Study of Elisha - Part 3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[0:00] Seeking the Lord's blessing, we'll turn to the portion of Scripture we read, the second book of Kings and the third chapter.

And we'll read it, verse 15.
Verse 15, But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass when the minstrel played that the hand of the Lord came upon him.
Bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass when the minstrel played that the hand of the Lord came upon him. We saw Elisha beginning his prophetic ministry with two works, which you could call a work of mercy and a work of judgment.
The first work was a work of mercy when he healed the polluted waters of Jericho and made them pleasant and sweet to drink. That was a work of mercy.
[1:25] It was a miracle of mercy. The second work was when he pronounced a curse upon the rebellious youths in the city of Bethel. And that was certainly a work of judgment.

And in beginning like that, he showed himself to be in the spirit of the Savior himself, who began his own ministry, first with a miracle of mercy when he turned the water into wine.
But then immediately afterwards, he scourged the money changers and those who bought and sold out of the temple. So they both showed, the Elisha of the Old Testament and the Elisha of the New, that although they were saviors and their name meant salvation, still there was judgment with them also.
So Elisha makes that plain from the beginning. And in doing that, his authority as Elijah's successor is confirmed in the sight of all. Not just in the sight of the prophets, but in the sight of the world around about.
But here you find Elisha in a very different kind of environment altogether. This time he is not with the schools of the prophets and he is not in Bethel.
[2:38] He is in an international expedition. He is taking part in a war. Or at least he is accompanying a battle. Or the army is going out to battle.

He is in the presence of three kings. And before this incident is over, Elisha has become an international figure. And his name is known. And it is one of the remarkable things that Elisha's name is carried to other nations in a way in which Elijah's was not.
And that also prefigures the gospel. Or it shows the way in which Elisha prefigures the gospel. Elijah's ministry is more confined. Elisha goes out to Syria.
It reaches out to Moab. And that shows us how the gospel days or the days of salvation will indeed spread and will permeate every area of the world.
But in any case, that's how we find Elisha in this chapter. Now the exact context in which we find him is the context of the uprising or the rebellion by Moab against Israel.
[3:44] And that's an interesting rebellion in many respects. Not least because it's been denied by many historians, or it was denied for hundreds of years, that such a rebellion ever took place, or that such a war as this ever really took place.

That was until 1868, when the famous black basalt stone of Moab, sometimes called the Moabite stone, was discovered. That stone was written by Misha, the king of Moab, who you find referred to here.
And that stone, it's a fairly small stone, records his battles. And some of the battles recorded are against Israel and the house of Omri. Now Omri was Ahab's father.
And he was, to the neighboring countries, one of the most distinguished kings of Israel. It's interesting that he's passed over more or less in silence in the Bible. But he was clearly a powerful military general.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And on the Misha stone, or the Moabite stone, found in 1868, that inscription is recorded, that he fought against the house of Omri. Now this particular defeat isn't recorded, but then again, like the Egyptians, that was par for the course.
[4:55] The Egyptians never recorded their own defeats, and neither really did the Moabites. The interesting thing is that the stone is there, and that the record of scripture is confirmed.

That is the interesting thing. Another interesting thing is that one or two details on the stone disagree with one or two details in this chapter. So you can guess what the world says.
Well, that the Bible is wrong. So it's like this. First, if something appears in the Bible that just hasn't happened to appear in secular history, then the Bible has made it up. But if it then happens to appear in secular history, and there's a slight disagreement, well, the Bible's got it wrong, and we have to accept the account that's given in secular history.
The Lord's people know better. Those who have tasted and seen the power of God at work in their own lives have no doubt that the Lord is able to record accurately and meticulously the truth, which he himself orchestrated and engineered.
And what we have in the Bible is the accurate and the faithful account of the rebellion of Moab against the children of Israel. Now, in the time of David and Solomon, Moab was firmly under the control of Israel.
[6:11] But after Solomon's death, you'll remember that Israel split up into Judah in the south and Israel in the north. Moab then began to sense weakness, and all these things are parables.

When the church becomes divided and weak, the world grows strong. The world which pays tribute to the church then rises up and throws off the yoke of the church.
These things are a parable. Moab became strong and began to flex its own muscles against Israel. But then there was another time of oppression when Moab was put firmly under.
And it was put under a fairly heavy tribute. 100,000 lambs, 100,000 rams, and the wool of them. Now, the wool of Moab, of the sheep in Moab, was particularly famous as being a fine fleece.
So that was a fairly substantial tribute that they paid yearly into the exchequer of the king of Israel. But then after Ahab's death, again, they threw off this yoke and they asserted their independence.
[7:18] By this time, Jehoram, the son of Ahab, was on the throne of Israel. And he decides to take matters into his own hand.

And he plans a campaign in order to subject Moab again to Israel. And first of all, he asks his neighbor in the south to help him.
He turns to Jehoshaphat and he asks him if he will go with him to fight against Moab. And Jehoshaphat says, I'm at your disposal. My horses are yours and my army is yours.
And then they discuss a strategy. And the final strategy agreed on is this. And it was a clever one. They wouldn't just cross the Jordan east and take Moab on head on.
What they would do is they would go down south, down through Judah. They would go around the tip of the Dead Sea. They would go up through Edom, take a wide berth into the wilderness and attack Moab from the south.
[8:20] Now that was a clever strategy in many respects. To begin with, it was a surprise, or it would be a surprise to Moab. They would never expect an attack on their south eastern flank.

It was their most weakly defended border. And then again, there was this advantage to it that in that way, they could gain the help of Edom on that path.
And going around the Dead Sea, going through Edom. Now Edom was really in the possession of Judah at this time. It was paying tribute to Judah. So Jehoshaphat could persuade the king of Edom to help and to join with the other two kings and throw off or subject Moab.
And I'm sure they would promise that Edom would have some share of the spoils. So the net effect is that you had three armies together, moving, supposedly to do the Lord's work, and to crush Moab, and to make sure that it came back into a place of paying tribute again.
But the whole expedition turned into a disaster. And that for a simple reason. When they took a wide berth into the wilderness, they went too far. We're told that they fetched a compass of seven days' journey, and that was too far.
[9:43] The wadis, the places that were filled at certain times in the year with water, were empty. They found themselves lost. There were three armies that probably found it difficult at the best of times to get along with each other.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

There was traditional rivalry between Israel, Judah, and Edom. And here they are thirsty. They're lost. And immediately there's a panic when they realize that they don't know where they're going and that they're beginning to die of thirst.
You can imagine what seven days' journey in a dry, barren wilderness is like in terms of thirst. They are on their knees and they're on their last legs. And Jehoram, the king of Israel, says, Alas, he says, and really the expression is stronger than that.
It's as though he's shaking his fist in the heavens. Alas, he says, that the Lord has called these three kings, himself and the two others, to perish in the wilderness. To perish in the wilderness. Jehoshaphat is different. He takes control or tries to and he says, is there a prophet of the Lord in the camp? It's a bit too late for him to ask that question. If he had asked it earlier, it would have been better.
[10:50] But still he asks it and he has the sense to ask it. Is there a prophet of the Lord in the camp? And someone comes up to him and says that Elisha, the son of Shaphat, is in the camp. Now he hadn't been asked.

Clearly he was guided by the Lord to attach himself to the army and to follow them into the wilderness because God would do a mighty thing there by his hand. When Jehoshaphat hears the name of Elisha, he associates him immediately with Elijah and he says, we must go to see him. So the three kings gather together and they make their way in the camp to where Elisha is. Notice how hardships humble people. They didn't at this point demand that Elisha be brought to them. In the hour of crisis, they decide that they'd better speak to the man of God and that they should speak to him on God's terms. At least that's how Jehoshaphat views the situation. And so down they go to meet the prophet and to speak with Elisha.
And so here is the prophet of God with three kings in front of him. Now before we go any further, I want to look with you at two of these kings as they're brought before us here in the chapter.
[12:01] Jehoram, the king of the north, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah. Now Jehoram was a son of Ahab.

And he was a better man than his father. He could hardly fail to be. His father was the worst of all. And he showed that he had some fear of God or some element of it when he got rid of the enormous statue of Baal that Ahab and Jezebel had put up in Samaria.
He took that down. And to a large extent, he made the religion of Baal a private thing. He tried to take it out of the public arena and he tried to make it a private thing.
Did he turn to the Lord? No, he didn't. He went back to the old mongrel religion of Jeroboam, which was a little of the true religion mixed in with a lot of paganism and a lot of superstition.
Just the kind of thing that you see around you on every side today. That was the kind of religion that Jeroboam or Jehoram practiced. So his religion or Jehovah was to him a kind of lucky charm that he would use.
[13:15] He was frightened because of what happened to his father. He knew that there was some kind of power in Jehovah. He feared the name. He had enough sense to do that. He wouldn't treat the things of God as it were flippantly like Ahab sometimes did and many others before and after.

He had too much time for it to do that. But still he kept it in a little corner and he mixed up its religion and he covered it with all kinds of easy things. Easy to bear things that were very palatable.
But notice what happens to Jehoram when the crisis comes. In verse 10 he says, Alas, that the Lord has called these three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab.
And then again after Elisha says to him, what have I to do with you? He comes back and he says, no, no, the Lord has called us these three kings together just to deliver us into the hand of Moab. Now here's a man who is immediately depressed. He has no hope. He is in despair. All he can see is defeat, blackness, gloom, darkness, and desolation.
[14:28] Why? Well, because he doesn't know the true God at all. He uses the name of God as a kind of lucky charm. But when the trouble comes and when the hardship comes all he can do is panic.

He's suddenly in a vortex and he feels himself in an abyss. He doesn't have the true knowledge of God that can sustain him at a time like this at all. No, he doesn't. He doesn't have the real thing, not the true faith of God's elect.
What he has is a cheap, cheap imitation that can't sustain him in the hour of crisis and that can't keep him up in the hour of need. The contrast is remarkable. In verse 10, Jehoram is saying we're

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

finished and in verse 11, Jehoshaphat is saying is there a prophet of the Lord?
And that's the difference between the hypocrite and the believer. That's the difference between you with your superstitious veneer of superficial religion on one hand and you and the other who know the true God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
That is when it's all revealed and how men's and women's religions are revealed when a disease strikes your body, when it is a heart disease or cancer or something of that kind, how that reveals what is in your soul and what is in mine.
[15:46] Does it work within us this calling upon the Lord's name and a calling in hope and a calling in faith or does it produce this darkness and this gloom that as it were shakes its fist at the Lord?

Because my friend, in the second place, that's exactly what Jehoram is doing. Now, you may miss this on the first reading but it's there alright.
In the words that Jehoram uses, he is actually blaming God for the bad thing that has happened to himself.
And every time something good happens to him in the narrative of the Bible, there's not a word of thanks, not a word of praise, not a word of acknowledgement that there's a God in heaven at all.
It's convenient for him to keep up a show of religion but really there is no thanksgiving another crisis.
[16:54] And he says there more or less the same thing. He says more or less the same thing. He accuses the Lord there again of dealing very, very unfavorably and very, very harshly with him.

Behold, he says, this evil is of the Lord. Why should I wait for the Lord any longer? Now are you hearing those words? Do you recognize them?
Do you recognize the kind of person that says that this whole thing, this whole mess, this whole situation is from God. Why should I wait for him any longer? Why should I worship him? Is this God?
Well if this is God I'll turn the other way and I'll ignore it. God only deals with me like that. I only have hard things in my life all the time. There's never really anything good.
But of course there is. But when it comes is it acknowledged? No, it's not acknowledged at all. The good things are luck or the good things are the works of my own hand. But the bad thing is God in heaven.
[17:56] Is that the way your own religious life operates tonight? I'm quite sure that more than a few of you who maybe think like that. It's quite common to think in precisely that way.

When a bad thing comes into your life you use it as an excuse and you say look at what God has done to me. Hasn't he dealt harshly with me? And what happened with all the good things and all the blessings?
Was there a word of thanks? Did you call yourself an unprofitable servant? No. That's the religion of Jehoram and it's the religion of the hypocrite. My friend, do I have what will sustain me on my deathbed?
Do I have what will look after me in the wilderness? And when I'm face to face with death which is the ultimate reality do I have what will keep me in that day?
What is my religion and what is yours? That's what the scriptures are constantly addressing us about. So, he views God as a harsh God and that comes through very clearly.
[19:00] What about Jehoshaphat? Well, this is one of the most interesting kings in the Old Testament. At least to my mind he is. This is the third time you meet this man caught up in an alliance in which he should never be found in the first place.

The third time. He seems to have a besetting sin in this respect that he ends up in situations which always lead him into compromise.
He gets involved in these situations all the time and he has a good motive for it and he's a good man. The scriptures make plain that he's a good man and he wanted peace with Israel.
He saw Israel's idolatry. Judah was a better nation. It served the Lord better and he saw Israel's idolatry and he said, how can I help them go back to the true religion?
And he cultivated an alliance with them. He married his son to Ahab's daughter. And so he was connected with a family tie. And of course it was a family tie that always pushed him northwards.
[20:13] They always say that the daughter remains more attached to her own home than the son does to his. And it's interesting that Jehoshaphat is seen going up to Ahab's and he becomes more

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

and more close to the king of Israel.

Now he's trying to do him good. And I've no doubt in some respects that he chopped the rough edges of some aspect of Ahab's life. But Ahab had a worse effect than himself.
And every time he seemed to end up in some kind of compromise out of which he was delivered by the skin of his teeth and after it the Lord had to rebuke him by a prophet.
Now the first instance was when Ahab said come up to fight with me against Ramoth Gilead. Jehoshaphat didn't stop. He didn't pray. He didn't consult. He said I am as you are.
Now he had reasons for that. I don't have time to go in then. But the end result is that Jehoshaphat was nearly put to death in the battlefield. And when he got home a weary man the prophet came and rebuked him and said should you help the ungodly?
[21:17] Is it your business to ally yourself with those who hate the Lord? And he was rebuked for it. Sometime afterwards he does the same thing.

This time in a shipping expedition he gets involved again with the king of Israel and the expedition ends in shipwreck. And the prophet comes to him a second time and says look again you have helped the ungodly.
you have allied yourself with them and you have compromised. And so this is upon you from the Lord. Now it seems remarkable but here he's doing the same thing again.
I suppose you ask why? Well I would suspect that it's because Jehoram has shown some kind of sign of trying to break away from the idolatry.
He got rid of the image of Baal and he went back to the mongrel worship of Jehovah that they had instituted in Bethel in Israel. This was a good sign for Jehoshaphat so he thinks that the way is clear for him to go back in and to ally himself with Jehoram again.
[22:30] And again he is in the wrong he finds himself in the wilderness he finds himself with no water and he finds reproach and shame because he didn't consult the Lord.

Now it's interesting at each turn when the going comes hard Jehoshaphat is the man who turns around and says is there a prophet of the Lord here? He learns the children of God do learn and they are arrested and they are brought to a point of repentance but three times he did the same thing.
It's a difficult thing for the Christian to learn that he is compromising in certain situations. It's a difficult thing for him to learn and the Lord makes it plain to them but they still find it hard to learn.
Jehoshaphat took himself into a place where he was just not careful that he was doing the Lord's work and that he was doing it in the Lord's way. He was essentially under this oversight of the king of Israel and God never wants his church allying itself with an apostate church.
God never asks any congregation or any church or any denomination to ally itself with a church in a halfway house. If there's a church that can't shake off idolatry, if there's a church that insists on compromising the word and if there's a church that shows that it does not give the word of God the supreme place in its life, then any true church should not ally itself with that church.
[24:00] It shouldn't go to war with it. It shouldn't fight under the same banner with it. It shouldn't spiritual things disassociate itself from that church. God's word makes that crystal clear.

It makes it absolutely plain. Israel worshipped the Lord plus a mixture of paganism and worldliness and these things. And the church of Christ must not mix itself with these Christ plus churches.
And Jehoshaphat learned the lesson eventually and we must pray to God that God would keep his church learning that lesson today. There are all kinds of temptations to join with us in this and join with us in that.
And all right you don't like this but look we've got that and surely because we've got that you can join with us. Is that not the exact philosophy that brought Jehoshaphat's ships into shipwreck? Brought the whole army starving in the wilderness? And the church or indeed the individual Christian that compromises himself or puts himself into a position where he is following the world's agenda will starve in the wilderness until God by his mercy shakes him out of it and delivers him out of it if God indeed will do that.
[25:16] These are important lessons important lessons to learn in this day of tolerance in which tolerance has become the only never mind the chief virtue and truth has become a cheap second.

So here is an alliance on the terms of Israel with its mongrel religion and Jehoshaphat is putting himself into that place. Now the only interesting thing to my mind here is that Elisha doesn't particularly rebuke Jehoshaphat here.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

He doesn't have any direct word of rebuke to say to him. In fact on this occasion the only word he says that is a word that commends him. I have no doubt that is because he turned to the Lord in the wilderness.
Turned to him in his need which is what Jehoram may have done outwardly but not really inwardly at all. So let's just leave that there for the moment.
Now what does Elisha have to say to Jehoram? Well he has this to say to him first of all get to your own gods. You he says who follow your own prophets and who have followed the mixed religion of your own forefather get to your own prophets consult your own calves in Bethel and let them help you out of this situation.
[26:39] When you're desperate you come to me. When you're absolutely desperate you come to me because you suspect that there's something more to my religion than there is to your own.

But you haven't got the spiritual wherewithal to follow that out in your life every day and every week. No you have not. So get back to your own gods and consult them.
And Jehoram comes back to him and says no no the Lord has called the three of us into this wilderness as though he was on a par with Jehoshaphat himself. Elisha says I'm telling you if Jehoshaphat wasn't here I wouldn't even look at you never mind talk to you.
And that is the blunt reply that Elisha gives to the king of Israel. If Jehoshaphat wasn't standing here in my presence I wouldn't even look at you never mind talk to you.
I think I said some time back in speaking about Elijah that there are some prophets who seem to have reached the height of their ambition when they can stand in front of kings and when they can consult with kings and when kings confer with them that seems to be the top of the greasy pole and they're happy there.
[27:51] Elisha is not like that. He's commissioned by God to speak and so he'll speak and he told Jehoram the truth he told him the truth and that truth was this Jehoram if you get out of this it's nothing to do with you and it's nothing to do with the fact that you came to me here today it's nothing to do with that at all it's to do with the one you're with and because of the one you're with you will get out of this situation but you take it to heart for once and for all I wondered my friend if Jehoram went home and forgot all about it scriptural evidence seems to show that he did exactly that once he got out of the scrape that he forgot it and just carried on as he was my friend you have little conception and me with you of how often we are sometimes delivered from situations kept even kept in the world delivered even from a disease or financial hardship not because of ourselves but because of someone else because there is the salt of the earth scattered in your own home or scattered in your family circle because some of that scattered salt is praying on your behalf and because of that you are not destroyed but you take it to heart if you're godless tonight and if you have no respect to the law of

God really in your life then every blessing you have is one you'll understand what I mean that you do not merit it is one showered upon you for some other reason but may the goodness of God in that lead you to repentance before it is too late and may you turn to himself so then that's what he says to Jehoram and then after that Elisha shouts bring me a minstrel or bring me a musician and the musician is sought for and he's found and he stands before Elisha and he begins to play on his harp probably and as he begins to play the spirit of the Lord moves upon Elisha and Elisha begins to prophesy now I want to look with you just at three things with respect to the prophecy here fairly briefly each one of them first of all the circumstance in which the prophecy comes secondly what the prophecy actually is and in the third place how the prophecy is fulfilled now first of all the circumstance in which the prophecy is given and it's unusual bring me he says a minstrel so the musician playing the harp has some significance for Elisha and the significance of it must be connected with the coming of the Lord in verse 15 because it says it came to pass that when the minstrel played that the hand of the Lord came upon him the hand of the
Lord came upon him now who is the minstrel well the minstrel or the musician is clearly a Levite from the temple who has accompanied Jehoshaphat he's accompanied the people of God the true king he's come in their company and he's accustomed to playing the harp he's skilled in playing it and when Elisha asks him to play he's not asking him to play a war song or to play just any other kind of music what he's asking him to play is no doubt one of the psalms of David which were very often sung in the Old Testament to the accompaniment of a harp certainly in the temple in David's time they were sung like that you would have bands of prophets or bands of Levites who would sing and who would pluck when the harp when the psalms were sung in the

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Old economy and it's more than likely in fact that it's not just a matter of the minstrel play but of the minstrel singing as well there was distinctive tunes for distinctive psalms and as these tunes were played or as these psalms were sung Elisha is moved and the spirit of the Lord comes upon him and he prophesies now we have no idea what psalm was sung or what psalm was played none at all there are many psalms dealing with the wilderness many psalms dealing with the perplexity of her souls or with the overwhelming power of the enemy but Elisha's heart is quietened and then the spirit comes upon him now there's one or two things that I want to say about this first of all why ask for it in the first place well

I suspect that his spirit was agitated it was no small exchange that he had with Jehoram the king of Israel the king of Israel was a man that agitated the heart of the prophet and the way the prophet had to speak to him distressed him he spoke righteously and he spoke as the Lord enabled him to speak but it put him out of sorts and you know what I mean sometimes even when you do faithful dealing and when you do righteous dealing there is an element of upsetness in your heart and something that you find difficult as it were just to go back to your business to something about it that just involves that and Elisha felt like that he found it hard to seek the guidance of the Lord because of how upset his spirit was and in that context he asks for a psalm to be played or for a psalm to be sung and there's an important spiritual teaching in there if I'm not mistaken and the teaching is this there are times my friends when we need to draw near to the

[34:14] Lord and we need to draw very near to him perhaps there is a pressing business or some urgent concern but you're out of sorts and something has put you out of sorts and it seems to block the very way to the throne of grace on you you want to pray but you can't pray the agitation is too great well Luther had an advice for someone in that kind of situation and I think it is good sound spiritual advice and that is to take quietly in your soul or even he says sing a psalm out loud and you will find that your heart is soothed you will find that the agitation of your spirit is taken away and that the way of worship and the way of access to praise and adoration is opened to you by the hand of the Lord himself now how often you have found that I'm sure you've experienced something like that yourself the agitation you turn to the

Lord and these words of the psalms console and they soothe and you find liberty and you find release and in that circumstance the spirit of the Lord comes upon Elisha and he gives a powerful prophecy and what is the prophecy well the Lord says dig ditches verse 16 thus saith the Lord make this valley full of ditches for this saith the Lord you shall not see wind neither shall you see rain yet that valley shall be filled with water that you may drink both ye and your cattle and your beasts now the armies are to spend their time digging wells in the wilderness and then they're to wait and they're to wait with prayer and they're to wait with expectation because God says I'll send no storm you won't see any quiff or any trace or foreboding of a storm but

I'll fill the ditches for you and I'll do it with my own power and in verse 20 that's fulfilled it came to pass in the morning when the meat offering was offered that behold there came water an incident is it something just recorded a miracle that happened or is it like other miracles in the word of God is it a teaching encapsulated inside an act is it a word taught through a deed well so it is all this has spiritual significance first the water water is divine grace water is divine blessing water is the help of God it is what God gives by his spirit to a thirsty soul that is what water represents and just as the water which came in Elijah's day pouring down from heaven after a three and a half year famine represented the power of

God falling upon the land represented showers of blessing so this water represents the same thing it is the water of life it is the water that the Lord gives water to quench the thirst of his own people's soul and in that respect it's interesting that before it comes the people have to dig the ditches first you can't get away from this principle in God's word it is just simply this principle that you put in in order to get that what God gives is a response to your seeking to your turning to him and to your calling upon the name of the Lord and any view of the doctrines of grace and they are as precious to me as to the next person any view of them which somehow does away with this as though there's no room for seeking or digging ditches but that you just somehow sit and wait is just askew it is not right it is unfaithful to the truth he commands that the ditches be dug and he says

I will fill the pools and I will fill the pools with water what is digging a ditch well when you repent you are digging a ditch when you say like Ephraim I have had enough of idols you are digging a ditch when you set a time aside a time earnestly to seek the Lord in prayer you're digging a ditch or you're digging shall we say a well and the Lord will fill that well you who have forgotten what water

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

tastes like God will fill that well with water if you dig the ditch dig it earnestly dig it deep and however deep you dig it God will fill it and God will send water and I mean that there are some people who have forgotten just how sweet the water of life is and why is that because you have hewn out for yourselves broken sisters that can hold no water you're taking other water you're sipping other water go back dig a well and ask
[39:44] God to give you the water of life and it will taste preciously sweet to you and you may be doubting whether water really represents that well let this clinch it for you that this water is given you'll notice in verse 20 in the morning when the meat offering was offered came to pass in the morning when the meat offering was offered that behold there came water when you find an expression like that there's a reason for it here they are in the middle of the wilderness and the water is about to come but the writer says it happened when way back in Jerusalem many many miles away the meat offering was being offered up to God in the temple what does that do well it asks you to relate the water from God to the offering up of the sun it is as simple as that just as in Elijah's time we're told that the fire fell upon the altar at the time of the evening sacrifice so we're told here that the water came from heaven at the time of the morning sacrifice fire in the evening water in the morning connected to the offering what offering the only offering that really matters it is connected to the life and death of the

Lord Jesus Christ what fills my well what blesses my soul what can bless your soul but Jesus Christ and him crucified that is all that is all and I say that to you the world and I say to you Christian that is all forget and leave for once and for all whatever cistern you're playing with turn to the sacrifice dig a well and how thankful you did that at the time of the meat offering the rain comes down from heaven it's also interesting by the way that when Daniel prays in Daniel chapter 9 the answer to his prayer comes again at the time of the evening offering but certainly at the time of one of the offerings again it's the same truth every single answer to your prayer every single blessing that comes every enlargement of heart in the reading of the scriptures every time of fellowship is connected to the sacrifice of
Christ this sacrifice now is as it were perpetual in the heavens and so it can come to you at any time but in the old testament it is explicitly linked just to guide us and to understand that without the offering there can be no blessing and it's all this not what's meant in psalm 84 and the time is passing this not what's meant in psalm 84 when it speaks of the pilgrims going up to Zion passing through Baker's Vale and therein they dig up wells also the rain that falleth down the pools with water fills and so they go on until they appear in Zion at length before the face of God what is that but just a picture of this here is a pilgrim going towards Jerusalem a Christian heading towards the heavenly Zion and he finds himself in Baker's Vale and it means the valley of weeping it is a wilderness he's found himself in it is a barren spot what does he do he starts to dig he turns to the Lord he turns in repentance he means it and he digs deep and the rain that fall down fills the pools with water and with that water he goes on in the strength of the Lord until he appears in Jerusalem at length now just last of all and very briefly Moab comes to the border they've heard that there's a force coming and they make their way to the border and in the morning they look across and they see what comes across to them as pools of blood on the ground and in their haste they say to themselves the kings have fallen out they're at war with each other Moab to the spoil and the world becomes strong thinking it can destroy and crush the church just like that but the world is deceived the earth there is very red and the sun was just rising it's the time of the morning sacrifice and there were lots of little pools that were dug up by individuals in the armies and it seemed to
Moab from a distance that it was blood and not only that but I strongly feel that this enters into it there would have been a mad rush on the part of the armies to that water you can picture that after the agony of the thirst and the desert searing heat of the wilderness there is a rush it is almost a mad rush one person trying to pass the other trying to get to these pools on the ground and they're glistening red against the red earth and against the brightness of the morning sun and the king of Moab says to himself it is confusion they couldn't sustain that coalition again they're at war with each other and he thinks there's a battle and all they have to do is to go down and just to pick up the spoil that they're mistaken there is really an orderly rank down there underneath them it is water that is strengthening and reviving them and in the strength and power of the water they go and they conquer and they crush Moab the church thinks it can do something in the world without water the church can do nothing without water except die but once the water fills the pools out they go and they conquer

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

[45:36] Moab and they crush Moab and they do that in the strength of God the Lord he gives them the victory he alone can give you the victory and he alone can give it to me dig dig dig my friend and the Lord will send rain and may he bless his word amen we ask thee oh lord to bless the truth to us and we pray for grace to recognize where our strength comes from and if any of us have taken a wrong turning into the wilderness to though by grace enable us to turn to thyself and to dig a well that we might be restored and that we might be saved have mercy upon any who may not have the true religion in their hearts but who are mixing it up with what is false we pray that they would lead them to put their trust and their rest upon the Lord Jesus Christ alone bless the scriptures to us for

Christ's sake amen

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host