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## **Living in the Miraculous**

***By David Wilkerson***

May 23, 1988 I can't read the Book of Acts without feeling very much ashamed! The apostles lived and ministered in the realm of the miraculous. Even the laymen like Stephen and Philip, men who served tables, were mighty in the Holy Ghost, working miracles and stirring entire cities. Who can read the Book of Acts without awe and wonder at the miracles God worked for them and among them? Angels appeared to them, unlocked their chains, and walked them out of high security prisons. They had mighty visions, clear and detailed. Peter was so full of the Holy Ghost that the sick were brought into the streets on beds and couches so that his shadow would fall on them for healing (Acts 5:15). Cripples were healed and went leaping through the temple; and special miracles are recorded: "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them" (Acts 19:11-12).

Why are we not living today in such a miraculous realm? Where is the apostolic power of Jesus Christ today? I'm not talking about deliverance meetings and star healing evangelists. I'm talking about a miraculous way of living for every true believer. God has not changed; we have. The same Lord is with us - we have the same promises and God is more than willing to do it again. But regrettably, there is an idea today that we don't need the miraculous. It is said, "This generation has a greater revelation; it's more educated, more knowledgeable. We are not to expect the Lord to work like that today, as that was only necessary to establish the church."

My answer to that is, if the miraculous was needed to establish the church, it is even more needed in the closing of the church age! Evil men have waxed worse and worse as sin has abounded many times over. Seducers have increased, violence has broken out beyond control, and hell has enlarged it's borders. Satan has come down with great wrath. As doctrines of demons comes in like a flood, apostasy grows worse.

We are in the great falling away. Satan has his own angels pretending to be great evangelists and teachers. Abortion has filled the land with blood-guiltiness. Parents molest their own children - even babies are being abused. Our youth are out of control with cocaine, crack, heroine and alcohol spreading throughout schools, devastating and killing, turning teenagers into sick, crazed thieves and murderers. New diseases like AIDS and herpes are spreading death worldwide.

We need more of Jesus - more of His saving, healing power, more of the miraculous than any past generation! The apostles knew the cost of the miraculous and eagerly paid it, but we have not been willing to pay the price.

God Responded Miraculously to Them Because They Were Given to Prayer. The Book of Acts is the account of holy men and women seeking the Lord's face. From beginning to end, it tells about how prayer moves God, whether in the upper room, in prison, in some secret house, hiding from authorities, or in Simon's house on a street called Straight - they prayed! They prayed in the morning, and sometimes all night - they prayed without ceasing. Cornelius prayed always. Peter prayed on rooftops. By the seashore, in the temple, or in the desert, they called upon the Lord continually. They spent hours and days shut in with God, until they received dear, detailed guidance. What incredible specifics God gave them.

Ananias, who lived in the miraculous, was a man of God given to prayer. "And there was a certain disciple of Damascus named Ananias, and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said,

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Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight" (Acts 9:10-12). Listen to the detailed instructions God gave him, "Go!" He named the very the very house, the householder's name, the man he was to pray for. Then God said, "He knows you are coming. He even knows your name. And he knows what you will do when you walk into his room, because I told him everything!" Why did the Lord tell this baby convert such intimate details? Because "...behold, he prayeth." For three days Saul fasted and prayed. It was not, "Lord, what can You do for me?" But rather, "Lord, what will You have me to do?" His vision of Jesus so consumed him that he immediately forsook everything on the spot and was the Lord's bondservant from that moment on.

Had Saul been saved in our time, he would have been sucked up into our world of hype with a media blitz, a best-selling book, and invitations to give his testimony to churches every where. Why is it today that so many are miraculously saved, just like Saul; but unlike him, they are so soon living in confusion, not knowing what to do? God said to Saul, "...Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:6). God was saying, "Go pray! Go seek My face and learn to wait on Me. Show Me that you want more of Me!" No directions came, no vision came, until he had spent three days in prayer. But what a powerful and miraculous thing happened during prayer - Saul got to know the Lord's voice and learned to depend on His leading. Although just a newborn believer, he was already being clearly led by God. Saul needed no counselor or prophet to show him what to do; he needed no one to give him a word of knowledge because the Lord said, "...I will show him" (Acts 9:16).

I can picture a fundamentalist preacher coming to see Saul before Ananias arrives: he sees him on the floor, weeping, crying out, "Jesus, reveal Yourself in me, not just to me." The fundamentalist says, "Brother Saul, you've been wonderfully saved. What more do you want? Take it by faith. You are on the verge of becoming a fanatic! Don't you know souls are dying out there? God has called you to evangelize. Witnessing is God's will so go quickly and win the world for Jesus!" Saul answers, "Brother, I'm not moving! Please excuse me, but I'm waiting for a man named Ananias. Are you Ananias?" The fundamentalist is agog, "Are you crazy? Who told you such and such a man was coming? Who told you he would walk in here and lay hands on you and heal your eyes?" Saul answers, "The Lord told me in a vision! I know his name and I know what he will do. I know I will be healed."

In this same scenario, in walks a charismatic prosperity and success teacher. "Brother Saul, I brought you an autographed copy of my latest book, Covenant Rights. I'm here to tell you that God wants the new Saul to prosper and be always in good health. If you will learn my keys to success and prosperity, you won't have to weep and agonize like you've been doing these last few days. Claim your rights! All you need is faith! It's all there for the asking!" To this Saul answers, "Sorry, brother! The Lord is showing me many ways that I must suffer for His name's sake. I'm waiting for Ananias. I can't claim anything, do anything, or go anywhere, until he comes and puts his hands on me. God will tell me what to do next." The teacher replies, "But you're just a baby in Jesus! I've been walking with Him a long time and I have revelation knowledge. Let me teach you!" Saul's simple response is, "All I know is that He appeared to me and He talks to me!"

Then there is Peter, praying on the rooftop. Thirty miles away at Caesarea, Cornelius is praying "always." "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the

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people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do" (Acts 10:1-6). Again, detailed instructions! The town was Joppa; the house was Simon's; and the man who has the answer was Peter.

Meanwhile, "...Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour" (Acts 10:9). "...He fell into a trance!" (Acts 10:10), meaning, he had a vision. "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee... go with them for I have sent them" (Acts 10:19-20). Peter goes to the house of Cornelius and meets a praying man who speaks of angels visiting him, giving him supernatural guidance. "And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither, Simon, whose surname is Peter; he lodgeth in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God" (Acts 10:30-33). The Holy Ghost is so specific He even gives both names: "...call Simon, whose surname is Peter (verse 32). To be sure that Cornelius called the right man (since Peter was staying with another man called Simon), God told him his name was Simon Peter!

All through Acts we read these words, "God said to them...", "The Lord said...", "The Holy Ghost said...", "The angel said...", Heaven was not closed. They got the clear mind of the Lord; there was nothing "flaky" or fuzzy about what they heard. It was very practical, very detailed, and very clear. But the word from heaven came only after much prayer, after being shut up alone with God in secret. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 13:1-4). They fasted and prayed until the word came; and then fasted and prayed again before sending them out!

Paul later stood before the raging Jewish crowd in Jerusalem and retold his miraculous story. "And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:11-15). Paul made it very clear that it was more than a miraculous conversion - his was to become a miraculous way of living. There were three things God wanted for Paul. He wanted Paul to know His will, to have a vision of Christ, and to hear His voice at His mouth [meaning directly, not secondhand].

God's People Today Could Receive the Very Same Clear Word From God If There Were the Same Intensity to Seek His Face in Prayer. Christians seldom pray today because they've been taught to "take everything by faith." We preach faith here in Times Square Church, but not to the exclusion of

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prayer. We teach obedience, repentance, the Word, faith, and prayer! It is said, "Why pray? Why plead with God when He has already promised it? If He knows what we need before we ask, why keep asking?" Some even teach, "If you ask when He has already promised, that is unbelief. Just claim the promise and then rest; there's no need to pray over it." Abraham had the promise of becoming a mighty, nation locked up securely; God had already made him this promise. "For all the land which thou seest, to thee Will I give it... and I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth..." (Genesis 13:15-16). God had promised to bless those who blessed him and to curse those who cursed him. Abraham also had much faith, so much so that God accounted it to him as righteousness: "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Here is a man of God, secure in God's promises and full of faith; yet he ran to the altar over and over again to pray. "And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel... and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord" (Genesis 12:8). Again, after coming up out of Egypt, after the famine, the Scripture says, "And Abram went up out of Egypt... and he was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel... unto the place of the altar... and there Abram called on the name of the Lord" (Genesis 13:1-4). So we see that not his faith nor God's promises superseded prayer.

Moses, too, valued his intimacy more than any blessing. Look at him standing on top of the hill with his arms being held up to God by Aaron and Hur on each side! God had already promised that the Amalekites would be defeated and Israel was promised victory. Yet, Moses goes up the hill to call on God with upraised hands. "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi" (Exodus 17:5).

We are atheists in this matter of prayer compared to the early church. Many today look upon secret prayer as hard work and boring. So they do it only occasionally - and mostly when shamed into doing it. Can you imagine a husband and wife living in the same house, hardly ever speaking; yet, in public she speaks to him as if they were intimate? When she does talk to him, she is bored, turns her eyes elsewhere, then neglects him days on end. So some treat our blessed Lord! Prayer, hidden secret prayer, is the mightiest weapon God has given His people; yet it is neglected, disdained, and seldom used.

God is so eager to show us that we too have power in prayer. He gives us this glorious reminder in James 5:16-18: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (James 5:16-18). Elijah was human and was affected by the same things as we are and he was subject to the same fears, longings, hopes, despair, and needs - yet his prayers got results! God is showing us what to do in every crisis. Run to Him! Get in earnest! Pray doors open and shut! Elijah prayed earnestly, he kept praying and waiting until the Lord answered. Seven times he sent his servant to look over the horizon for just one little sign.

Today, after one or two sessions, we give up and get angry with God. We say, "It didn't work for me. I prayed and my husband and I are still having problems so I still don't have what I need." It's obvious people don't pray because they don't think it works. But they don't know what persevering in prayer means - going back like Elijah time and again with your head to the ground. It's called "laying hold of God." In the Old Testament it is called "wrestling with God." Jacob's prayer was, "I won't let you go until you bless me" (Genesis 32:26, NAS). The waiting, the delays, are for a purpose: to conform us to Christ. You can't spend a lot of time in His presence without getting to know Him. The longer the

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answer is delayed and the more you effectually press on in prayer, the more important He becomes and the less important the answer becomes. One way or another, you win!

God Will Call Away a Remnant To Be Shut Up With Him. The prophets have foretold that in the last days, as calamities fall, God will call away a remnant to be shut up with Him. Daniel understood God's divine time clock for his day because he had studied the prophets of the past. "I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes" (Daniel 9:2-3). By Studying Jeremiah, Daniel discovered that the seventy years of exile were about over. Jeremiah 29:10-11 says, "For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope in the latter end."

Why wasn't Daniel rejoicing? Why didn't he grab the promise by faith and rest? Why did he start weeping, praying, and fasting, sitting in sackcloth? Because he also found a condition for all this goodness to happen. Yes, God promised to deliver, to do them good; but, there stood verses 12-14 in the same chapter: "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity..." Sin, or being disinterested, can thwart God's promises. Daniel discovered from Deuteronomy [chapter] 4 Moses' warning that Israel would be scattered because of sin but the promise that she could be delivered. "But if from thence [captivity] thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 4:29).

Where Are We in Prophecy? By the same searching of the prophets we can find out where we are in prophecy. I believe we are found in Isaiah 26 and also in Deuteronomy 4:29-31. Deuteronomy 4:30 and 31 reads, "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forsake the covenant of thy fathers which He swore unto them." These verses were not for Daniel's time. They are for the latter days, which is our time. In Isaiah 26, God tells us that His goodness already shown did not bring about repentance. "Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord" (Isaiah 26:10). America was founded as a land for the upright. God favored us and showed us His goodness in order to lead us to repentance. But our nation deals wickedly and will not recognize God's power and His work on our behalf. So God is going to send swift judgments: "With my soul have I desired thee in the night [last days]; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isaiah 26:9). A night of judgment has come in Isaiah's prophetic vision and a people see this night of darkness falling. They turn to the Lord to seek Him with all that is in them.

God is raising up a travailing remnant. "Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isaiah 26:17-19). Here is a woman "crying

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out of her pains."

That woman is the church coming out of a church! There are hundreds of you. For the past few years there was something trying to be born; there were great hunger pains and a crying out of spiritual pain. You were seeking to be released, so you went here and there, seeking deliverance but got only winds of conflicting doctrines. You were spiritually dead or dying. Yet your heart was awakened and you were resurrected! "Thy dead men shall live." You awoke and now you sing a new song, "Thy dew is as the dew of herbs." There is glory from the Lord on you, like dew from heaven, because of the light. "Dew of herbs" is translated, "born out of supernatural light." God brought you into the light of His glorious Word. You are awake and you sing. You've been raised from the dead with a fresh light of His Word every day, like dew.

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isaiah 26:20-21). God forewarns us that His indignation is going to break out upon the land. Indignation here means enraged fury, white hot anger against sin. The Lord is even now stirring Himself as His anger is enraged. He is coming on His white horse and He will do a quick work of judgment ("...the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain"). God is going to open the bowels of the earth and pour out streams of blood - the blood of innocent children! Every drop of blood this murderous nation has spilled has been siphoned into a mighty dam, a dam of innocent blood, and every living cell in the stream of blood cries out for vengeance. The earth will vomit out of its graves, the very bones and those tiny limbs will no longer be hidden! One hundred million crying babies, an ocean of shed blood! When our economy crashes to the ground, those who are spiritual will hear behind it all the rattle of those tiny bones. When the moon turns to blood, it will be A HREFlection of that sea of blood of the innocents.

Where will the holy remnant be? Shut in with God, hidden in the secret chamber of prayer! Beloved, there is a flood coming: "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood... And the dragon was angry with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:15,17). There is a war on the remnant! It is a flood of filth, lust, and temptations. The television set is a wide open floodgate that is sweeping millions of Christians away. They are "carried away with the flood." This is war, but not against flesh and blood. We must fight on our knees!

Those who don't pray, who are not ready, will not stand in this day of judgment. They will be overpowered by demon hordes! In Revelation 6:17 this question is asked, "For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Every child of God who is shut in with Him during the indignation will stand. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13). "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you spotless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

"...When the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19). There will come times when you will unexpectedly be overwhelmed. You will be basking in the light, rejoicing, thanking Him, when out of nowhere you will be overwhelmed. It could be your temper because Satan will provoke you. It could be fear, in a sudden, unexpected flood. It may be sickness, knocking you down and robbing your strength. Or it could be an old lust you

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thought was conquered and you hate it; you didn't seek it but there it is, like a flood! It can be the blues, depression. You don't even know what's causing it, but suddenly you're flooded with it.

But with David we can say, "I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication. I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me. I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge faded me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I. Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me" (Psalm 142).

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