

FROM NOTHING TO EVERYTHING

By Henry T. Mahan

Ezekiel 16:1-14

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Now, I want you to open your Bibles with me to the **Book of Ezekiel**. I'm going to bring a message today from **Ezekiel Chapter 16, verses 1 through 14**. Now, the title of the message is: **FROM NOTHING TO EVERYTHING**. This is an interesting message and I pray that you'll listen very carefully to this message; give it a lot of thought and consideration and prayer. Take the scripture down and go back and read it again later.

Ezekiel 16, do you have it there? All right, listen, now the great powerful and glorious nation of Israel rose to such splendor and beauty in the days of King David and his son, Solomon. I'm sure you've read about it; the queen from the South who came to visit during Solomon's reign and she saw all of the riches and glory and splendor of the nation Israel in the days of Solomon. She said, "*The half has never been told.*"

This nation, at that time, had the greatest nation on the face of the earth. It started with one lone man, one individual, a man called Abram. God later changed his name to Abraham, but we'll call him Abraham because that is a name that you all are familiar with. This glorious, splendid, great and powerful nation of Israel, in the days of Solomon, was so great that this magnificent queen, when she visited, said, "*The half has never been told.*" But it did start with one man; think of it.

That one man was over 70 years of age when God called him out. He was the first Israelite. He had no children, but he did have a beautiful, charming wife whose name was Sarah, but she was well up in years. The scriptures say that she was past the age of bearing children. He had no heirs, no children and God called this man out of idolatry. That's right, he didn't know God. He didn't know the true and living God, he was an idol worshipper. He was a pagan.

God called him out and that was the beginning of this great nation of Israel. From his loins, through Isaac, arose this great nation of Israel, at that time, the greatest

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nation on the face of the earth. All the other nations of the world stood still in wonder and marveled at how such a poor, humble, insignificant beginning, one old man and his wife, from that humble beginning, could come such an exceeding, rich and powerful people. But, I know the answer; do you know the answer? How can it be? I know how it can be.

It was by God's favor. It was by God's power, and by God's grace that Israel was blessed and that Israel arose to such splendor. I'll read it to you in **Deuteronomy 7**: God is speaking in **Deuteronomy 7: 6-8**, *"He said to Israel, He says, For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all (one man, Abraham) people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand."*

Their glory was His glory. Their beauty and their riches were because of His beauty and of His riches and His love for them in mercy and grace for them. This was often proved. Not only by their blessings, but it was proven once they departed from Him and God lifted those blessings and took away those blessings and you could see what Israel was, God made them. What Israel became by the grace and power of God.

Let's turn to **Ezekiel 16**; The Word of the Lord came to Ezekiel, and the Lord told Ezekiel, He said, "You speak to this nation of Israel, these people, my people, my chosen people. You speak to them about their sins and about their departure from the Lord God and about them bowing to and serving other Gods. You speak to them now, and I will tell you what to say." All right, **Ezekiel 16:1-3**, *"Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem."* God said, "I'm going to tell you, where you came from." You came from pagan idolatry, that's where you came from.

You've heard of Canaan, *"Cursed be Canaan."* That's what God said to Noah, *"Cursed is Canaan."* This is what He is saying, "You folks came out of Canaan." *"Your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite and the day that you were born, in your beginning, your navel was not cut, neither where you washed in water, you were not salted nor swaddled at all, none I pitied thee, to do any of these things to you, but you were like a newborn infant, unwanted, cast into the open field, to the loathing of your person in the day that you were born."* That's your beginning. Do you see this situation?

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They tell me that long, long ago, during some of these days that some of these pagan nations, that if a woman was expecting a child, and it was an unwanted child, or when the child was born, if it was deformed, or even a girl, sometimes, a female child, they wouldn't even wash it or clean it. When the child was born they would take it and throw it out in a field and let it lie out there until the beasts ate it. It wouldn't last long; it died. What a terrible, terrible picture. But God said that's your beginning, Israel. "*Your mother was a Hittite, and your father was an Amorite and your birth was of the land of Canaan, and none eye pitied thee, and when you were born you were cast into the open field to the loathing of your person,*" in a wretched, despicable situation, deformed, unwanted and polluted.

Now, watch **verse 6**, "*And when I passed by you,*" listen to this, God said to Israel, "*I passed by you, I saw you, I saw you as you were, polluted in your blood and I said to you, live.*" You didn't call on me, you didn't love me, you didn't seek me, you didn't pass by me, I passed by you in your helplessness, in your inability and I said to you, "*live,*" yea, He repeats it, "*I passed by you and saw you in your blood, polluted and I said, live. And I caused you to multiply as the bud of the field.*" There are many of you now; many of you were once despicable, despised, unwanted, and deformed as an infant. "*I made you live and I caused you to multiply as the bud of the field and you've increased and you've become great and your breasts were fashioned and your hair has grown, and I clothed you, where as you were naked and bare.*" Do you see the difference?

God said, "Your beginning is that wretched, polluted, and loathsome situation of a despised, deserted infant." "*I came by in the land of Canaan and I saw you in your blood and I said, live.*" I've made you a living beauty. You see, you're standing here now is one of the most beautiful women in the entire world. God made you what you are.

Listen to **verse 8**, "*And I passed by you and I looked upon you in your blood and it was a time of love.*" Who loved whom? A baby is incapable of love, incapable of helping itself, incapable of even crying; it doesn't even know its condition. It will lie where it is until it rots. It will never know the difference. "*But I loved you, it was a time of love. I spread my skirt over you and I covered your nakedness. I swear unto you and I entered a covenant with you, I made a covenant with you and you became mine.*"

Verse 9-14, "*Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broided work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broided work;*

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thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD.” That’s what I’ve been talking about, in the days of David, and in the days of Solomon. I brought you from nowhere to where you are now. I brought you from nothing, nothing, and nothing, less than nothing.

You know, my friends, “You say, well, what does that have to do with me?” That’s what I’m getting to. You see, our chief business as preachers of the gospel is not with Israel the nation, the national people of the Old Testament, but our chief business as preachers of the gospel is with ourselves and with the true kingdom of God and with the true Israel of God. That nation under Moses and David and Solomon, that nation Israel, is but a type and a picture of Spiritual Israel.

The nation Israel, delivered from Egypt, by the blood, is a picture of true Israel, delivered from sin and the dunghill and the bondage and curse of the law, by the blood of Christ. Their tabernacle is a picture of our tabernacle, which is Christ. *“He tabernacled among us.”* Their priesthood is a picture of His priesthood, our great High priest. Their mercy seat where God met them and the atonement was made, is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ who is our atonement and our mercy seat.

The blood of the lamb that was slain and every drop of blood that was shed throughout the whole Old Testament is a picture of Him who died on Calvary’s cross. *“He’s the lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world,”* not just Israel’s sins, but Spiritual Israel. You see, *“He’s not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he’s a Jew which is one inwardly. Circumcision is not of the flesh, it is of the heart and we’re children of God by faith, and we’re sons of Abraham by faith.”*

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ” (Gal. 3:16).

Every believer is spiritual Israel; so this scripture in **Ezekiel 16**, causes Israel to know her abominations, causes Israel to know her conditions, causes Israel to know Who makes the difference, causes Israel to know what she is.

That my friend is God’s command to me as His preacher, to preach this to you, by God’s grace, we been brought from nothing to everything (1Cor. 15:10).

I see three things here. **First**, I see what we were by birth and nature. **Secondly**, what God hath done for us. **Thirdly**, what we are now in Christ. Would you look at it? Would you go back and look at it, from this standpoint? Look at it not through the eyes of Israel, but through our eyes, what we were.

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First, I see what we were by birth and nature. God said, *“In the day that you were born, you were born of the land of Canaan, under the curse.”* You see, in the day of our birth *“We were shapen in iniquity; we came forth speaking lies. In sin my mother conceived me.”* We were as helpless as this infant when we were born. *“None I pitied thee,”* God’s law condemned us because we sinned against God and offended Him.

Justice waited to slay us, to the loathing of our person. God said, *“From the soul of your feet to the top of your head, there’s nothing but open, running sores that have not been bound up, neither mollified with ointment. There’s none righteous, there’s none that doeth good, none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God. All we like sheep have gone astray.”* In Adam all sinned (Romans 5:12). Paul said, *“That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”*

It’s an awful, awful sight to see that baby lying out in that field, unwanted, helpless and hopeless. That’s what we are by nature and that’s how we come into this world. We don’t come into this world innocent and then reach an age of accountability and suddenly become sinners, we’re born sinners. In Adam all die, by one man’s disobedience, death passed upon all men. In Adam all die, by the sin and transgression of Adam, death passed upon all men. We were born that way.

Secondly, now watch this, what did God do for us? *“I passed by you.”* One day, David wrote this, he said, *“Lord, I looked into the heavens, and when I consider thy heavens, the sun, the stars, the moon, the things you’ve made, what is man that thou are mindful of him?”* He came where we were. I passed by you, I passed by you and I saw you. I saw you polluted in your blood; I saw you just as you are.

The hymn writer said:

He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet He loved me
Notwithstanding all.

We didn’t see Him, but He saw us. We didn’t love Him; He loved us. We didn’t want him; He wanted us. *“But, God commended His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin, hath quickened us together with Christ.”* I passed by you and I saw you. I saw you polluted in your blood.

You know, our Lord came into this world to save sinners. I wish I could get that across to all the people to whom I preach. Christ died for sinners. *“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I’m the chief.”* I passed by you, and listen, He said, *“I*

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said unto you, when I passed by you and saw you polluted in your blood, I said to you, live.” He commands the dead to live, He quickens the dead and He awakens the dead. He opens the grave, and when He speaks, death gives way to life. Darkness gives way to light. Inability gives way to strength. Sickness gives way to health. Our Lord said in John 5:24-26; *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”*

He said, *“When I passed by you and saw you polluted in your blood, I said to you, live.”*

Thirdly, what we are now in Christ. He said this, *“I spread my skirt over you and I covered your nakedness.”* Adam realized he was naked and he tried to cover himself with fig leaves and they dried up and flew away. Christ comes along with His robe of spotless righteousness and with His spotless garments on, we’re as holy as God’s own Son and He covers our nakedness. He says, *“I spread my skirt, my robe, my righteousness over you and you became holy.”*

Then, He said, *“I entered a covenant with you,”* now listen. *“I entered a covenant with you and you became mine.”* You know, when David came to his dying hour, he rejoiced in that covenant. He said, *“Although it be not so with my house, God hath made with me, an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and this is all my salvation, and all my desire.”* That covenant became mine. Paul wrote about it in **Hebrews 13:20**, *“Now, the God of Peace who brought again from the dead, that great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus Christ, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, makes you perfect.”*

God said, *“There you were and I passed by you, on purpose, by my divine will, I came your way and I saw you polluted in your blood.”* Oh, in your sins! I saw you and I loved you. It was a time of love and I said to you *“live”* and you lived. I spread my skirt over you and I entered a covenant with you and you became mine. Then He said, *“I washed you with water.”* Paul was washed by the blood. Listen, there’s a two-fold cleansing. *“The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”* His precious blood cleanseth us, justifies us, makes us accepted, but then He cleanses us with the washing of regeneration with the water of the Word. *“Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth.”* So, we’re justified and we’re sanctified.

Toplady wrote about it in the hymn, Rock of Ages. You’ve sung it; do you understand what you’re singing?

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Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flowed.
Be of sin the double cure,
Saved from wrath and make me pure.

Justify me, sanctify me, give me a right standing and a new heart. Make me a new creature and make me love Him. Do you see? Reconcile God to me, and reconcile me to God. That's right, the double cure. *"I washed you."*

All right, read on, *"And I anointed you with oil."* The anointing of oil is the Holy Spirit. Every believer has the Holy Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit that quickens us; it's the Holy Spirit who regenerates us. It's the Holy Spirit who reveals Christ to us. It's the Holy Spirit who begets faith within us. It's the Holy Spirit who teaches us. It's the Holy Spirit that comforts us. *"If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, He's none of His."* Believers don't pray for the Holy Spirit, they don't pray for the feeling of the Spirit. They do pray for the leadership of the Spirit and the blessing of the Spirit and the Holy Spirit to teach them how to pray, but they have the Spirit. *"If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, He's none of His. As many as are led by the Holy Spirit are Sons of God."* *"I've anointed you with oil."*

You know, when the Old Testament priests stood before God, he put on his holy garments, they poured oil on his head. They anointed him with oil, (the Spirit of God). Then He said, watch this, *"I clothed you, I did all of this, and salvation is of the Lord. "The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord."* It's 100 percent, not 98 percent, salvation is all of God. *"I make all things new."* *"I clothed you with broidered work."* Do you know what broidered work was? It was those beautiful linen veils in the temple. Those Jewish women sat for days and days and days, and hand embroidered those veils. There were purple, there were red, and there were blue, just beautiful! God said, *"I clothed you with that special needlework of glory of the grace of God and the graces of the Spirit, love, joy and peace."* All those things that are so beautiful. *"I shod you with badger's skin."* Badger's skin was tough and lasting but soft.

We will walk through this world through many trials and God enables us to bear these trials and He comforts us as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. *"I girded you with fine linen."* Who wore fine linen? The priest did. We're priests, we're priests of God, that's right! Every believer is a priest. *"He hath redeemed us by His blood and made us Kings and Priests to God."* I put broidered work on you, I shod you with a soft, yet tough badger skin shoes, I put white linen on you like the priests wear and I covered you with silk. Who wears silk, the King? It's the King-Priest. We're His people and I put a crown on your head and you will reign with Christ.

Listen, *"And your renown,"* He's talking about you and what I did for you and what I made of you and what I made you from, and where I found you and what you are now, *"Your renown went forth among the nations for your beauty and it was perfect."* The reason is because it is all Christ, and your perfection was my comeliness.

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Listen to this song:

Buried in the shadows of the night we lie,
Til Christ restores the light.
Our guilty souls are drowned in tears,
Til His atoning blood appears.
And then we'll wake from deep distress,
And praise the Lord, our Righteousness.

What were we? (Nothing, I mean nothing). Just a despicable, unwanted, deformed infant cast into the field. Born of pagan, fallen parents. God said, *"I came by, it's a time of love. I love you and I said live. I washed you and I clothed you and I put a crown on your head and I entered a covenant with you and you became mine."* Never to belong to anybody else, you're mine. *"I am my beloved's and He is mine. I put a crown on your head and then you were perfect."* Your perfection was through my comeliness, which I put upon you. He took me from nothing and gave me everything. Someday I'm going to be perfectly conformed and you are too, to the glorious image of Christ Jesus.

Praise God for His abundant mercy!