldn't forget it. There was no way he

could ever take those words back or in anyway could he ever forget them. He told it exactly as it was told him, and it's written here in a Bible. John the Baptist came on the scene, and they said, "Who are ye?"

He said, "I'm the voice of one screaming in the wilderness." The same Holy Ghost in Isaiah brought that to pass in human flesh and brought the manifestation into an interpretation which was a genuine revelation to those who could receive it. It was no different; it was the same Holy Spirit that brought it originally. The same Holy Ghost then brought it to pass. The same Holy Ghost interpreted it, though those men were hundreds and hundreds of years apart, and miles apart. No way could one get to the other. In fact, Isaiah was dead hundreds of years.

(21) ... holy men of God spake as *they* were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Now Peter is telling them that there has got to be a prophet come on the scene and reveal the Scripture.

5. Now you say, "Bro. Vayle, where do you get it?"

I'm glad you asked the question. I'm going to take you right to It. Matthew 16:28:

(28) Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

[Matthew 17:]

- (1) And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, (He took them right up, bore them up, took them in His arms.)
- (2) And he was transfigured (transformed) before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.
- (3) And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him. (That's with Jesus in the glorified state. By vision, not really glorified, just in vision.)

And notice the glorification Peter had, was what? God speaking back to him. Do you know that you're in a state of glorification right now if God is speaking back to you?

"For whom he justified, them he glorified." [Rom 8:30] How can you stand here and know you're the perfect Bride of Jesus Christ and not be glorified? Just get your glories exactly right, brother/sister; there's a lot of glories in the Bible. There are many glorious promises in the Bible. That's right. Hallelujah, God's in that Word, everything is in Him; you've been singing it this morning.

6. (4) Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if you will, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.

Now Peter had a way of talking out of turn, but he covered himself pretty well right here. I like that. He said, "Lord," he said, "It's good to be here." And it surely was. Now he said, "Do you think it would be all right if we built some tabernacles." I like people that go to God to find answers. That's right, he went to the Lord. See? "One for Moses; one for Elijah."

- (5) While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Now he didn't say, "I'm dwelling in Him." He said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; you hear Him." Now Bro. Branham brought out the truth of that Scripture, "Hear you Him." Now, remember; the seventh, the great messenger that comes down in Rev 10:1, is that same One that was there in a human body. Now He's down here, and that's the One whom you've got to hear. See? That's the One; He's the head of the church now, and He's proved, "He's the same yesterday, today and forever." [Heb 13:8] He, Love, is the Capstone of all the other seven. He is Love. God is Love.

- (6) ...the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.
- (7) And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.
- (8) And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.
- (9) And as they went down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.
- (10) And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come?
- (11) And Jesus answered..., Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things. (And that's what Peter said in 2 Peter.)

He said, "Get your priorities right. No Elijah, no the Coming of the Kingdom." Yet people say, "Well, who needs Elijah? Hallelujah! I need Jesus." That's your Oneness bunch of preachers, UPC's and Independence, your Assemblies of God, all the Pentecostals claim they know God. *"They know Him no more than a Hottentot knows about an Egyptian knight,"* as Bro. Branham said. In fact, they know a whole lot more about it than about God. And Peter said, "Get your priorities straight." He said, "There has got to be a prophet come on the scene."

7. (12) But (he said, Elijah has) already come, and they knew him not, (See?) but have done (what) they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

Now, many people turn to that one when they say, "See, well, that was John the Baptist." Can't they understand English? Listen, according to how they got this figured out.

- (10) (The scribes said, Why was Elijah first to come?)
- (11) And Jesus answered and said, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things.
- (12) But I say unto you (I'm just testing you when I said that. I've got news for you: he isn't going to come.)

Then why didn't he say so? You can make me a jerk. Like they got mad at me concerning a certain guy in Europe. Well, I'm not going to say everything I said, because I'm not too proud of it, but I'll say it again, if I have to. I'll say look, "Making me a goat's fine, but you make William Branham a false

prophet, you'll destroy everything I stand for and what everybody else stands for." He's an enemy of God.

8. Now, listen; you can't make Jesus some kind of a jerk. He was really smart. Twelve years of age and stood there and confounded the whole bunch.

What are they trying to make him, some kind of a fool? And Peter says over here, "There has got to be somebody." And the same Peter said in Acts 3:19, the middle part.

(19b) ...when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;
(That which is visible. Any part of Him that's visible.)

(20) And he shall send (even he shall send,) Jesus Christ, which was preached
unto you (appointed, and so on.)

(21) (But the heaven has got to retain him until the) restitution of all things,
which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the
world began.

Now he tells you, "Who restores? Elijah restores." He tells you, "At a time of evident manifestation of somebody, or something, which is visible to your eyes, it's going to bring a revival." Because that word is 'revival'; that's that breeze right there. 'Refreshing' means 'refreshing breeze', and Bro. Branham said it. He said, "A revival." He said, "Going on for thirty years; it hasn't stopped. Most healing revivals run out in three years. This has been going on and on," because the false anointed are being manifested, too.

Now It says here, that after the great healing revival... See? Now who's going to bring it? Well, Elijah had a great miracle ministry, so let's talk about Elijah. Now he's got to restore. What? All things the prophet said. The holy prophets spoke by their mouths—not by brains. And Peter says that in 2 Peter, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved." So, it has to be a man who stands here, absolutely vindicated, before Jesus Christ comes on the scene, physically speaking. All right.

9. Now, let's read what the prophet said. People say they believe a prophet. I wonder if they do.

[Anointed Ones at the End Time, 07-25-65]

[269] *Now I want you to know this is sure. And you that listen to this tape you might have thought that I was trying to say this about myself being I was preaching this Message. I have no more to do with this message than nothing, no more than just a voice. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

Now Bro. Branham, like anybody else could say things, but when he was in that pulpit and anointed of God, you better believe that was the Word of God. And I'm not trying to detract from other things he said outside the pulpit. I'm just leveling with you today on the fact that he might have said, "Say, wouldn't it be nice if you and I have a beef steak dinner?" It doesn't mean you had to have a beef steak dinner. You could do what you wanted with that one, because that wasn't the anointed Word of God, merely Bro. Branham's desire for a beef steak dinner.

[269] *...And my voice, even against my better judgment, I wanted to be a trapper. But it's the will of my Father that I declare to do and am determined to do. I wasn't the One that appeared down on the river, I was only standing there when He appeared.*

Now, something became visible. Now, listen.

[269] ...*I'm not the one that performs these things and foretells these things that happens as perfect as they are. I'm only one that's near when He does it.*

Okay? Now he said that he wasn't the Pillar of Fire. Now he said, "*I'm not the Pillar of Fire*" folding and enfolding. Now he said categorically, "*I am not the Pillar of Fire, I'm not the Son of man, and the Pillar of Fire is not the Son of man.*" Now, let's watch carefully what he's saying here. Now he said:

[269] *I was only a voice that...(I'm not the one that performed these things, and tells these things perfect as they are. I'm only one that's near when He does it. I was only a voice that He used.)* (Only a voice He used.)

10. All right then, the Holy Spirit was moving up through William Branham in a voice. Now He spoke through him.

[269] ...*Only a voice. It wasn't what I knew it's what I just surrendered myself to that He spoke through..* In other words he surrendered himself, this man William Branham, to the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost spoke through him. *It isn't me. It wasn't the seventh messenger, oh no: It...* (Now, what is it?) *I'm not the one that performs these things and foretells these things as perfect as they are.* It's God. All right.

So, out of here, here's sayings, doings. [Bro. Vayle writes on board.] "*Now I'm not the one doing it.*" He said, "*No way. No way, am I doing it. Now, what I'm saying, and what is coming forth to you people, that you're looking at over here, from my words, I had nothing to do with it.*" Now, let's watch carefully.

[269] ...*It isn't me. It wasn't the seventh messenger, oh no. It...* (It, this, See?)

The 'sayings' and 'doings' that they saw: it, was what? A manifestation of the Son of man. Well, did they see Him, or didn't they? Now the word 'presence' means, 'what is visible to the eye'. What was visible to the eye? The works of God.

11. [John 15]

(24) If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. (When they saw the works, they saw God and hated Him. True or not true?)

Now he said, "*The appearing is different from what the fundamentalists' call appearing and coming.*" Now Bro. Branham did use the words interchangeably to make us to know that we would actually see Him physically—but not here, at this time.

[269] ...*It was a manifestation of the Son of man.* He didn't say from the Son of man. He said it was a manifestation of the Son of man, because that's what appeared to our eyes. *It wasn't the messenger, his message. It was the mystery that God unfolded . It's not a man; It's God. The messenger was not the Son of man.* See, the angel is not the Son of man. William Branham wasn't the Son of man. This messenger was only a messenger from the Son of man. *The Son of man is Christ.* (All right.)

Christ. Holy Spirit. See? Moving. Why? Because He had to have a reflector. What came here reflected came into manifestation. Now:

[269] *...He's the One you're feeding on. You're not feeding on a man.* In other words, what Bro. Branham has to tell us wouldn't do us one bit of good. Might even do harm. *A man's word will fail, but you're feeding on the Body Word of the Son of man.*

12. Let's go back to 2 Peter again. Now he's telling you that this great kingdom, which is under discussion, which he saw in a preview, which preview was fantastic, is nothing compared to coming reality. Now he warns of the false misconception that comes on the scene. "Who needs Elijah?" "Oh," they say, "The Jews get Elijah, but, you see, the Gentiles don't get any prophet." Then you don't get Him either, because this is written right to us. Because we're the kingdom of priests. People try to make this a Jewish book. You better forget it; He opened the doors to both Jews and Gentiles.

(20) Knowing this first...

Get this clear: a prophet, contingent with this comes on the scene. Elijah—or no Kingdom. As I said awhile ago, "Prophet-God, God-prophet. Kingdom-Elijah, Elijah-Kingdom." And the same time Elijah is there, Malachi 4 categorically says, "I'm coming to destroy the earth, but at the same time I'm coming to get the Bride out." That's what we're looking at. Now he said:

(21) *...prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

And Bro. Branham categorically said, "*At this end time here, when the Word was in the Third Pull, there would be no imitation.*"

In other words, there would be no prophet that could arise up and approximate this one, because William Branham alone could tell it how it was, and every discernor out there misses it some way; they make mistakes. I don't care how good Bro. Grant is, and I think he is a tremendous person. He has to be, but I'm sorry for him. But he, every time, his ministry shows that he misses it. William Branham stood there, and there wasn't one 'hitting and missing', because he was the only one who could tell it as it was, who could literally bring out the truth of this, and put a Bride in a Kingdom.

Now, notice in chapter 2 that he is bringing forth a warning that, just because this comes, it doesn't mean, "Oh, we're going to be taken off the scene. Oh, from now on everything is wonderful. Hallelujah, just breaks through the sky and instantly we're gone."

13. Let's go back to Mt 24:23.

(23) Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

(24) For there shall arise false Christs, and (even lying prophets,) false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it* were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

(25) Behold, I have told you before.

(26) Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

- (27) For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Now, over here you'll notice that this man's ministry can never be duplicated, so there's none of us going to get fooled on that. One William Branham, one Elijah, period. Don't look for another; just say, "Thank You, Jesus." But beware of the false teachers. Now, that's what he said. And there's not one pulpit that couldn't be false. Let's get that straight. 31:16

14. [2 Peter 2]

- (1) (For) there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, (Doesn't say prophet. Now we would just throw them out on their ear so fast they wouldn't know what hit them.) who (proudly) bring in damnable heresies, (saying no, or declining) the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (Saying no to Him.)
- (2) And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth will be evil spoken of.

15. Now I've got to talk straight. Look; sin is sin, and there isn't one thing that you can't make into sin.

- (2) (Men fall) pernicious ways; ...the way of truth will be evil spoken of.

By men's actions...See? I'm not even going to get to that today. I won't get to my setting, but I've some things to say about that, too, right from the Word of God where the setting is. Now It says these people are going to make others despise us because of the truth.

- (3) Through covetous men, (They're covetous.) with feigned words make merchandise of you... (Telling you lies.)

"Well I was with the prophet and the prophet, he and I were such good buddies."

Well now, I wasn't such a good buddy with any prophet, and yet he told me all the things some people run around saying he said...that a man had the gall to say, "You know Bro. Vayle, the prophet and I would sit together, and he would just tell me about all these people and what they're going to do, and I'd see it happen, and I'd just sit back and smile."

Well, I've seen what happens with him, and I'm not sitting back and smiling.

16. (3) ...whose judgment now of a long time lingers not and their damnation slumbers not. (Now, watch.)
- (4) For if God spared not the angels (of) sin, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;
- (5) And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; (Not the godly, but the world of the ungodly.)
- (6) Turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an (example) unto those that should after live ungodly;

- (7) And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.
- (8) (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful(ness.))
- (9) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.

Now he's letting you know there's a period of time going on concerning this event. When William Branham was here, I was under the impression that William Branham would be standing there saying, 'Behold the Lamb of God.' Then we'd see Him coming for us.

He did say, "Behold the Lamb of God." And He was revealed to us, but then the prophet went on ahead of us. Certainly. Revealed Him according to Scripture. He sure did. Told us what it was Who came down ringed by those seven mighty Angels. Told us all about it. God even letting a picture, as much as He could let a picture be taken. He couldn't let too distinctive a picture be taken, that's for sure; there's no way because I believe that would kill a man by looking at it, the same as no man can see God and live. Now there's going to be a period of time here.

- (10) But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.
- (11) Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.
- (12) But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption:
- (13) And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness...

17. In other words, they speak out of their mouths any old way they want to speak and they say it's acceptable. Now this goes clean across the board into the Assemblies of God, the Oneness, and the whole group of them, the Methodists, Baptist, the whole lot. But we've got to watch ourselves because these people don't sport with us; the others do.

- (13) ...*as* they count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you.

This is at the time of attrition. When the last ones are coming in and there's no replacement. They're right here.

You say, "I don't believe they are."

Then you believe wrong because a man had a big supper. There was a big wedding. He said, "Bring them in." So, they brought everybody in, and a man sat there, and he had no wedding garment on. Bro. Branham said, "*That's those that feast among us, but they're not one of us.*" Why do you think he was there?

18. (14) Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:
- (15) Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

What was the wages of unrighteousness? Well, standing there using gifts from God. What about these big tent meetings and big programs?

“Well,” you say, “they’re justified.”

No they’re not justified. They can’t be, in the light of verse 16.

- (16) But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

What do you think a real prophet would do, being the voice of God? Be like Paul. That’s why they’re still insane down here in Laodicea. That’s why they’re blind and naked and miserable and fully insane, because they won’t listen to the voice of God in a man. And, when the voice of God came forth out of the man, proving it was God, the Son of man in manifestation, the Son of man revealed, the Son of man amongst us—appearing, Elijah standing there, oh, they couldn’t take that. You know what? It drove them madder. Yeah. They couldn’t place the voice, because a little voice wasn’t in their little black book and never gets in unregenerate hearts. No! No, the heart has to be clean. It’s got to be lightened up.

19. (17) These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

You talk about great, poetic, beautiful words here that spell the awfulness of condemnation. They talk about Dante’s inferno. Who needs Dante? Who needs his lies? Get the Word of God!

I’m going to tell you something: a lie about the punishment that God metes the people is no different from a lie that man tells about the righteousness and goodness of God. A lie is a lie is a lie is a lie.

- (18) ...they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, (They’re vain; won’t come to pass.) they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

- (19) While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

What’s he talking about? He’s talking about men who claim they came out of organization. Sure they did, but organization never came out of them. Came out of Pentecost, so-called, but Pentecost never came out of them. Came out of Baptist, but Baptist didn’t come out of them. I’m going to tell you, when you come out of anything, it had all better come out of you, or you haven’t been purged and the purging starts with the mind. You’ll never get purged until first of all it comes to the mind. Repentance. Amen.

Men can say what they want, but they’re working this ministry entirely backwards, feelings and this and that and else counts. Get you’re mind with the Word of God. Nothing else counts. Nothing else counts, brother/sister. Don’t let anybody ever tell you anything else does count because I’m going to tell you something: this Word with God in It is omnipotence, and you with this Word, the portion with that

Life in it, is another form of omnipotence. Then God moving on His Word of Life within us, that does something. It proves or fulfills Itself.

- (19) ...they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; (and so on, and so on.)

20. Now, listen. It says: [2 Peter 3]

- (1) This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

And Paul said the same thing. "He started you as virgins, but I think you've gone astray." He said, "I think your minds have been seduced by the devil. I think a case of seduction has settled in here. The sweet word has got you all excited to have a little affair." Sure. Yeah, and they did. Now he said:

- (2) That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.
- (3) Knowing this first...

Now, notice: 'first'. First, over here you've got to have something monumental. Then the first thing you see is they'll try to destroy the monumental. Do you follow? They'll try to take it away from you, and you'll talk about the prophet, you'll talk about this, you'll talk about that, and they'll take it away from you. Now:

- (3) ...there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,
- (4) ...saying, Where is the promise of his coming? (Of His Appearing, of His Presence?) for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

Now, when you look at this, and we apply it to ourselves, what I've said is perfectly true, people will go on about the prophet and say, "Well, there was a prophet. That's great. He did great things, and that's wonderful." But, do they understand the literal Appearing that Bro. Branham said was in our hour, "*Appearing amongst us in signs and wonders*"—a literal appearing?

21. Now, what are they looking for? They are looking for the literal, physical appearing of the Lord in the air, and they're missing the literal Appearing of the Son of man without flesh. They're looking for the literal physical, and they're saying, "Well, where is the promise of the Rapture so that we're going to be caught up?"

- (4) (Because) ...since the fathers fell asleep...

And the last father to fall asleep is William Branham. Because like Paul, Paul said, "You've got many teachers, but only one father." If Bro. Branham was in the true character of the apostle Paul, (And he said he was.) then he was the one father at the end time; because he alone was the one to bring forth this message which is the life of this last hour.

22. Now, what are they saying? They're saying absolutely this: "There is nothing going on since William Branham left the scene."

We are the children of the prophets, so in a real sense God gave us a father because all children have fathers. God's vindicated prophet literally was to us a father, and you can see him in that particular sense,

because he was “Turning the hearts of the children back to **the** fathers.” Then he would have to reflect the image of a father, because he was God to us, and so on.

So, I put him down as one of the fathers, right along with the apostles, right along with Paul. I don’t have a bit of trouble there. I might have a little trouble, but I don’t think I will have any trouble. I don’t think the Lord minds what I’m saying. I put him right there with those men, because, with John the Baptist, the whole group of them, doing that great work, and to me he’s like one of them. In other words, if you don’t want to use the word father, that’s fine, but he’s certainly one of them. He, himself, placed himself with Moses and Paul with the Pillar of Fire.

23. Now, way back in those days, until this twentieth century, the people did not understand Elijah’s coming at the same time the Spirit of God returned to this earth in the form of the Pillar of Fire, to bring forth what we’re looking at in this very hour. And the trouble I see today is, there are people right today who know better, but they are willingly ignorant because Bro. Branham said, “*The Pillar of Fire will lead us into the Millennium.*” That’s four pages of that. We read it in “The Third Exodus”.

A man phoned me to jump all over me, and I said, “Now, just a minute.” I said, “You qualify on the grounds of what I said because you know the tapes better than I do and you know Bro. Branham used four pages saying, “The Pillar of Fire would lead us into the Millennium.”

He said, “Lee, if you thought...,” he said, “if I and so-and-so knew that, do you think we wouldn’t say it?”

I said, “That’s exactly right, you do know it and you won’t say it.”

He turned right around and said to me, “What you preach is blasphemy.”

He was wrong on his thoughts—willingly ignorant. Now, I’m not worried about those that are around about us so much as this covers what Bro. Branham said, “This was not done in a corner.” You knew what went on, and you turned it down anyway, and that’s plum across the world.

24. Now, watch, what is it that people can’t understand in this hour when something is going on, though it appears that nothing is going on, and they get confused? What is it? I tell you what it is. It’s the long-suffering of God. That’s the whole thing; the long-suffering of God: even when the ark is shut, no rain for seven days. And a lot of people simply want this to transpire not realizing the judgments of God are already in the earth. The whole plan has been set up. The whole plan has been triggered, and day by day it’s gaining momentum. As soon as the Bride gets out of here, I wouldn’t want to be here when that One amongst us, Who is the Judge of all the earth, becomes incarnate in human flesh and stands there. Even though He’s husband, which He is, and the Bride is having a great time, you remember, that the same One of grace, the Man of grace, is a Man of destruction. For the Lord is not only Redeemer, He is a Mighty Warrior.

And I’ll tell you what; the bow has already been set in heaven. One bow of grace and the other bow for arrows, and you better believe He’s not one of those anti-Christ people, because He is the Christ. He’s not that one that doesn’t have any arrows. He’s the one that’s got the arrows and it’s going to be His Word coming back upon the people that didn’t believe. And He says, “Listen, this world is being stored up, it’s being kept like a case of dry goods in a warehouse, the whole thing.” And he said, “The minute you get out of here, that’s when the whole thing begins to start to have the problems, until one of these days, even at the end of the thousand years, God’s going to call a halt.”

25. Now, listen; he said: [2 Peter 3]

(9) The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, (No way, shape and form.)

Now he said:

(10) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.

And that's exactly true. It does come as a thief in the night. He's telling us. But, listen; to whom is He the thief in the night? Not to us. We're the articles that are being stolen, so to speak. But how can you steal what's yours? Jacob couldn't steal what was his. The birthright was his from the very fact that God gave it to him. The boy didn't understand, so he let his mother talk him into something instead of letting God go ahead and prove it to everybody. She had to go ahead and pull a devious act, which you can't steal what's your own. So, what she did was unnecessary.

26. But I'm going to tell you one thing, if you make it look awfully suspicious; something bad is going to happen. And ever since then, because she stepped in and tried to do something, it got in a mess again. Eve stepped in to do something and it got into a mess. And so, what happened? Rebekah stepped in and it got into a mess and every time the woman steps in there's a mess, and this is one time the woman can't step in. That's right? It's right. This is one time He speaks, the Bride stands back, and everything He says is perfect for her. And I'm going to tell you something: everything He says does go, and if we're a part of what He said, we're going, and if we aren't, we're going to stay. Oh yes, the Third Pull, my brother/sister, is never going to be duplicated. There's no way. They can't do it. The infallible prophet.

Now, "He comes as a thief in the night." He certainly does, but he's not a thief to you and me because the Scripture says over here, absolutely we are aware of all these things. And so, these things are not going to fall upon us and befall us as though they are judgmental, because they are not judgmental at all.

27. So, there that's as far as we are going to go. But next week we're going to start, then, where we left off, about page 26. Somewhere right in there we'll start. And then we'll go on ahead. We might take a little recap here, and we'll try by the grace of God, the help of the Lord, to get these things all done.

In the meantime, be of good cheer because, if this is not the hour to look up and rejoice, then, I'll tell you what, it's a wonderful start. It's a wonderful start because eyes have not seen what you and I have seen. Ears have not heard what you and I have heard. We're right on the threshold. I don't care what anybody says. There's no way you can get away from it; you can't get away from 2 Peter. We are into a stage of the Rapture. We're already caught up into it, the grace of God having begun. There's no turning it back. There's no place... There's no place where God ever turns back once its start because you've come to the ushering in of the Millennium. Just as it was with Noah, once God gave Noah the Word, the next 120 years started: no turning back, no changing of course or program.

Let's rise and be dismissed.

Heavenly Father, we believe that the Bride is cemented around the Holy Spirit. And to a lot of people it might look like confusion, but I don't believe it is. I believe that there is an exclusion and a seclusion that is going on now and makes us Bride. I believe that, Lord. I believe the Bride is all glorious within, and without, because she's thoroughly justified and these thoroughly justified ones are glorified. We've heard the Voice from heaven. We've heard the prophet say It, and we don't arrogate to ourselves that but we believe we are a part of it because we we're there, and we are here. And we rejoice in this and what can we say except what Paul said, "If God be for us, what can be against us?" And that's the way it is. And if You're not for us, Lord, we know that, then all right, the others are against us then. It'll do its job. We're looking to You, Lord, as part of You that Your great work, Your Word manifest in us taking us right on through.

Now I just pray that every single person here would build up in the most holy faith, which is in Christ Jesus, our Savior, putting aside anything which is wrong in our lives and not being hypocritical to want to put aside what's in somebody else's life because we don't have it, and try to keep in our lives what little pet thing we like by reason of indulgences or actual sin. Lord, it's time to take that nonsense away and every man be counted in the uprightness which is available to us—to keep adding these virtues until there's a saint of God with a true headship of the Holy Ghost. Just like the church has right now.

And I believe Lord that Your true headship in the church extends to every single one of us. That every one is going to have a definitive, absolute, headship of God Himself, so that the whole family is headed up in God. That's a real Bride; one body of many members constituting one Bride, right here on earth. "A living statue," as Bro. Branham said, which is right. Absolutely. Yes, Lord, we don't falter at that either.

So Father, we encourage ourselves today, and this is part of Your truth, and the devil is angry because we know his lie. He said, "It's not so." But he's a liar; it is so. It is so, Lord; there's no way that You could be in the church the way that we believe at this time that "I and my Father are One," and we're one with You, that there's anything but this. So, we accept this and love You and just trust, Lord, this love becomes fervent, just so absolutely tremendous that there's no place here on earth for it—that it just doesn't fit.

We pray, Lord, the people will know that I'm not trying to hurt anybody, but if anything amongst is there that shouldn't be there, that certainly there's room for improvement in everybody. Certainly, Lord, there's things that have got to go in all of us, and if You're standing by here, Lord, to get them out of us, then which one of us would be so ridiculous as to not let You reach down with a mighty cleansing hand, the powerful hand of God and remove those things out of our lives. Lord, we're here in Your Presence to that end. What you don't like in us, take You're dust cloth, take that bleach of the Blood, Lord, and the power of the Holy Spirit, and just wipe down within and take it away, because there isn't anything that good anyway. There isn't anything that we want to retain, really—nothing, just that seed that You put there in the beginning. That's all. Let it have its way.

And so, unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God be all power and glory and honor, through Jesus Christ our blessed Savior. Amen.

Let's sing, "We'll Walk in the Light".

You know, wishing each other the fact that, 'Take the Name of Jesus with You', you know that's forbidden just as a casual statement. It's forbidden to even say it, if the person doesn't have a right to it. But think what a tremendous blessing it is to sing it with thoughts of blessing upon everybody here, with earnest expectation unto God, taking that Name in sacred vows of trust that we're part of the Bride. Take it with us at all times. As Brother Branham said, to the woman, he said, "*Your hair is your glory. Bear it proudly; wear it proudly.*" May we be very proud of our association and our oneness with Him, very circumspect, knowing that everything is to reflect His glory.

Let's sing, "Take the Name of Jesus with You".