Elisha on his deathbed

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Preacher: Rev J.M.Macpherson

[0:00] 2 Kings chapter 13. We'll read verses 10 to 19.

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3 Kings chapter 13.
3 Kings chapter 13.
4 And he said, Whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.
[2:18] May God add his blessing to that reading of his word. Let us pray. We give thee thanks, O Lord, for the assurance of thy word that there is victory to the church of God and to every believer in the battle upon which they are engaged.

We thank thee that as we seek to put on the whole armor of God, it is not with doubts as to whether in the end of the day victory is secure.
It is with a sure knowledge that the Lord is King, King of kings and Lord of lords, and that none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?
The kings of the nations, those we have been reading about in this passage of thy word, and many others before and since, they set themselves against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break asunder their bands, let us cast their cords from us.
But as they do so, we thank thee that he that sits in heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. For thou art the sovereign Lord, and thy purposes they shall always be fulfilled.
[3:39] And in that confidence, we come to thee today. And we come to pray for thy work committed to us in our day and generation. We commend to thee thy cause in our congregation and community.

We thank thee for every heart in whom thou art winning the victory of grace. We thank thee for men and women and young people in our midst, who are being brought out of darkness into light.
We thank thee for those who have acknowledged this, and weak though they are in themselves, are made strong in thee. And we have confidence that thou art still winning battles among us, and that there will be, day by day and year by year, victories for God and for his truth, even in our congregation and community.
We pray for every effort that is made, through the preaching of the word, through every kind of evangelism, through the day-to-day witness of thy believing people and their ordinary occupations. We pray that every endeavor would be blessed by thee. And not only for our congregation do we pray, and for all among us, for those who particularly need thee among us, for sick and suffering ones, for sorrowing ones, for perplexed ones, we commend them all to thee.
[5:00] But we also pray for thy church, throughout our presbytery, throughout our land, and to the ends of the earth. We commend to thee every effort made to reach out with thy word to men and women in their need.

And we do look towards the world at large. As we do so, we are obeying thy command. Lift up thine eyes and look at the fields, white or ready to harvest.
And so we do look to the fields throughout the world, thanking thee for nations where not so long ago there was no Christian church, but today there is. And Jesus Christ has been acknowledged and his gospel preached.
And we pray for thy blessing there. We commend to thee thy church in Kenya. And as thy servant, whom we've had here over these months with us in the congregation, as she returns, may it be not in her own strength, but in thine, conscious that whatever gifts thou hast given her, they are not enough.
And they are tainted by sin. But as the Holy Spirit takes them, and as he empowers, then blessing can and must follow. And so we pray for that church that we here do not know personally, but as

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part of the body of Christ, and ask that in that nation thy hand would be upon thy people.
[6:23] We pray for the president of Kenya. We thank thee that he is prepared to acknowledge himself publicly as a believer in Jesus Christ. And we pray that as many pressures are brought to bear, for Satan will not rest in such a situation, we pray that he would be strong in Christ and lead his people in the ways of truth and of godliness.

And now we pray for ourselves that as we turn to thy word, we would have an understanding of thy truth and be men and women of the word, men and women of Christ, and that the difference will be seen in our lives, in our homes, and wherever thou dost place us.
For Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Now let's sing in Psalm 37 at verse 37.
Psalm 37 at verse 37 to the tune of St. Andrew. Now we were reading a moment ago about the deathbed of God's servant Elisha.
What a difference between that and the end of what the Bible calls wicked men who have no faith and no hope. Well, this verse, the first verse, verse 37, is a beautiful picture of the deathbed of Elisha and of every child of God.
[7:48] Mark thou the perfect and behold the man of uprightness, because that surely of this man the latter end is peace. We'll sing from verse 37 We'll sing from verse 37 to the end of the psalm.

The man of the man of uprightness, the man of uprightness, the man of uprightness, because that surely of this man, the man of uprightness, because that surely of this man, the latter end is peace.
But all that much will endorse us shall be— it align with you and may Tom, think of the man or mentioned between the And for women shall be the lost forever.
But this of the day I know that just it knows the Lord above.
He is the right over his head, serving after the throne.
[9:42] The Lord above helps and strength. In the right stage of envy and sin.

From wickedness before sin. Because in him their confidence they have.
And we'll turn now to 2 Kings chapter 13. Reading at verse 14.
And the incident that follows. Chapter 13 at verse 14. Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died.
And Joash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over his face. And said, Oh my father, my father. The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.
[10:51] Now Elisha at this stage must be well over 80 years of age. For 60 years he has served God as a prophet in Israel.

Far longer than his predecessor Elijah. But for the last 45 of these 60 years. So obviously by far the greater part of it.
He has scarcely been heard of. In his ministry as prophet. We have been looking through the life of Elisha these past few months. We've seen some of his great miracles.
Some of the tremendous impact that he made on Israel. But all that, the miracles and the particular itineraries that are described for us. All that seems to have taken place in a relatively short span of time.
Certainly less than 10 years. But now for these last 45 years. Things have been different. They correspond these years with the reigns of King Jehu.
[11:58] And King Jehoahaz. You remember last week how we saw that Elisha sent. One of the sons of the prophets. To anoint Jehu king over Israel.

Well Jehu and his son Jehoahaz. Reigned for some 45 years between them. And Elisha is heard of not at all. As far as we are concerned.
During all these years. Now it may be of course. That he did perform miracles. And that he was going out and about in Israel. Unknown to all and sundry.
But it seems more likely. That God's plan for Elisha was. That during all these years. He should remain in comparative retirement.
Perhaps encouraging the people of God. In the face of the evil days in which they were living.
Perhaps training quietly. In the schools of the prophets. The men who were to continue the witness to God's truth.
[12:56] But not it would appear in the same spectacular way. In which he administered during the previous years. But what we need to bear in mind.

Is that Elisha was no less the prophet of God. No less a man of God. Serving him faithfully. During the years of quietness.

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And retirement. And obscurity. Than he was when everybody knew about him. Than he was when he was performing magnificent miracles. He was just as much God's servant.
Though God's choice. During the latter part of his life. Was for a quiet retired ministry. There's a parallel surely. As we look at the Lord Jesus Christ.
For 30 years. He lived in obscurity in Nazareth. But he was no less. The eternal son of God. He was no less the Messiah. During these years of retirement and obscurity.
[13:55] Than he was when he burst on a public scene. With his miracles and his teaching. And eventually his death. And resurrection. And isn't there for us.

A reminder that. Though it's true. God has his special moments. Special outputings. Or outpourings. Of his power. What we would call revivals.
And they come to the church. And they come in God's sovereign way. In time. Yet God is still the same God. And his power is still the same.
Even though we may not see. Even though we may not see. The spectacular. Even though we may not be privileged to see. The mighty outpourings. That have been known throughout the church.
And the call to us. As to Elisha. Is to be faithful. In every time. In the times of retirement. And obscurity. If God's call is to be faithful.
[14:52] In a quiet way. And seeing perhaps much less. Than what we would like to see. Of his power being put forth. Still God is the same. His word is the same. The call to obedience.

And to holiness are the same. And let us be ready. By such a life. For the time when God is pleased to work. And who knows. But that in our congregation.
We might be privileged. To see just such days. But may we be ready. During the quiet days. During the days that we sometimes call. The day of small things.
For God's great days. And God's great power. So we come to the close. Of Elisha's life. And in this sick bed.
This death bed scene. That's portrayed for us. There are several things. That I'd like to draw your attention to. And the first is this. The testimony. Of a godly life.
[15:47] Life. The testimony. Of a godly life. Now it's a remarkable thing. It seems to me. That Joash. King of Israel. Should take the trouble.

On this occasion. To go to see Elisha. Joash. And may I just say in passing. That we mustn't confuse. This Joash. King of Israel.
The northern kingdom. With Joash. The king of Judah. It's rather confusing. That they had the same name. And they were ruling. About the same time. Joash. The king of Judah. Was a very different character.
To Joash. King of Israel. Because he was a wicked. And an evil man. The man with whom we're dealing here. And so it's remarkable. That being the kind of man. Joash was.
He should bother to go to see Elisha. His grandfather. Was Jehu. Now Jehu. Was indeed. In some ways. God's instrument. To execute his vengeance.
[16:43] His righteous and holy wrath. On the wicked house of Ahab. But as we saw last week. Jehu took a special gusto. And enthusiasm.

And his cruelty. He loved killing people. And eventually. The judgment of God. Fell upon him also. And we read about Jehu. That he took no heed.
To walk. In the law of the Lord. That was. This man's grandfather. His father. Was Jehoahaz. And in this very chapter. In the second verse.
We read about this man. Joash his father. That he did that. Which was evil. In the sight of the Lord. Joash. Was the same. We read it a few moments ago.
At verse 11. He did that. Which was evil. In the sight of the Lord. And if you go into the next chapter. You find that his son. Jeroboam. Who economically.
[17:35] And militarily. Militarily. Was a great success. As a king. Yet spiritually. And morally. He was a disaster. And he too. Walked. In the ways of Jeroboam.

The son of Nebat. Who made Israel to sin. He did what was evil. In the sight of the Lord. So here's this man. He's an evil man. From an evil stock. And he passes on.
His evil views. To those who come after him. And yet. He comes to see the prophet of God. He comes to hear. What God will say. Through this righteous holy man.
Elisha. Jewish. He didn't care about God. He had no desire. To leave his sin. So why then. Should he come to see the prophet. He knew perfectly well.

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The kind of thing the prophet would say. He knew that God's law. Is invariable. And that Elisha. Wasn't going to bend. God's standards. To make it easier.
[18:31] For Jewish. To enter the kingdom of heaven. He knew that. He knew that God's inflexible righteousness. Was present there in Elisha. And would be proclaimed to him.

So why did he bother. Why did he not just stay away. And leave the old prophet. To die. And end his ministry. Well of course.
It's because. Surely. There were still. The tattered shreds. Of the divinely given conscience. Within this man.
Jewish. Surely it's because. As the writer. The preacher tells us. In the book of Ecclesiastes. Because God has put eternity. In every man's heart.
Now that doesn't mean. That there is in everyone's heart. A spark of goodness. Because the fall has taken that away from us. What it does mean. Is that we have been made. By the eternal God.
[19:26] We are not merely creatures of the dust. There is an eternity. And we have to render account. Within eternity. And these things. Every man woman and child. Knows them.

Knows within his heart. Or her heart of hearts. That they have not been made. Merely for this world. And Jewish knew that. And however much he sinned. And however much he followed. The course of evil.
He knew there was that niggling feeling. Within him. This isn't all there is. There is a God. And I'm responsible to God. And I ought to go and see this prophet. I don't like what he has to say. But I must listen.
Because God has something to say to me. Now of course we know. From scripture and from history. That sometimes. Men like Jewish.
Who have the power to do it. They seek to silence. This voice of conscience. In the person of God's servants. Ahab. Ahab. Ahab. Who was the king during Elijah's ministry.
[20:22] He tried to do that. Remember. How there was a prophet called Micaiah. And Micaiah had been put in prison. Because Ahab didn't like his message. His message of righteousness.

And you remember how. When Jehoshaphat. The king of Judah. Came to join forces with Ahab. And they went out to battle together. Jehoshaphat said to Ahab. After all the prophets of Baal. Had prophesied smooth things.
Easy victory. Jehoshaphat knew it wasn't true. And he says. Isn't there a prophet of the Lord here. That we can inquire of him. You remember Ahab's very striking words.
Oh yes there is. There's that fellow Micaiah. But I hate him. Because he never prophesied good concerning me. But evil. And because that was so.
He clapped him in prison. That he might shut his mouth. As far as prophesying was concerned. And we read from the story. That when Micaiah came. Ahab was once again.
[21:19] Hurt to the quick. By the righteousness of Micaiah's message. And he shut him up in prison. And stayed there no doubt. Until his dying day. And so.

There are those. Who have the power like Jehosh. Who will seek to silence. The voice of conscience. In the messengers of God. If they can. But even so.
It's amazing that there is this. This strange compulsion to listen. You have it in Herod. Herod. Who had John the Baptist preaching in Israel.
And Herod was deeply offended. That John the Baptist should take it upon himself. To criticize the monarch. Who was he. To complain about the king's marriage.
Not only Herod. But his. In inverted commas. His wife. Herodias. Were furious. At the righteous preaching of John. And so John was shut up in prison. But you remember that striking comment.
[22:16] In the gospel. That tells us that. Herod. Occasionally. Would take John out of the dungeon. And bring him up into the court. And say to him. John. Preach a message from God.

And Herod heard him gladly. Isn't that strange? A wicked man. Steeped in evil. And yet. He feels compelled to listen. To the word of God.
You see. There is the testimony. Of a godly life. Micaiah. Elisha. John the Baptist. And it's compelling. And people who want.
Who don't want to listen. Feel that they have to listen. To such a testimony. And even when John the Baptist was dead. There was still that testimony. For when Jesus came.
And Jesus performed great miracles. What did Herod say? Oh it's John the Baptist. I thought. I thought that I'd finished with him. But John the Baptist has come back to life.

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[23:13] And he's doing these great miracles. You see his voice. His conscience was being spoken to. By the testimony. Of godly men. You know that. On the one hand.

It's a warning. A warning to all of us. To hear the word of God. But it's also a great encouragement. To Christian men and women. You may be. A believer.
In the Lord Jesus Christ. And you may feel. That well. Your witness is not worth. A great deal. You've so little influence. You don't preach publicly.
You don't occupy. You occupy any particular position. Of authority. Your circle of acquaintances. Is so small. You may feel. That you're doing so little. But the word of God.
Comes and says. Don't believe that. Remember the testimony. Of a godly life. And remember that Elisha. Was 45 years. As far as we can gather. In obscurity in Israel.
[24:09] And yet. His testimony. Is speaking. Throughout the nation. And so it still is. And if you and I. Believing in Jesus Christ.

Are faithful. In our witness. Day by day. In the kind of people we are. In the kind of lives we live. Then. There are many around us. Who will not read. The epistles of Paul.
But they will be compelled. To read. The epistle. Of a godly life. And see Christ. Written there. And so we have this scene. The royal visitor.
In all the vigor. Of his early manhood. For he's just ascended. To the throne. No doubt full of optimism. No doubt feeling. That he'll be the best king. Israel has ever had. In all that optimism. And all that vigor. He stands before the prophet. Who's a gaunt. Wasted. Dying old man. And yet.
[25:05] When you look at that scene. What is it that you see? Well the first man. Is a man who is just. As fading grass. For all his royal robes.

And kingly authority. And the second man. That you wouldn't give anything for. In human terms. He's spent. He's done. He's the one.
Who is strong. In godliness. Well there's the testimony. Of a godly life. Notice also. As you go through this incident.
The combination. Of human effort. And divine power. In this rather strange incident. That's recorded us here. About the bow and arrows.
You have the combination. Of on the one hand. Human effort. And on the other. Divine power. Now it's not just. Play acting. That you have here.
[26:00] When Elisha. Says to Joash. Take your bow and arrows. Put a bow. An arrow in the bow. Stretch the bow. And then Elisha. Puts his hand on the king's.

And he says. Shoot. And the king shoots. It's not just play acting. And it's certainly not. That kind of. Juju magic. Where. You know. You know. The kind of thing.
Where. You stick pins. In the. In a model. Or statue. Of your enemy. And then you expect him. To suffer in the same way. It's light years. Removed.
From that kind of thing. It is. God almighty. Using. These symbolic actions. To proclaim. A vital message.
From heaven. To earth. It's if you like. A kind of visual aid. Whereby God. Reinforces the word.
[26:52] Visually. So that the king. Will not only hear. God's word. But by this means. It will come home. With power. And with. With fresh. Impetus.

To his heart. And conscience. God spoke to this man. How? Well. By shooting the arrow. God was showing him. His duty.
As king. To defend his people. To be up and doing. In the defense. Of the realm. And in the doing. Of righteousness. He couldn't just sit back.
He had to take action. And on the other hand. By Elisha. Placing. Elisha. God's representative. Placing his hand. On the bow. God was saying.
To Joash. I want you to be active. As king. I want you to be. A diligent king. But remember. You're helpless. Without me. Unless the hand of God. Is upon you.
[27:46] As you labor. You can do nothing. Now the fact. That Joash was unworthy. Totally unworthy. Of the lesson that was being taught him.

Doesn't invalidate the principle. Which is still true. That God calls us. To be active. In his name. And at the same time.
Reminds us. That all our activity. And all our endeavors. Will avail us nothing. Unless we have. The power of heaven upon us. Now it's true.

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In every area. It's true. At the outset. Of the Christian life. God is sovereign. In salvation. Man. Of himself.
Can do nothing. To receive. To gain. The favor of God. For he is dead. In trespasses and sins. He needs a quickening power.
[28:38] Of the Holy Spirit. In order that he might come to life. And yet. We are reminded in scripture. That we must repent. And we must believe. It is not God who repents.

For he has no need to repent. It is not God who exercises faith. And trust. In Jesus Christ. For he is complete in himself. It is we. The sovereignty is God's.
But he calls us. To believe. In Jesus Christ. The battle is the Lord's. But we must put on. The whole armor of God. God. Work out.
Says the apostle. Your own salvation. But remember. That it is God. That worketh in you. Both to will. And to do. Of his good pleasure. And so.
If. At the outset. Of the Christian life. With regard to. Conversion. And salvation. If we seek. To do it. Without God's hand. On the bow. As it were. Then.
[29:33] The arrow. Will misfire. If for example. Someone comes to God. And says. Look. I've lived a decent life. I've been everything. I should be.

To my neighbors. I don't think anybody. Can say. I haven't been a good citizen. Or. I haven't been. Remembering. The religious side of things. It is human effort.
And it is of no value. Before God. The hand of God. Is missing. Or if someone says. But listen. I was at a. A big meeting. And. I was very moved.
And I. I put up my hand. Or whatever else. Was asked of me. And I made a decision. But then. If it is only. Of the flesh. And only moved.
By what one hears. Or by what. Is happening around one. And the hand of God. Is not in the bowl. It will misfire. It will not be truly. A work of grace.
[30:27] But let's think of it. In the Christian life. A man or a woman. Has come to Jesus Christ. By grace. Believed in the Lord Jesus. Received him. As savior. And set out.

Upon this Christian life. The same principle. Holds true. That. Unless. God's hand. Is on the bowl. Unless. His power. Is in our life.
All our efforts. Will be in vain. Now let me give a few illustrations. I'm sure that. Nettie will forgive me. If I take her. Not her and herself.
But. As a missionary. Going out. As one example. Here we have a missionary. Going out to Kenya. Now she's got all the experience. Seventeen years of it.
As you can go into that. Hospital. And take up the post of matron. More or less. Without any difficulty. She's done it before. She speaks the language of the people. She's done all our nursing training.
[31:21] She knows the culture. She knows the set up. And God comes and says. Yes all that's true. But without me. You can do nothing. And it'll all be wasted. And it'll all be meaningless.

If it is done. In our own strength. If it is not done. With God's hand. Upon the bowl. If it is not. His work. And his name. That is being glorified.
Or again in a congregation. There may be times. When there are particular needs. Perhaps particular financial needs. Sometimes a congregation. Has a huge expense.
Perhaps a roof. Needs redone. Or something of that nature. And the temptation comes to us. to do all the efforts by ourselves and perhaps because we have this to attend to to say well we can't give to the missionary side and we can't give to evangelism we've got to concentrate on this and we do it according to our own thinking and our own ways of doing it with much effort certainly with much enthusiasm but if God's hand is not in the bow it's of the flesh it may bring some short term benefit but it won't be the glorious work of God and the victory that God desires for his church or for his people but it may be the individual Christian perhaps somebody here very worried about something in their lives tense, hit up because there are problems of one nature or another and you find yourself being all steamed up as we say about these things and God comes and says look let my hand rest upon the bow because it's not only a hand of power it's also a hand of calming and of steadying as we in our own efforts so often seek to fulfill the work and the witness that God has laid upon us and forget that it is all of the Lord let me illustrate well some 20 years ago
I began to learn to drive when I was nearly 30 and as many of you know if you don't learn when you're young or younger than that it gets more difficult I remember on one occasion I didn't find it

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easy the first few lessons I began to wonder if I'd ever learned to drive a car and I still remember on one occasion going down Dingwall West End and the instructor told me well you're going to turn down at that corner and I saw a car a whole stream of cars coming towards me I looked in the mirror and I saw a car behind me there was a wall at one corner and you know how it is you've got to do the signal and you've got to have your foot on the brake and you've got to get the right gear and I got totally flustered and I still remember now he wasn't a very soothing kind of man the driving instructor far from it but on this occasion he just took his hand as I was trying to find the gear and getting so het up and flustered he just put his hand and laid it in mine and said take it easy well I got round the corner and I drive now now that on a human level apply it to the Lord his hand upon the bow and when we are so flustered when we are trying in the power of the flesh to carry out our work the Lord comes as Elisha laid that hand and he says take it easy my power is given to you my strength is made perfect in your weakness so there's this combination of human effort and divine power we must be zealous for good works we are called to the conflict we must be up and doing but God lays his hand upon the bow and says in my strength you will have the victory and so we come to the closing point of this incident we've seen the testimony of a godly life we've seen the combination of human effort and divine power and there's also the call to believing perseverance now the final part of this incident is even stranger than the first part once the first arrow has been shot

[35:44] Elisha says to the king of Israel take the arrows and strike the ground with them now I suppose that what is meant here is all the arrows a pile of them out of the the quiver some feel that perhaps what he was asked to do was to take them one by one and fire them at the ground a seemingly ridiculous thing to do but so was to take all the arrows and hit the ground with them and this is what you have here you have Joash asked to do a certain thing strike the ground with the arrows and he feels stupid what a ridiculous thing to do yes fire the arrow he could see some sense in that but just to fire it at the ground or hit the ground with the arrow it seemed so ridiculous so ludicrous and presumably he did it the first three times well just to humor the old man after all Elisha he does deserve some respect he is a prophet of God

I better just do it once twice and rather reluctantly and feeling rather ashamed embarrassed at doing it he does it and then he stops and Elisha says you should have done it five or six times you should have kept doing it until the word to stop came to you from God and of course the picture was of his efforts against the Syrians the Syrians came in to invade Israel and we see at the end of the chapter that when they did come the very close of verse 25 the Syrians came and three times the Jewish beaten the king of Syria and recovered the cities of Israel only three times and then he failed now obviously this incident is not teaching us that the actual striking of the ground with the arrows was somehow going to win the victory it's not that the action in itself would do nothing it's the same as with Naaman in a previous incident with Elisha

Elisha says to him go and bathe in the river Jordan seven times and we can all understand Naaman's reaction when he says why should I go to the river Jordan are not Abana and Farper rivers of Damascus better than all the rivers of Jordan of Israel can I not wash in them and be clean it wasn't that the river Jordan had a particular cleansing power it wasn't that its waters were any better than the waters of Damascus but it was obedience God said and God was testing this man Naaman God said this is my way of cleansing are you prepared to submit to it and God says to Joash this is my way of victory are you prepared to submit to my direction are you prepared to believe in me are you prepared to persevere in that believing and sadly the wisdom of God was foolishness to Joash and you know you've got a picture there of the gospel the gospel to many is foolishness come to the cross be cleansed in the blood of Jesus who died two thousand years ago believe that by repenting of sin and taking Christ as savior as our substitute that that will alter our life that that will make us different that that will make us acceptable with God and ensure our place in heaven it seems either too simple or too foolish or too archaic the way of the cross is foolishness but it's the only way and if as yet you've never come by that way of the cross there is no other way but by the foolishness of God acknowledging sin and coming to Christ and recognizing him as the only savior while Josh wouldn't accept it it was foolishness to him it is foolishness to many and to the Christian there comes this final message the message of perseverance not only believing that God's way however foolish it may appear to us is the right way but the call to persevere in the work of God fight the good fight of faith not just three times but keep going

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Satan never gives up nor should we in the name of God he that endures to the end says the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved and in prayer when we're so ready to give up we've prayed again and again and nothing happens and so we're tempted to give up it's very wearisome and the Lord says that we should pray without ceasing that we should not be weary in our prayers that we should keep striking as it were until God is pleased to give his own answer and so as we close let's all beware of the attitude of Jewish see Jewish attitude was this I'll go so far with God but no further I'll go a certain distance accepting God's word three times but no more if God doesn't prove himself in the time that I set him then that's the end of it there are those who will trust him perhaps someone like that today trust him for salvation believe yes that Jesus is the only savior believe in their heart in him and know him by grace be a child of God and yet not prepared to trust God not only for salvation but for keeping them not prepared to witness openly not prepared ever to let their mouth speak a word that will indicate that they are trusting in Jesus not prepared to hear his command this do in remembrance of me and profess him openly agree yes that he can keep that he can save but not that he can keep that's like Jewish three times but no more as if God is limited in any way trust him perhaps for material provision when things are going all right but then when there are problems when there is difficulty in our finances in our homes say well
I can't go the way of faith any longer I've done it thus far but now I must do it in my way or perhaps as a congregation believe that God yes he can bring sinners to Christ and we've got to be sinners from our kind of background we've got to be brought up in the free church or in the highlands and have an understanding of our way of thinking they must know about the Sabbath and the shorter catechism and in that way then they can come to faith in Christ but these outsiders these people who come in who don't know anything about our kind of religious background you can't expect it from them well that's striking three times and saying God can do no more God is not limited he is sovereign and as he said to Joash he says to you and me as individuals and as a congregation don't limit God he is able able to do exceeding abundantly according to his mighty power let us then praise him for all that is past and trust him for all that's to come let us pray oh Lord our God we give thee thanks that thy servant
[43:28] Elisha though dead yet speaketh we pray that our ears would be open to hear the voice of God through the life and the testimony and the words and the actions not only of Elisha but of all thy servants portrayed to us in holy scripture may we as a result of what thou hast shown us from thy word today may we be spared the sin of Joash of trusting thee so far but no further may we be able to say with the psalmist that we will trust thee with our whole heart that we will commit our lives unreservedly to thee and to thy service and may we thus know thy mighty power among us for Jesus sake Amen for Jesus for Jesus he loved these days or may we be wig or may weest theieg of our Holy

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