

**Remarks delivered by
Dr. Ravi Zacharias
on the occasion of
27th Annual International Prayer Breakfast
18 September 2012**

To the honorable guests at the head table, and to all of you who are seated here and have taken time out of your busy lives and your schedules this day: I have no doubt your mind is already racing into many things that you have to catch up with, and I fully understand that. Because this date also was originally set for a week ago, and then a few months ago it had to be re-scheduled, I find myself in a bit of a hurried state of mind as well. I have to fly out of New York in the middle of the day to speak at McGill University in Canada this evening on the subject, “What Does It Mean To Be Human?” I’m not qualified because, living like this, I am not a good example of what it means to be human.

I will never forget, many years ago, speaking at a Christmas banquet for the United Nations. It was quite an intimidating moment for me. As I was sitting at the table and trying to make conversation, I looked at the ambassador next to me. I thought I would just ask a question that will allow him to talk for a while as I listened. I asked him, “What is the greatest strength of the United Nations?”

“The greatest strength is...” he pondered a moment, then said, “that we are talking to each other, rather than not talking to each other.”

“That’s very nice, very good,” I said, “So what, then, is the greatest weakness?”

He paused and said, “That we do not speak the same language.”

I asked, “Then how does talking help?”

He said, “No, no, no. You’re not understanding what I’m saying. I’m not talking about language, I’m talking about concept. You see, when I say *peace* I mean one thing. And when another says *peace*, he means something else, perhaps with his guns aimed in my direction. So we are not talking the same language.”

This brought to mind a humorous story of a burly Texan talking with a Punjabi Sikh. He looked at the Sikh and said, “Mr. Singh, I have a ranch and you have a farm. How big is your farm?”

The Punjabi gentleman said, “If you stand here and you look about 50 yards ahead, you will see a lamp post; that is how long my farm is and that is how wide my farm is.”

Then the Texan said, “You know, Mr. Singh, how big my Texas ranch is? If you got into my car at 6:00 in the morning and kept driving and driving and driving, by the middle of the day you will reach the end of my property line.”

Mr. Singh looked at him and said, “I know exactly what you mean. I used to have a car just like that!”

We can talk the same language while completely missing the concepts and the context behind them. I remember hearing of two chaps sitting at a table talking to each other, and one fellow said to the other, “I’m feeling thirsty. I want a Coca Cola but I don’t have the money. Can we start a bet? I will ask myself a question, and if I can answer it, you buy me a Coke.”

The other fellow said, “What kind of nonsense is this?”

He said, “No, no, no! Then, it will be your turn – you ask yourself a question and if you answer it, I will buy you a Coke! We will keep going like this until one of us asks a question we can’t answer.”

His friend said, “This is the strangest bet I’ve ever known!”

He said “It will work. I promise!”

So the other fellow said, “Alright, you go first, as this is your challenge. Ask yourself a question and answer it. Then I will take a turn.”

The first chap said, “My question to me is this: *How does a rabbit burrow a hole into the ground without throwing mud onto the outside of the ground?* That’s my question to me. *How does a rabbit burrow a hole into the ground without throwing mud onto the outside of ground?* And my answer is: *It should start burrowing from the inside of the ground.*”

The other chap said, “How can it do that?”

He said, “I don’t know. That’s your question!”

We have many, many questions. Often times, we pose them to ourselves and we cannot really even answer them. Many of you can understand this, perhaps even better than I. Part of the hazard of my life is that I travel about 250 days a year. I cover about 15-17 countries a year. Like many of you, I have seen the globe.

Last night as I sat at my desk in the hotel, preparing for my talk here today, I looked out the window and saw the massive structure of the U.N. building. How impressive it is! I walked over to the window and looked down, and noticed all the police cars lined up, the armed personnel out there, and the bomb-sniffing dogs. I thought, *what a picture of contradiction*. Grandeur, power, good intentions, intelligence interacting on the most noble issues, and we have come to a point of almost needing the beasts of the field to keep us from devouring each other up.

Yours is indeed a difficult task. I do not envy you, ladies and gentlemen. You will be in meetings day after day after day; your life could be drastically altered; your family’s life could be altered, with a sudden move of what is happening, somewhere around the globe.

It is not often that I share personal illustrations. But whenever I do, it will be in an unnamed manner, although they are true. About three years ago, I was in one part of the world, and the chief of intelligence invited me for coffee as his military generals surrounded him. I have been there many times; and even though they are of a different worldview, they are always very kind to me. I walked in, the general said, “Mr. Zacharias, welcome. You are always welcome here. Thank you for coming. My one caution to you, however: don’t get involved in politics.”

I said, “I won’t, sir.”

He said, “You may speak freely on the topic that you are here for, and I just wanted you to know, you are welcome.”

I said, “How are things going around here, sir?”

(This is now a direct quote, and this took place just three years ago.) The general said, “I give this part of the world no more than 5 years, and the whole thing might blow up.”

I said, “You think so?”

He said, “Oh, maybe a little longer than that.” He said, “We are sitting on a very dangerous piece of terrain.” Not long afterward, he himself was killed.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, warning the West, said this: “The west is on the verge of collapse created by its own hands. Between good and evil there is an irreconcilable contradiction. One cannot build one’s own national life without regard for this distinction between good and evil. We, the oppressed people of this part of the world, watch with anguish the tragic enfeeblement of Europe. We offer you the experience of our own suffering. We would like you to accept it, without having to pay the

monstrous price of death and slavery that we have paid. I want you to accept this as we watch the tragic enfeeblement...”¹

Recently, in response to United Nations’ concerns, the World Health Organization wrote its book on global statistics on violence. The forward, by Nelson Mandela, is worth reading. He warns the world that the 20th century will leave as its legacy, blood and horror and destruction. He said if we do not wake up to this reality, we will watch our children pay an even more bitter price than we have paid. Then he says, “I speak as one who has lived with the struggle to find an answer for all of these.”²

In the famous writings of Blaise Pascal (in his *Pensées*) he says, “What a chimera then is man. What a novelty, what a monster, what a chaos, what a subject of contradiction, what a prodigy, a judge of all things and feeble worm of the earth, depository of truth, sink of uncertainty and error, the glory and the shame of the universe.”³

The glory, and, may I say, the shame of the universe! What legacy are you and I going to leave in our time?

I had the privilege of meeting probably one of the greatest English journalists of the 20th century, Malcolm Muggeridge. He expressed to me his concern about where we were headed, considering the power of the visual and the power of mass communication. He said, “We are living today, not in the delicious intoxication of science,” and he goes on to explain the tragic ramifications. “We have created a sense of boredom out of our own affluence, impotence out of our own erotomania, and vulnerability out of our own strength. We ourselves blow the trumpet that brings the walls of our own cities crashing down, until at last having educated himself into imbecility, and drugged and polluted himself into stupefaction, 20th century man keels over, a weary old brontosaurus, and becomes extinct.”⁴

Is that what we are living with? The danger of becoming extinct? Rock musicians express this well, as one from the 1960s said:

Cat's foot, iron claw,
Neuro-surgeons scream for more
At paranoia's poison door.
Twenty-first century schizoid man.

Blood rack barbed wire,
Politicians' funeral pyre,
Innocents raped with napalm fire,
Twenty-first century schizoid man.⁵

Then, he begins moving towards his answer:

The wall on which the prophets wrote
Is cracking at the seams.
Upon the instruments of death
The sunlight brightly gleams.
When every man is torn apart
With nightmares and with dreams,

¹ Miami News, 2 March 1976, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=iZUzAAAAIBAJ&sjid=ZuoFAAAAIBAJ&pg=3743.675258&hl=en>, accessed 10/3/2012.

² World Health Organization, *World report on violence and health*, (Geneva: 2012), http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/introduction.pdf, accessed 10/12/2012.

³ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (Paris: 1660), transl. Trotter, W.F., Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Grand Rapids, MI, page 85. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/pascal/pensees.pdf> accessed on 10/3/2012.

⁴ Malcolm Muggeridge, *Vintage Muggeridge: Religion and Society*, Eerdmans Publishing Co, Grand Rapids MI, 1985. <http://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1535442-vintage-muggeridge>, accessed 10/3/2012.

⁵ King Crimson, *21st Century Schizoid Man*, <http://www.songmeanings.net/songs/view/14218/>, accessed 10/3/2012.

Will no one lay the laurel wreath
As silence drowns the screams?

Between the iron gates of fate,
The seeds of time were sown,
And watered by the deeds of those
Who know and who are known;
Knowledge is a deadly friend
When no one sets the rules.
The fate of all mankind I see
Is in the hands of fools.

Confusion will be my epitaph
As I crawl a cracked and broken path.
If we make it we can all sit back and laugh.
But I fear tomorrow I'll be crying,
Yes I fear tomorrow I'll be crying.⁶

Fourteen year old Dinja wrote during the Bosnian crisis: “So many people have been killed in my land. Fighting for what? For justice. But what is justice? Do we even know what we are fighting for, while we are fighting? The weather is suddenly getting colder now. No longer can you hear the singing of birds, only the sound of children crying for a lost mother, a lost father, a brother or a sister. We are now children without a country. We are children without hope.” **Fourteen years old!**

Twenty-six hundred years ago, a man by the name of Habakkuk asked a question of God:

How long, Lord, must I call for help,
but You do not listen?
Or cry out to You, “Violence!”
but You do not save?
Why do You make me look at injustice?
Why do You tolerate wrongdoing?
Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and conflict abounds.
Therefore the law is paralyzed,
and justice never prevails.
The wicked hem in the righteous,
so that justice is perverted.⁷

Habakkuk raises three questions, and the questions are obvious:

1. Violence

Consider the statistics of the 20th century in one continent – Europe. Seventeenth century, in Europe alone, 3.3 million were killed in war ... Eighteenth century, 5.2 million ... Nineteenth century, 5.5 million. In the 20th century, counting up to 1978, 28 million had been killed and with over 20 years left before that century would be over. Twenty-something million up to the 1970s! This does not include many more millions slaughtered for ideological conflicts. Think of the minds that have been eliminated, minds that may have had answers to some of the perplexing questions of our time.

Adolf Hitler wrote (and his words are there at Auschwitz to this very day), “I want to raise a generation of young people devoid of a conscience; imperious, relentless and cruel.” **“I want to raise a**

⁶ King Crimson, *Epitaph*, <http://www.songmeanings.net/songs/view/102722/>, accessed 10/3/2012.

⁷ Habakkuk 1:2-4, *Holy Bible*

generation of young people devoid of a conscience; imperious, relentless and cruel.”⁸ What violence he did to untold millions!

However, violence exists, not only in the battlefield, as Nelson Mandela points out. Some of the greatest violence is committed in homes. Exploitation and abuse of women and of children abounds. Every day, the newspapers here in the United States are filled with such stories. I will never forget in the 1990’s when two boys, aged 11 and 13, walked into their school in Jonesboro, Arkansas, with weapons. **Eleven and thirteen year olds!** Slaughter and carnage began. One mother came to the hospital to pick up her son, and was asked to leave. She cried out, “I’m only here to pick up my son’s body. Will somebody please give my son’s body back to me?”

It is tragic. Violence is the desacralization of life, and an exaltation of my own ego. It is the desacralization of life where I actually say to you, “Your life is disposable and expendable in my cause, and for my values.” Whatever the reason, violence diminishes and destroys sacred life.

2. Evil.

Not only do we see violence, but we also see evil. Walk through the streets of the major cities of the world and you will see this happening. Let me ask you this question: If you and I were in a conversation and we had to define evil, how would we define it?

I remember meeting a woman on a flight from an unnamed part of the world. I introduced myself and she introduced herself to me. As we talked, I asked, “What brought you here?”

She said, “Oh, I’m involved in the rescue of children from the sex trafficking industry.”

I asked, “Were you successful?”

She said, “Mr. Zacharias, last night I was in a certain part of the city. If you ever want to go down there, don’t stay more than half an hour. Men come at the end of the day, and they are given a concoction of snake’s blood and hard liquor. They consume it and ask for whatever it is they want to ravage their mind with.” She paused and said, “Last night I rescued a baby, 18 months old, from the arms of a man whose mind was ravaged. He was sexually plundering this child.”

I looked out of the window and thought I would be sick to my stomach. That is happening in our day, in one of the major cities of the world!

My friends, your task is huge ... it is enormous! But we cannot bear to hear it all, can we? As one member of the City Council of New York said, “If you want me to listen to the cry of every person hurting, you may as well ask me to listen to the sound of every blade of grass growing and the heartbeat of every squirrel. The noise would be deafening on the other side of silence.” You cannot hear every cry; I cannot hear every cry, but it is there. Evil is at the heart of unspeakable suffering.

Let me just say this though: We will never be able to define evil until we have first been able to define what life’s purpose is. Evil is a deviation; it is a deprivation; it is a false move in a direction. If I were to take a motor car and run down somebody on the street, how can they blame the motorcar for being used as a weapon? That is not the purpose of the motorcar. How can we blame human beings for not being able to define evil if they do not even know what the purpose of life is all about?

3. Injustice.

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle all said justice was the firmest pillar of good government. How do we define justice? Aristotle said, “Justice is the ultimate of all ethics. It is the ultimate of all ethics because it seeks the good of everybody, not only myself.”

⁸ Adolph Hitler, words inscribed in a gas oven in Auschwitz. <http://www.thatimayknowhim.co.uk/2010/01/10/part-1-the-only-true-god-%E2%80%93-the-existence-and-knowability-of-god/>, accessed 10/12/2012.

Another philosopher of ethics says, “Justice has died because ours is an age where ethics has become obsolete. It is superseded by science, deleted by psychology, dismissed as a motive by philosophy. It is drowned in compassion, evaporates into aesthetics and retreats before relativism. The usual moral distinctions between good and bad are simply drowned in a mottle of emotion in which we now feel more sympathy for the murderer than the murdered; for the adulterer than the betrayed; and in which we have actually begun to believe that the real guilty party, the one who somehow caused it all, is the victim and not the perpetrator of the crime.”⁹

These are powerful words penned in 1959 by Robert Fitch, a philosopher of ethics. Violence, injustice and evil. What is the answer?

Habakkuk gives us three answers when he raised the question. Answer number one he gives to us is this; he says, “The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth be silent before Him.”¹⁰ That is why you are here this morning, to be silent before God, to hear His wisdom. And I will pray for all of you each day. My prayer is that each one of you will seek the wisdom of God each day as well.

The actuality of God, in distinction to atheism: That God exists, that He is. Do you know the difference that makes for values? It means you are a creation of God. You have intrinsic worth, not because any government has given it to you, but because God Himself has conveyed that intrinsic value to you.

I am now a grandfather. I have a 14 month old grandson, but I won't show you any pictures, I promise you. A young corporal came to Winston Churchill and said, “Mr. Churchill have I ever told you about my grandchildren?”

He said, “No, and I want you to know how much I appreciate it!”

God is! I hold that tiny little boy in my arms and I look into his face and I say to him (even though he doesn't understand it), “I love you Jude, I love you.” Why? Because he is the offspring of my own flesh and blood, my daughter's son. He has the value of being a human, loved by God, but he has the distinctive value of being our own offspring.

That is who you are. You are a creature, endowed with the sanctity and the sacredness of will and time. You do not know how long you will have the latter. It makes all the difference in the world that you are a person, not of extrinsic worth, given by state or anything else, but of intrinsic worth conveyed by God Himself. It is not your ethnicity that defines you; it is your very essence that defines you. You are a creature of God.

Billy Graham spoke in Haringey, England, many years ago. One of those who came to hear him, who became a follower of Christ at the end of those meetings, was a well-known medical doctor who had become an uncontrolled alcoholic. As he was destroying his life, he found no hope for himself. He begged people for help. But he could not find it. One evening, at that Billy Graham Crusade, he surrendered his life to Christ. A few weeks later his buddies looked at him and they said, “You know what? We don't recognize you anymore. You're a different man! What has happened to you?” He then shared with them what happened.

One fellow shut the door and said, “I want to ask you a question. I promise you I will not repeat this conversation outside this room. The door is locked; nobody else is here but you and me. Tell me something. You are alone and the door is shut and you have had a miserable day and knowing of your battle with your past habits ... nobody present, and you remember that behind your medical journals you had hidden one of the finest bottles of scotch available. Are you telling me with the door locked and

⁹ Robert Fitch, “The Obsolescence of Ethics,” <http://mywisegeneration.blogspot.com/2008/03/in-1959-philosopher-warned-ethics.html>, accessed 10/12/2012.

¹⁰ Habakkuk 2:20, *Holy Bible*

alone, and nobody's going to find out, you're not going to reach out for that and empty some of it into your glass?"

The doctor looked at him and said, "Everything you said could happen except one, and that, therefore, changes the decision."

He said, "What is that?"

"Since I have come to know Christ," the doctor responded, "I have found that I am never, ever alone."

That is the value of knowing who you are. I spoke to a couple of baseball teams. Those guys had muscles like watermelons. As I stood in front of them, I said, "It's terrible to walk into a room and be the only one who fails the physical." I said, "You guys earn more money in one season than I will earn in my lifetime. You are wealthier than I am. You are physically stronger than I am. Your eye-hand coordination is so genius-like, I don't even know the pitch has crossed the plate while you've knocked it out of the park!" I said, "I can't talk to you about baseball. I want to talk to you about something though. I've spent more life on the road alone than probably all of you sitting in this room." I said to them, "Some of you boys are twenty-two, twenty-three." (I was in my fifties at that time.) I said, "I have spent half my life on the road. I want to talk to you about how to live your life when you are alone." The guys crossed their arms and began to take note.

One chap, who was earning multiple millions a year, walked up to me, wept on my shoulder and said, "I wish I had learned these truths before I came into all this wealth! I have lost everything, including my family, but I am a baseball star."

Ladies and gentlemen, you are not alone. God is! Secondly, not only does God exist (the existence of God), but the eventuality of His working: God works in your life. God works in nations. He says there is an appointed time. You are not alone. You have a sovereign God upon whom you can depend, and He is always working. My brother, Ambassador Cabactulan from the Philippines, stated to you earlier about how he knew that the wisdom of God was needed in times like this.

Let me give you a very important illustration as I move to my final thought. The year was 1970. I was in my mid-twenties. I had been invited to go to Vietnam and speak to the military forces. I was so young; in my undergraduate studies. I had never seen such a situation as the Vietnam war. I got into my airplane from Toronto where I was living at the time, arrived in Saigon, and then covered the length of the country – most of it courtesy of the US troops, or on motorbike.

I remember one day we were in Dalat, a beautiful city. I was to go down to Saigon. I was alone. A driver with three others came to pick me up. We were driving in a very lonely part of the terrain, when the driver paused and looked at me and said, "Ravi, we are now going through the most dangerous part of South Vietnam."

I thought to myself, why did he tell me that? Why didn't he tell me after we had gone through the most dangerous part of South Vietnam? Now I was more worried than ever! Suddenly, the engine began to sputter and chug and then it stopped. I thought, "That's great! We are stuck in the most dangerous part of Vietnam with people who know nothing about the car!"

Have you ever driven with missionaries? They know nothing about cars. They lift the hood of the car and they just stare at it, like I do.

So, we are sitting there staring at the car and a white jeep is approaching at high speed. We took a white handkerchief and waved it. They didn't stop. Why would they stop in the most dangerous part of the country? They swerved and sped on.

We tried the starter again. The engine sputtered, chugged, and all of a sudden it started again. Before long, we got in the car and drove. About 10 minutes down the road we saw the white jeep on the

side of the road, overturned, ambushed, and every one of them was lying there bleeding to death. Those who had ambushed them were running, in the distance, with their weapons.

What I want to say to you is this: You have an appointment with God. And until you have that appointment to stand with Him face to face, He will protect you, He will guard you, He will keep you. But the most important thing to know is that you keep your appointment with God, spiritually, each day.

God is. God acts. Do you know, only God is big enough to change your heart and mine? I was in a country with the former deputy prime minister, an atheist. If I were to name her, many of you would recognize her name.

For three hours she asked me questions. As we finished, she said, “Will you pray for me?” After I prayed for her, she said, “Mr. Zacharias, I am in my seventies. I have never heard a person pray before. I have never prayed before.” The tears ran down her face. I thought to myself, “Thank God!” Even though late, she came to that realization. How wonderful for some of you, in the prime of your life, to learn that God is, and that He can intervene in your life.

My father was a deputy secretary in the home ministry of India. He worked for Prime Minister Nehru first, and then Lal Bahadur Shastri. My dad lived a life like many of you. I hardly ever saw him. Because of growing up in Delhi, with all the turbulence in the '40s, '50s, and '60s, my dad was hardly home at night. Every night there was an emergency. But I will never forget, when I was seventeen ... I was giving up hope because in India, if you don't perform in your studies, you are finished. You don't just have to perform; you have to perform at the top. I was not doing very well. I simply wanted to play cricket and tennis. My brothers and sisters were all excelling. I was a failure.

My dad grabbed me one day and, after giving me a thrashing, looked me in the eye and said, “You are going to be an embarrassment to this family. You are a total failure.”

I ended up trying to take my own life. In a hospital room – seventeen years old – a Bible was brought to me. I had never opened one myself. My mother was reading it to me. These are the words that she read: “Jesus said, ‘Because I live you also shall live.’”¹¹

I said, “Jesus, I don't know who you are, but if you claim to be the author of life, take me out of this hospital bed and I will leave no stone unturned in my pursuit of You, and in my pursuit of truth.” At the age of seventeen, I walked out of that hospital room a well man. I am 66 now. The biggest change came in my life in that hospital room when I recognized that God could change me. It had such a profound impact and eventually changed my father as well. And so, in summary, I want you to know the reality of God's transforming power. The actuality of God. The eventuality of His working. And lastly, the eternity of His perspective. I leave you with this. God says to Habakkuk,

¹⁷ Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines;
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food;
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls;
¹⁸ yet I will rejoice in the LORD.
I will be joyful in God my Savior.

¹⁹ The Sovereign LORD is my strength;
He makes my feet like the feet of a deer;
He enables me to tread on the heights.¹²

¹¹ John 14:19b, *Holy Bible*.

¹² Habakkuk 3:17-19, *Holy Bible*.

My prayer for you is that God will set your feet like the feet of a deer as you lead this world and enable you to go on to the heights and find answers that the world so desperately needs.

Mr. Abdelaziz Al-Nassir, sir, thank you for serving us for the last year. I pray that God will continue to use your wisdom and strength and all that you shared with us. And Mr. Mišković, sir, thank you for being here. Thank you for the service you render.

I would like to share a closing illustration with you, and then, if you will, give me the privilege of praying for you.

I will leave the players unnamed, as sensitivities abound. The former Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, took five of us to Israel to meet with both sides on the issues that are threatening that part of the world so much. We were meeting with religious and political leaders. We had spent five tiring days. On the last day, we were with a sheik. We were sitting in a room enjoying a lovely lunch, with lamb, rice, and other delectables. Having spent eighteen years in prison, the sheik told us all kinds of stories.

After lunch, the Archbishop, being the chief guest, gave the five of us with him an opportunity to ask one question. I looked at the sheik and asked him my one question. I will not give you my question, nor will I give you his answer. Then I looked at him and I said, “Sheik, sir, you and I will probably never see each other again, and I hope I do not offend you. I want to share just one thing with you and leave you with that.” I said, “Not far from where you and I are seated is a mountain. Five thousand years ago, a man you and I respect by the name of Abraham wanted to show his faith in God, and he took his son up that mountain. Do you remember that story?”

He said, “Yes.”

I said, “He was willing to sacrifice his own son as an expression of faith in God.”

He said, “Yes.”

I said, “As the ax was about to come down, God stopped that ax. Do you remember the story?”

He said, “Yes.”

I said, “What did God say to him when He stopped him?”

He said, “I don’t know.”

I said, “God said ‘Stop! I myself will provide.’”

He said, “That’s right.”

I said, “Sir, 2,000 years ago, God kept that promise. A stone’s throw from where you and I are sitting is a hill called Calvary, where He took His own Son and offered that Son for you and for me. Sheik, **until you and I receive the Son God has provided, we will be offering our own sons and daughters on the battlefields of this world for position, power, prestige, and control.**”

There was silence in the room. The meeting ended, and I was walking down the stairs to leave. The sheik assisted the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the guest of honor, into his car, and then came running over to me. He grabbed me by the shoulders, patted me on my face, kissed me on both sides, and said, “Dr. Zacharias you are a good man. I pray someday you and I will meet again.” The tears began to flow.

We may have our differences. We may have our political theories. But until you and I learn the forgiveness and the grace the Lord has to offer, the battlefields will continue to shed blood and people will want more land and more power. God has provided His Son as the Prince of Peace. I pray for the peace of these nations and I thank you for the courtesy you have shown in giving me a hearing and

attending this breakfast. And to the organizers, this is my third time, what a distinct honor to be here. I hope I'll have the privilege of coming back again.

Now, may I pray for all of you as we close?

Heavenly Father, we are sitting in this little tent with the wind blowing, and the sounds of the elements in the air. But they are nowhere near the sounds of the cries of many across the globe, crying because of death and destruction and hate. You are the God of love, and the God of peace. You wish to conquer us with Your peace. We know that in dying to You we really live, and in surrendering to You we really win. Bless these men and women. Make this new year of the General Assembly, one of its best years yet. Take away the contentiousness and let us find answers that can only be found in You. Let Your blessing rest upon the families of these men and women who sacrifice so much, and help them know the sacrifice You have made for them in the offering of Your Son, as our Redeemer and our Savior. Thank You for giving me the honor, that I don't deserve, of speaking to this audience. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, Oh Lord my Strength and my Redeemer. In the name of my Savior, the Lord Jesus, I commit them, to You. God, bless them. Father, please bless them. Amen.

Thank you.