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Seeing Him Who Is Invisible

by Dr. Jack Hyles

"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." --Heb. 11:33-40

Now turn back, if you will, to verse 24 of Hebrews 11, then carefully follow in the reading of verses 24 to 27.

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured [notice very carefully the next line], AS SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE."

Now brethren, let's face it. We are in the fight of our lives. It has been made exceedingly difficult in my town. For six or seven years I have been standing in my town and fighting. Norman Vincent Pealish, National Council of Churchism and all the rest of it, and my folks believed what I said. Now there come those who preach the same message that I preach, yet embrace those whose doctrine I have fought through the years. My people come to me and ask me the same questions your people ask you: "Brother Hyles, we have always thought Norman Vincent Peale taught a doctrine that is wrong and lacked the punch. And we have always thought it was wrong to affiliate with the National Council. We have always thought it was wrong to associate with World Council people, and yet, Brother Hyles, there are people today who preach basically the same message that you preach who associate with those

people."

I lose people from my church, and many of you do--people who can't understand. They feel perhaps through the years we've been too narrow, our message has been too biased, and we have been a little prejudiced against some people and jealous and what not, because we have preached through the years some basic fundamental things. Now those who preach basically the same message we preach embrace those who formerly were our enemies. Black used to be black and white white; but now it has become a dirty gray till a person can hardly tell what is black and what is white.

Now brethren, how are we going to take these things? I don't know about you, but I get discouraged sometimes. Sometimes I think nobody is left but me.

I say to my wife, "How did you like my sermon?" With her tongue in cheek she says, "Good." I know what she means. And the dog won't wag his tail at me; the cat won't even come and let me feed him milk. It seems as though the whole world is down on me. I can walk under the door without bending over. I can sit in the gutter and dangle my feet. It seems nothing is going right. I get discouraged, and so do you. Many times you, like me, shed tears of loneliness and sorrow.

Sometimes I wish some preacher with convictions would come to my town with whom I could agree. I wish he would come to be pastor in my town so my own folks wouldn't think I was the only one in the world who was against something. It seems everything that goes on I have to get against. I get out of one scrap right into another. I don't mean to fight. Really I like people and want to get along with them; yet it seems there is one scrap after another.

So I get discouraged. you laugh now, but you are laughing because you were crying yesterday! When two people get together who have tuberculosis, and they cough, your cough doesn't sound so loud if somebody else is coughing along with you! We get discouraged and down in the dumps and wonder if it is worth it all.

You think the battle is raging now--it has just begun. The same Devil that fought yesterday is alive today. The same Devil that put these Christians into lions' mouths and in flames of fire is still alive today. Are we going to take it?

Look at Moses. Moses chose to serve God rather than all the riches of Egypt. Moses, how did you take it?

"I've seen Him who is invisible."

You are not going to take it unless every once in awhile you get a glimpse of Him who is invisible.

Aren't you tired of just going to church? Aren't you tired of singing the "Doxology" and "How Tedious and Tasteless the Hours" and "How Dry I Am"? The preacher does the best he can; he tries to get in touch with Heaven, but the line is busy. The operator is off for the week-end and you can't get through. Aren't you tired of going to church,

then going home and feeling you haven't heard from Heaven? But when we go to church and God comes and talks to us and we feel His presence, then we go home and feel so good!

There are times when I go to church--it's one of those mornings we slept a little later and I had to dress all three kids by myself. Just about the time we are ready to leave, we discover Linda Lou's right shoe is on her left foot and her left shoe on her right foot. We get in the car and David wants a drink--got to go back and get him a drink. We go to church and Becky feels that she doesn't look just right, and my wife's dress is wrinkled because the baby wallowed all over her. I get up in the pulpit and try to get in touch with Heaven but can't. I go home and realize I have failed.

Brother, when your people come to hear you preach, they come to hear from Heaven. And if you fail to give them something straight of the altar from Heaven, you ought to resign your pulpit and let somebody in there who can get a call through to Heaven. Now you had as well face this. you will kill yourself if you don't see Him who is invisible every once in awhile.

In the last year I have been voted out of everything. I got voted out of the Dallas County Baptist Association on October 19,1957. It's funny now; it was sad then. Do you know what October 10 is in the Bible? The Day of Atonement! (Both Joe Boyd and I were voted out the same time.) The Day of Atonement was the day the high priest took two goats. Do you recall the offering of the scapegoat? On that day the high priest took two goats. He killed one of them and left the other out in the wilderness and said, "Don't you ever come back." Now that happened to me.

Oh, I don't want to preach if I can't get in touch with Him who is invisible. I don't want fellowship with God's people if I can't have God's fellowship. The reason you are at this conference is because you want to see Him who is invisible. If you go home from this conference after hearing these men but have not had fellowship with and seen Him who is invisible, you have cheated yourself out of \$20, or whatever you spent to get here.

There are three basic things about people who see Him who is invisible. Moses saw Him in the burning bush. Saul saw Him on the Damascus Road. Stephen saw Him when he was being stoned to death. Paul saw Him when he was outside the city of Lystra. The Hebrew children saw Him in the fiery furnace. Jacob saw him wrestling at midnight. Daniel saw Him in the lions' den. And others saw Him. And if you want to see Him, you will have to have these three basic things these men had.

Only in Heartbreak, Perhaps, Will You See Him Who Is Invisible

Every man in the Bible who saw Him who is invisible was a man of heartache. he was a man of loneliness. he was a man who bore reproach. These three things accompanied those in the Bible who saw him who is invisible.

Brethren, the times when I have seen Him who is invisible were those times when my heart was broken. Those were good times. It seems the Lord has a wonderful way of

turning heartache into victory, and times of loneliness and despair into victory. Preacher brethren, isn't it good when you get in the middle of the battle and get discouraged and down in the dumps, to know that God really called you to preach?

I recall several experiences in my life when I have seen Him who is invisible. There are times when I get lonely, discouraged, down in the dumps. In those times it seems God has given me a vision of him who is invisible.

My first experience took place when I was a small boy. I promised God on my daddy's grave that everywhere I would tell this experience. My daddy was a drunkard, I was raised in a poor home with no conveniences--just a little cabin on the edge of town. Because she couldn't afford a dress to wear to walk across the platform, my sister couldn't get her diploma with the rest of her class.

It came time for me to graduate. The morning of the commencement exercise, I had nothing but a pair of blue jeans and a tee shirt to wear to my own graduation. I looked in the closet and said, "O God, give me something to wear to commencement tonight. I can't wear blue jeans and a tee shirt." When I went to the mailbox at noon there was a \$50 check from one of my old uncles. He wrote, "Spend it for your graduation present." I went downtown, bought a suit and graduated with as pretty a suit as anybody had.

I was raised poor. My little old mother--God bless her--had a life full of heartaches. Her daddy was mean and beat her; he didn't love her as he ought to. She married a drunkard at seventeen and had a little baby girl when she was eighteen. This baby was born invalid, never walked or talked. When she was seven she died. My mother had another little girl and at seven she died.

I shall never forget one night. My dad didn't come home. He was out drunk. We had nothing to eat, so Mamma came to me and said, "Son, let's go to bed early tonight." I thought, "Well...okay." Then I heard Mamma crying. I didn't know then why, but not I realize it was because there was nothing to eat, and no wood to put in the stove. About four o'clock in the morning I heard Mother open the door. Daddy came stumbling in. The car was torn up; he was broke and bloody. There wasn't anything worth living for, it seemed.

I can recall wishing Daddy would go to church. It was Saturday night. I can recall going over as a little boy and getting on my knees and looking up and saying, "Daddy, why don't you go to church tomorrow?" Daddy would shove me away and say, "I don't have time for church."

Somehow God spoke to my heart that day and I went to church. That night I saw Him who is invisible. I got saved that night.

So you know God gives us experiences with Him who is invisible through heartaches and tragedy.

When I became a teen-ager I saw my daddy leave home, and Mother and I had to

rough it the best we could. I went to work and tried to take care of Mother as she had taken care of me. I still try to take care of her. Even to this day I still pay my mother's rent and take care of the food. She is a member of my church now, is seventy-odd-years-old, and I get to preach to her every Sunday. She thinks I'm better than John Rice!

I went to work to take care of Mother, but it seemed we couldn't make ends meet, couldn't pay the bills. One day I went to church so forsaken and so forlorn--I just didn't know what to do. you know what the Lord did? God called me to preach that day! I saw Him who is invisible.

So in every deep experience I have ever had, I had to cry before I laughed. You have to go down before you can go up; have to get sad before you get happy.

Loneliness, the Price of Seeing Him Who Is Invisible

Then I went through other experiences. When my daddy passed away I stood on his grave and asked God why. From that day to this I have not been the same man. God gave me a vision of him who is invisible.

I wasn't going to say anything here about getting voted out of the Association, but I almost have to. You've heard about Lone Ranger and Tonto. Tonto is the Indian companion of the Lone Ranger. They went out in the desert in Texas. Ten thousand Indians came toward them and attacked them from the north, and so they took off south. Then ten thousand Indians came from the south, and so they took off east. Then ten thousand Indians came from the east, so they took off west. There were the Lone Ranger and Tonto, his Indian companion, out in the middle of forty thousand Indians, no way to go. They were coming down upon them quickly. The Lone Ranger looked at Tonto and said, "Tonto, what are we going to do?" Tonto looked at him and said "Ugh, what do you mean 'we,' white man?"

That is what they said! When I was voted out of the Association, I had lots of friends [I thought they were friends]" so I went to them and said, "What are we going to do?" They said, "Ugh, what do you mean 'we,' Jack?" There we we. Friends gone, revivals canceled. The first day after it happened four speaking engagements were canceled. A revivalist was coming to my church. Within two or three weeks he had canceled our revival. It just seemed like the whole world had fallen in.

Actually, our people never even heard of the Association. They didn't know there was a Dallas Baptist Association. We belonged to it, but our folks didn't know it. They thought we had lost our charter. They thought we couldn't have services anymore. Lots of them said, "What are we going to do with the building now that we can't have a church anymore?" They thought that. Finally it dawned upon us what had happened, and for awhile we felt lonely.

I had been to a Southern Baptist college and seminary and pastored four Southern Baptist churches, and for awhile it seemed lonely. People we never dreamed would leave us, left us. Folks we never dreamed would break their friendship, broke their

friendship. I mean the best friends I had, I thought, turned their backs on our church and upon me just like that.

Preacher boys whom God had saved and called to preach under our ministry, and everything they knew had been taught from our pulpit, left us just in a moment. They were gone. It seemed like the church was rocking and reeling. It seemed for awhile as if the whole thing was breaking in. I said, "Lord, I'm going to leave. I feel led to be an evangelist. I'm going to leave." So I decided to go.

One night I was sound asleep, just enjoying a good night's rest. (I love to dream. I pray to God every night when I go to sleep, "Lord, let me dream something tonight. I don't want to waste my time while sleeping. Let me dream something tonight." I love to dream. Listen! I've been to Shanghai, China; I've been to Rome, Italy; I've been to London, England; I've preached city-wide revivals in New York City and Chicago; and I've never been to any of them. I did it in a dream. Wonderful experiences! I have seen literally thousands of people saved in my dreams. I love it! It's wonderful. You ought to get in the habit. Eat a hamburger before you go to bed every night and ask God to help you dream! God will do it!)

So I was sound asleep and dreaming. The telephone rang, and oh, the horror of a preacher's telephone at two o'clock in the morning! I thought, "I wonder who is dead now." I went to the phone and picked up the receiver. One of my custodians said, "Brother Jack, come to the church quickly."

"What in the name of common sense happened?"

"A tornado hit the educational building."

"Oh, no! Oh, no, no! A thousand times no. I'm still dreaming."

He said, "You're not dreaming. A tornado hit the educational building. Come quickly."

It was pouring down rain. Hail was on the ground. I rushed down to the church house in the midst of the pouring down rain and hail, looked up and saw through the top of our educational building. The top story was blown off and was down against one of the other buildings. The water was going through and you could swim in the bottom floor. Furniture was broken. I looked at my associate pastor, who went with me--we lived four houses from each other--and said, "Brother Jim, this is it! I can't take it anymore. I just can't. This is it! Friends are gone, members are gone, deacons are mad, preacher boys have left--now the building blown down. This is it!"

That was Friday night. Saturday morning I went down to the church house, and folks came by the church. One thing about our church in Garland--you don't have to know what's going to happen; something is always happening. If it's not a tornado, somebody has dropped dead in the church (it has happened right in our church). Folks were driving by to look at the building.

I was crying. I said to the associate pastor, "Now, Brother Jim, this is it. you better

look for a place to go because I'm quitting. I'm just going to quit!"

The next morning I got up in the pulpit. What did I preach on? On Job; what else was there to preach on? I told the people about Job, and really, honestly, I was sitting in ashes and burning and scraping my old sores and feeling sorry for myself. I got down to where I was trying to show them that God gave Job the victory and he said, "I know that my redeemer liveth." Usually I would say, "Boy, I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth," but that morning I didn't know. So I said, "I know...that my Redeemer liveth." The people didn't know either. I was going to show them where God came down and gave Job the victory, gave him children, and gave him more than he had had before, and God blessed him bountifully. I got down to that place and I said, "Look here!" I wasn't convinced myself. I said, "God is going to bless us--I know He is." I didn't know it, but I said it. "I know God is going to bless us. Look here," and I read the Scripture... and you know what it said? It said when the Lord came down to tell Job that victory had come, He came in a whirlwind! "Oh," I said, "Victory has come! The Lord came in a tornado and told us that victory is here, and defeat is over!"

Boy, the people shouted for joy, the choir rejoiced, and folks were saying, "Praise the Lord!" All of a sudden like a bolt out of the blue, we had a glimpse again of Him who is invisible, and from that day till this we haven't been the same.

More than anything else in the world, we need some hard times! We need some times to be broke and lonely and forsaken and forgotten! We need some enemies, and some heartaches, some battles!

In my own crooked, wicked, vile life, if I didn't have heartaches and times of despondency and loneliness, I wouldn't seek help from Him. But I want you to know, when those times come and it seems like nobody understands and really you can say nobody does understand--nobody understands but Jesus. He is the only one who ever had the problems that we have, like we're having them.

Dr. Rice, bless his heart, will come to the rescue of anybody who stands for God anywhere--I don't care who he is. if I had my life to live over and could be born with any daddy in the world, I'd say, "Let me be John Rice's son." Walt, I congratulate you. If I had found one of these Rice girls before I married, I believe I would have been a bigamist! I really do, I really do, because I'd like to be in his family. Anyhow I appreciate him and he comes to your rescue. But even John Rice doesn't completely understand your problems and I don't completely understand his problems. Neither my little old mother nor my wife completely understand my problems. There are times when nobody understands, and the only hope you've got is to see Him who is invisible.

God is so good and so wonderful, and about the time we get down to the bottom of the barrel, it seems as if he lifts the shutter of Heaven and says, "Say, look at Me again." We get to see Him again and we say, "Fill 'er up. We're on our way again," and off we go. So times of heartaches seem to accompany times of seeing him who is invisible.

In the second place, it seems men who have seen Him who is invisible are lonely men.

I didn't intend to say this, but I will: Don't ever get to the place where you depend upon these conferences for your spiritual strength. Get a straight line through to Heaven. Get through when there are no conferences going on! He who is invisible is available for conferences any time. Depend on fellowship with Him, speak with Him--the God who lives, the God who rained fire on Elijah, the God who filled the oil in the little lady's pots, the God who changed water to wine, the God who fed the five thousand, the God who raised His Son from the dead. He is a God who lives and you can have fellowship with Him who is invisible.

I think how lonely Dr. Rice must get. I'll tell you, loneliness is the hardest thing I've had to face since I've been preaching. I was raised in a Southern Baptist church--licensed, married, baptized, spanked, everything else in a Southern Baptist church! That's all I knew. When I started preaching my preacher preached pretty good and I thought every preacher stood against sin. So I took off with a pitch-fork in one hand, to stick folks in the seat of the breeches and wake them up, and a Bible in the other, to tell them what to do when they woke up. I found out right away that everybody wasn't for me. I was brutally shocked! The pastor of the First Baptist Church where I was pastoring then didn't feel led to co-operate with me. Talk about co-operating with modernists--he wouldn't co-operate with me at all! It just seemed nobody understood.

It seems the lonelier the road has gotten, the sweeter it has been. I couldn't say that before I read the whirlwind, but the lonelier the road has gotten, the sweeter it's been. It seems when you get to the place where you say, "Who can I turn to?" Somebody says, "Did you ever think about Me?" You look up and He pulls back the shutter and you get a glimpse of Him who is invisible.

Bearing Christ's Reproach Must Come With Seeing Him Who Is Invisible

The third thing notice very quickly. The main thing I want to say is to see him who is invisible, you have to bear reproach. This modern-day popular Christianity is not the kind the Bible talks about--this Jane Russell type, this Roy Rogers type--teach them how to kill on Saturday and tell them what the Lord means to you on Sunday, I don't care how good the testimony is.

In Dallas they had Pat Boone down (can you feature it?) for a religious rally, packed the city auditorium with 10,000 people. Pat Boone got there and told them what Jesus meant to him. Isn't that something? That may sound good, and Grandma, Agnes, and Oswald, you can sit out there and cry and say, "It sure is good to see a young man that is popular be so religious." I tell you what, that isn't the kind the Bible has anything to say about.

Show me anybody in the Bible worth his weight in salt who wasn't hated by the crowd. There wasn't one socially popular character in all the Bible! Abel was killed by his brother. Noah was hated by his people and could get but seven converts in preaching 120 years. Joseph was sold into slavery. Moses was hated by his family and his race. Elijah was chased until he thought he was the only one. Elisha was hated and called "bald head." The more hair I lose, the more I appreciate Elisha. He was the first bald-headed Baptist preacher boy! Isaiah preached to deaf ears. Jeremiah was a

weeping prophet. Daniel was put in the lions' den. The Hebrew children were put in the fiery furnace. David was chased by Saul. John the Baptist lost his head. Peter was crucified upside down. Stephen was stoned ;outside the gates. Paul was left for dead outside Lystra. John was exiled on Patmos. James was martyred. Jesus Christ was put to Calvary!

How in the name of common sense do you think you can walk the streets of this world, in your city, in your town and have folks think you are a nice fellow? You can't be a master mason, president of the Lions Club, pray at every dog show that comes into town and be the kind of preacher you ought to be. We need some John the Baptists again who will rise up in our town and call folks to repent. When you walk down the streets in your city, folks ought to spit at you, make fun of you, laugh at you. I don't mean because you want them to spit at you, but because you hold forth the banner of Calvary, the blood, the Book, the blessed hope, and fight sin, exalt Jesus Christ, and fight the things you ought to fight. I don't care where you live--they will hate you. The Bible says, "The servant is not greater than his Lord" (John 13:16). They hated Jesus and nailed Him to Calvary; they spat upon Him and plucked out His beard. Are you better than He is?

I tell my people that I want it to be so in my town that when folks drive by my church they get rebuked by looking at the building. One lady told me, "We have to drive by your church to go to work every morning, but we drive around the block to miss it." I asked, "Why?" Her reply, "We don't even want to be reminded of you."

When I walk down the street in my town and people look at me, I want them to think about the sin they are committing or have committed. I want their sin rebuked by my very presence. I often say, "When you come to Garland and mention Jack Hyles, you duck or pucker--one or the other!" You'll get hit in the mouth or kissed, I'll guarantee you for sure.

We've got the idea nowadays that a preacher is like a lawyer. The most respected folks in town--the doctor, the lawyer, and the preacher. That's the Devil's lie. There was a day when preachers ran for their lives, yet we say we're premillennialists and we say the world is getting worse. If the world is getting worse, why aren't we running for our lives? It seems to me that our churches ought to fight sin and stand against modernism and sin and unrighteousness until folks will think we are screwballs, fanatics, cranks, and fools for Christ. Yet those of us who are fundamentalists nowadays have gotten so soft. Talk about "Yesterday's fundamentalists" and "second generation fundamentalists." The last generation of fundamentalists started churches in garages and tents and brush arbors and fought the city council and fought the school board. They fought for all they got. They were hated and misunderstood and laughed at. Now we have doctors' degrees and we are Rev. Hyles and Dr. Rice, Dr. Malone.

We've got Doctor of Divinity and Doctor This and Rev. This and Brother This! Our preachers have gotten so respectable we can walk down the streets in our city and folks look at us and say, "There goes a good man." The bootleggers in my town ought not to like me. The modernists ought not to like me! Some of you preachers say, "I appreciate Dr. Rice. He's gotten his name ruined in many places because of his stand."

Pray tell me, why don't you go to your own little town of 500 or 1,000 and take the same stand--have the same reputation locally he has nationally? The Bible says, "Woe be unto you when all men speak well of you" (Luke 6:26), and "If I pleased men I should not be the servant of God" (Gal. 1:10). We're afraid somebody will think we're different or won't like us and we won't be respected in our town.

You say, "Brother Hyles, I don't believe in sticking your tongue out at everybody." I don't either--just at some. I'll tell you one thing: we dead sure need more fighting going on in our churches. A man yesterday said, "How do you get folks to come to your church?" I said, "I just stay in a scrap all the time. Anybody will come to watch a good fight."

A man said not long ago, "Jack, how do you get a crowd to come to hear you?" I said, "Just get against a bunch of stuff and preach against it. That's the way to do it." Like I said last year, if you can't be against anything else, preach against Hershey bars! I mean just get a series of sermons on Hershey bars and get up there and act like you mean it. Don't get up there and say, "The trouble with our country is too many Hershey bars." Boy, get up there and say, "BROTHER, THE THING THAT IS WRONG WITH OUR COUNTRY IS THAT OUR TEETH ARE ROTTING OUT BECAUSE OF THE SUGAR IN HERSHEY BARS, AND WE NEED MORE FOLKS WHO WILL FIGHT HERSHEY BARS!"

I'll guarantee you one thing--your house will be filled! You preach to empty pews and empty houses because you don't stand for anything or against anything. you are like the old Negro who said, "I jes' throws myself in neutral and whichever way you pushes I goes." That is not what God called us to do.

When I think about men of God, prophets of God of yesterday, and I think about Jeremiah who sat in the dust and cried, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow..." (Lam. 1:12); when I think about Isaiah and how folks stopped their ears and wouldn't hear him; when I think about the head of old John the Baptist lying on the platter of the king; when I think about old Paul lying outside Lystra, I want to say, "O God, I'm sorry I'm such a sissy. I'm sorry! The same world is alive, the same Devil is alive today, and I'm sorry I don't suffer more."

Brother, if you ever want the curtain pulled back so you can see him who is invisible, come to the place in your life where you bear His reproach.

Bible Christians Who Saw Him Who Is Invisible

Would you take a walk with me for awhile...down a little road. We see some people. As I walk down the road I wonder what I'll do for Jesus. A man beside the road is preaching. He has the Bible open, the book of the law. There are not many there--oh, some--but some stop, then pass on by. The man knows what he is talking about; he speaks with authority. I believe if that young man were a lawyer, he could be a success. If that young man were a doctor, he could be very prominent in the city. if he wee a businessman, I think he could make a million, because there is something about

him that looks like he has talent. He is a little crude in his tactics, yet beneath that crudeness and that uncouth attitude I see something that has possibilities.

I say, "Sir, what is your name?"

"My name is Isaiah."

"Isaiah, what are you doing?"

"I'm preaching to the people."

"Well, Isaiah, you're doing a very fine job. I don't agree with what you're saying, but listen boy, you could amount to something somewhere. If you'll just trim your message a little, the Sanhedrin would have you on the top shelf. I bet they would do you right. They'll take responsibility for you. Isaiah, look! Those folks are stopping their ears; they are hissing at you. Don't you realize that you're not appreciated? Why, if you put it to a vote, they would probably vote you out next Sunday morning. You are not appreciated."

Isaiah looks at me and says, "But, sir, I'm not trying to be appreciated."

"Well, Isaiah, you are an unusual man. You're not normal."

"No sir, I'm not!"

"Well, what's the matter."

"I'll tell you. Back yonder when King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord high and holy, lifted up, and I said, 'Woe is me,' but the angel, the seraphim came and with the tongs of the altar he took a live coal and put it on my mouth and I could not help but preach. I couldn't be a doctor, I couldn't be a lawyer, I couldn't be a businessman, because you see the fire of God is upon my lips and I: have seen Him who is invisible."

I scratch my head and walk on down the street. I come to another little fellow who is preaching. Pretty soon I see the crowd rise up and take stones and throw at him. He runs and pretty soon he falls beneath the stones. He is about to die. I pick him up and hold his bloody head in my hands and say, "Sir, what is your name?"

"Sir, my name is Stephen."

"You know, you ought to be smiling now, because you're dying."

"But," he says, "Sir, you don't understand."

"Stephen what are you?"

"Well, I'm a deacon, sir."

"A deacon? I saw you preaching."

"Yes, I'm a preaching deacon."

"I'll tell you, Stephen, it seems to me you ought to be on the finance committee where deacons ought to be. I mean you ought to be in those committee meetings trying to tell the preacher how to run the church. After all, that's what deacons are for."

"But you see, sir, God didn't call me because I was smart. God called me because I was full of the Holy Ghost."

"But Stephen, old boy, you're losing your mind."

"I'm beginning to see Him who is invisible."

"Well, you're about to go off now, old boy; you're just about to crack up."

He says, "Wait a minute. I see the glory of God."

"Well, wait a minute now, don't get beside yourself."

"Oh," he said, "I see the glory of God. I see Jesus standing at the right hand of God."

"But, Stephen, I belong to the Sanhedrin and I happen to know that Jesus is not standing at the right hand of God; He's sitting there."

"Yes, but He's standing up to welcome me. I'm about to go see Him. Oh, I'm so glad I did what I did because I have seen Him who is invisible!"

I walk down the street a little ways and I come to a man, blind, groping in the dark, on the road to Damascus. I recognize him immediately to be a successful young man, one who could have reached the top in the religious field. I say, "Sir, what is the matter with you?"

"I can't see. I can see, but I can't see. I can't see you, but I sure can see lots of other things."

"Sir, you are a pretty smart fellow. I know you. I've heard you speak before. You've got talent. Listen, we'll go down and see the optometrist and he'll fix your eyes up. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll recommend you to the First Jewish synagogue and you will be the leading moderator of the Jewish Association. I'll see to it that you go all the way to the top."

A fellow told me that one time. he said, "Brother Jack, if you'll trim your message, you'll go all the way to the top."

I said, "I've fished some, and I know one thing. When fish are alive, they stay at the

bottom; when they are dead, they come to the top. I'll stay alive!"

So I say, "But, Paul, don't you realize I'll take you to the top?"

And old Saul of Tarsus looks up and says, "Sir, I cannot." I like what he said there. He said on the road to Damascus, "Who art thou, Lord?"

Paul say, "I've seen Him who is invisible."

I come down the road a little further and I see that same little fellow outside a city. he lies there; it seems he is unconscious. I reach for his heartbeat and there is no beat, no pulse. I say, "It's that same little fool that sold himself down the river. I knew he ought to have taken my proposition and gone to the top. I knew he should have." I reach down and I try to pick up his body and call the undertaker. I say, "Paul, Paul" but there's no answer. pretty soon I see an eyelid flutter. I say, "Now wait a minute, be still."

But Paul looks up and he says, "Boy, this is great."

"Now wait a minute, Paul. Just be calm. We'll get the doctor in a minute. We'll make you live."

"But I don't want to live. Let me die."

"Wait a minute, Paul.. You're crazy. knew you were crazy when you gave up your job with the Baptist headquarters as the executive secretary's office boy. I knew when you did that you were dear sure crazy. But listen, Paul, you just it there."

Paul says, "Don't worry about me." Paul gets up, brushes the blood and the dust, and all the grit and grime off, and says, "Listen, you know what I was? You wouldn't believe it if I told you. But I saw...aw, I can't tell you. It isn't lawful for me to tell you and if I told you, you would call me a liar. But I'll tell you one thing--I've seen him who is invisible!"

I walk down the street a little while longer. I come to three young men inside a furnace. I say, "Young man, what's your name?"

"My name is Shadrach."

"Sir, what's yours?"

"Meshach."

"What's yours?"

"Abed-nego."

I say, "I've seen you fellows before. You were training to be leaders in the kingdom during the captivity period, weren't you?"

"Yes, sir."

"And here you are. What are you doing in the fiery furnace?"

Shadrach says, "Shoot, boy, who turned the air-conditioning on?"

Meshach says, "Ooooh, it's cold; I need my overcoat."

But I say, "Wait a minute, fellows. You're just about to die now. What's wrong with you? What are you in there for?"

"Well, the king built up an old image out here and said bow down and worship it. We could have done it. The king said if we didn't do it we would get thrown in the fiery furnace."

Just about that time I see a fellow coming. It is the king! Standing at attention, I say, "Hello, your majesty." (I'm trying to get to the top, you know.) "Hello, your majesty," and I salute.

The king says, "Wait a minute. Those three men are supposed to be dead. Why, they have been in that furnace long enough to have burned to a...oh!...Who put the extra one in there?"

Old Shadrach looks up and says, "Sir, the extra one is He who is invisible."

I go on down the street and see a young man praying at a window. I ask, "Young man, what are you doing?"

"I'm praying."

"What's your name?"

"Daniel."

"Well, Daniel, you know it's not right to pray, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Don't you realize that you're next in command? You'll go to the top of the kingdom. If you will just quit praying in front of that window you can get to the top of the kingdom and witness to everybody in Congress and win the whole Congress to the Lord. Daniel, if you'll just keep your mouth shut for awhile right here, someday you can be at the top and you might win the whole empire and win the world and bring in the kingdom. You might do it."

Daniel says, "No, I've got to pray. If I don't pray here, I'll deny my God. I've got to pray."

"But don't you realize, young man, you've got a future ahead of you? Stop and think! Don't run with that John Rice crowd. He'll ruin your reputation. your reputation is gone if you appear on the same program with Jack Hyles and Tom Malone and John Rice and these others.; now wake up! Get some sense into your head, you little crazy nincompoop! Get some sense in your head."

Daniel says, "Sir, I cannot do it, because I have seen Him who is invisible."

I walk down the road a little further and see an old grayhaired man who hasn't had a haircut in years. His beard comes down across his chest and his locks flow down over his shoulders. He has one of the sweetest looks on his face you have ever seen. I say to him, "Sir, what is your name?"

"My name is John." "John, how many folks live on this island here?"

"One."

"I see that old age is affecting you some. What is the population?"

"One."

"I guess you are that one."

"Yes."

"Well, I want you to know, old man, I love you and I appreciate you. You have my sympathy."

"Why sympathy, sir?"

"Well, I know it must get awful lonely out here."

"Lonely? Oh, no, for I've seen seraphims and angels and cherubim. I've seen the great wedding feast and the marriage of the Lamb. I've seen the saints coming in the clouds of glory and all of them on white horses. I've seen the millennium. I've even seen the golden streets of the new Jerusalem."

I say, "Now, fellow, sometimes when one gets up in years he has hallucinations like that."

"Oh," he said, "don't worry about me, because all these years out here I have been seeing Him who is invisible."

I don't know about you, but I'm tired of deadness and coldness. I'm tired of formality.

I'm tired of going to church and just studying and going home. I want to see Him who is invisible, don't you? Don't you want again somehow a breath of God, and to hear from Heaven and pull the curtain back and once again see him who is invisible?

I see a little fellow leading a band of Israelites. I hear one of them cry, "Oh, you rascal. We wish we were back eating cucumbers and leeks and garlic in Egypt, and you led us out here." The other one says, "Yeah, I make a motion your work is finished here. I feel some man who can work with young people might be better qualified for the position. yeah, I make a move we do."

God says, "Moses, what shall I do?"

Moses said, "Kill them."

"No," God says.

Pretty soon God said, 'Okay, I'm ready to kill them.'

Moses said, "No, God, don't do it after all."

Somebody said if Moses and God had ever gotten in the killing mood at the same time, there wouldn't have been anybody left but God and Moses!

Moses said, "No, no, don't kill them."

I walk up and I say, "Moses, aren't you the young man I used to see over there in the Egyptian palace?"

"Yes, sir, I am."

"Well, Moses, it's nice to have a hobby, some recreation, but I'm sure you are the head of the great kingdom now."

"No, sir, they won't let me in the palace anymore."

"Well, what did you do?"

"I went and tried to get freedom for the Israelites."

"Israelites! You did?"

"Yes, you know back yonder when I was in the wilderness, I was keeping some sheep one day and I looked over and saw a bush burning down--it just kept burning down. I walked down the road a little piece and looked back and that bush was still burning. I looked up there, and you know, I saw Him who is invisible in that bush. He said, 'I want you to do my work.' I said, 'I can't do it, I haven't got anything.' "

Listen! Did you know God does better work with folks who haven't got anything when He calls them, than He does with folks what have a bunch of stuff. You just start with nothing.

Moses said, "I haven't got anything."

God said, "What have you got in your hand?"

Moses says, "I've got a rod."

"Throw it on the ground!"

It became a snake.

God said, "Pick it up." (I don't know about you, but that's where me and Moses would have parted company right there.) Now I want you to get this. I'm no theologian but I can read in the Bible and I get some thoughts once in awhile. If Moses had not thrown that whole rod on the ground, Moses would have had half of that snake in his hand. I don't know theology, but that's true, and I believe he would have had the biting half! Boy, the most dangerous thing you'll ever do is to give God half your life.; Give Him all of it!

I say, "But Moses, what is the matter with you? Why, don't you realize you cold be the leader of a kingdom?"

But Moses says, "No, I could not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, because I have seen Him who is invisible."

As I look at the hall of heroes, I bow in shame and say, "O God, I'm a sissy! There's Moses--he gave up a kingdom; there's Paul--he gave up a future; there's John--he lost his head; and Abraham--he lost his home; and the Lord Jesus--He lost everything on earth."

And I sing with the poet,

Must I be carried to the skies On flow'ry beds of ease, While others fought to win the prize, And sailed thro' bloody seas?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign, Increase my; courage, Lord; I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, Supported by Thy word.

If every once in awhile You'll just pull the curtain and let me see Him who is invisible.

