

The waters of Marah

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 Donald Macdonald

[0 : 00] If thou wilt diligently hearth unto the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of those of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee.

It is especially the last phrase that we read, I am the Lord that healeth thee.

It is very important for us to remember that all God's dealings with his people are covenant dealings.

That is of primary importance. Our God is a covenant God. A God who made a covenant with his people, and a God who keeps it.

So when we're reading the history of these people, or the history of the church, let us ever remember that God is the covenant.

[1 : 27] On soever he went is appointed by him, appointed by him in the covenant, nothing happens by chance.

There is not such a thing as hate. And don't give way to thinking that there is. A Christian should never say what must be, must be, unless he has a sign on the foreordination, on the covenant of his God.

But he should never say it the way the world says it. In any case that is quite wrong to say. That is not true. But this is true, that all the appointments of God are covenant appointments.

At every event is the result or the effect of these. Now it follows from that, that everything that comes must be full of love and goodness and wisdom.

If things are ordained in the covenant by God, it cannot but be good. It cannot but be full of love.

[3 : 02] It cannot but be wise. Now let us always keep that in mind. And if you are disappointed tonight, or if you are anxious about anything, take these thoughts with you and believe them.

And they will make you a new man or a new woman. They will entirely alter you without good things. And just like Israel, you will get sweetness out of your greatest sorrow.

Now then, we found out the thing following here. That if everything is appointed in the covenant, and everything is full of love and wisdom and goodness, then everything must work for our good.

In the end, this follows as sure as day follows night. It will work for our good.

Whatever it is. We don't know how. We don't understand the mystery of these things. But God, in his own marvelous and almighty way, would work all things for the good of his own people.

[4 : 36] And all this boils back to the covenant, provision from all eternity. Now there are varieties of dealings in the covenant of God.

Various dealings that God has with his church here in the world. If I have a glimpse of it in this chapter, there was a marvelous deliverance from the Red Sea.

When the sea was divided, this round passed over as a dry land. And immediately after that, after they had sung this song of praise for that marvelous deliverance, they were led into the wilderness of Sharish, for there was no water to drink.

Could that good God do that? Well, you just ask yourself the question, why did God who delivered them out of the bondage of Egypt, where there might be ham, and opened a way for them in the sea, through the sea, why did he then lead them, all at once, into a wilderness, where there was no water to drink?

Because that was the greatest damage that could come upon them, to be in a wilderness, or were powered by the sun, in that hot country, with nothing to drink, must have been agony of the first magnitude.

[6 : 24] And God did the one thing, as he did the other. It was God who led them, to the wilderness, as it was God who brought them through the sea.

Now, do you believe that? Well, my friends, if you do and apply that to your own life, it will make the world of a difference, to the kind of life you lead.

All these events are meant to be lessons to us, and there are two or three lessons, which I want to take, briefly, out of this narrative tonight. First of all, we learn this from what God says, that we are people, exposed to diseases, are diseased people, are sick people.

God said to these people, I am the Lord, who healed me. Why did he say that, when they were sick? Why did he not say, I am the God, who will give thee water?

And he said, I am the God, who healed me. But he didn't say that. But he went deeper. And he said, I am Jehovah, the God who heals me.

[7 : 46] Now, why did he say this? Because God saw people, into their hearts, than they did themselves, and knew, that they had a disease, in their heart.

And there are diseases, in the world, which I need not linger, which is known, by way of explanation. For example, there are temporary diseases, the human body, is a depository of these.

every person, who lives, is dying on his feet, day by day. There is always something.

And if we don't heal, that there is, one of these days, we shall. And one of these days, we shall succumb, to these things, that are sure to be at work, in us, or within us.

There are ever so many, social evils, social sicknesses, envy, and enmity, and poverty, and war, and all these sorts of things, of which the world, is a fool.

[8 : 59] Diseases sometimes, caused by poverty, and sometimes, diseases caused by affluence. But the diseases are there, and we can't get rid of them, in this world.

If you listen, which I suppose you don't, you haven't got the time. If you listen to a lot of the type, that comes over the radio, during these days, and you hear politicians talking, telling lies, they tell you that, all social evils, that are in our midst, are going to be cured by them, taken away in no time.

But they can't take them away. They say that they're going to do something, which they cannot, which no man ever did, which did not even, even happen in the theocracy, before there were kings, and even after there were kings, according to God's own heart.

It did not happen, even unto the Lord, given unto Moses. These diseases, these all sheer evils, were there. And Harold Wilson and Ted Heath, will not take them away.

Nobody can take them away. They'll be always with us, in some mission than ever. And then there are moral diseases, where we better not talk about them.

[10 : 29] They're sickening enough. Sometimes you're afraid to read the paper. Headlines appear, which our fathers never thought would appear.

I suppose that, say, 50, 60 years ago, nobody would ever have believed, that a question, the question of battered babies, would ever appear as headlines, in the national press.

But then it is. And there are many, many, many other things besides. Well, these are things that are with us. And down at the root of the door, the sofa of the door, is the spiritual.

And this is really what God is referring to, when He says, I am Jehovah Ruffi, the God of humanity. He's referring to the spiritual. But there is a spiritual disease, what are some of the features, of which I will mention, very briefly.

I may mention that it is Yenideshwar, you see, some of the other diseases, are not in a different. Some diseases are in one country, but not in another.

[11 : 47] For example, leprosy, is prevalent in some parts. It's in Britain, but it is not prevalent in Britain. Sometimes socially, morally, are the pain of one country, but don't very, much trouble in another.

But spiritually, is universal. Wherever you go, wherever you get a man or a woman, this is true of them, that he is deceased, whereas spiritually, even, it is an universal thing.

And what is very sad, it is self-inflicted. It's a sad thing, when people afflict themselves, when people make themselves sick.

It's a very sad thing. Nothing is sadder, I suppose, than to see a man or a woman, ruining themselves, deliberately. It's hard.

It's heartbreaking to the home, and to relatives. But some people do that. Now, we all do it spiritually. We inflict upon ourselves, the wounds, which only God can heal, every one of us, by our prayerlessness, and carelessness, and indifference, and lack of spirituality.

[13 : 11] This is what we do. We afflict ourselves, with sin, with the disease, of sin. It's a deep-seated thing.

Down, deep in the heart, it is, as Jesus said to the Pharisees, when they said, why do you disciples wash, eat without washing their hands?

And he said to them, that is not what matters, most of all. It's not that Jesus Christ did care for hygiene. Not at all.

But he said, they're getting everything wrong. You think that it is what goes into a man that defies. If he eats food without washing his hands, that that defies.

Jesus said, that's not what defies. What defies him is what comes up to him. The source, the root of defilement, is in his heart. And down to the heart comes all evil things.

[14 : 14] A doctor in fornication. Hefts, covetousness, envy, all evil things. That is what defies a man.

These things that comes, that come out of the heart, they defy the man. And then this is infectious. We can't keep it to ourselves any more than people can keep, say, typhoid to themselves.

Or diseases like that. Diseases that break out and medical authorities immediately get into action so that these things will not spread among the people. But you can't keep sin from spreading among the people.

And I suppose one of the saddest things, one of the things that come hardest upon all consciences is not only that we have sinned those sins, but that we have caused us to sin as well.

That those sins have infected other people. That this plague of our heart has touched other people. and we have brought them into the mind in which we are ourselves.

[15 : 32] Sin is an infectious thing. And then again, it is stupefying. It makes people senseless or insensitive. They don't know they have it.

They don't believe they have it. They won't be convinced they have it. My friends, if we were convinced of that here this evening, and this is the first thing the Spirit of the Lord does in an awakening, we would be a different people.

We would cry upon the name of the Lord. This is what happened on the day of Pentecost when Peter was preaching. And the people cried in their thousands, what shall we do?

What was wrong with them? They knew they would die. They believed they were deceased. They believed they had that hate and malady.

And they said, what shall we do? Where shall we get a tune? Where is the opposition? This is what happened to them.

[16 : 32] They were convinced in their hearts. But we are not convinced. We are quite complacent. We are quite easy about it all that we have his disease.

And never shall be until the Spirit of the Lord shows us differently. But I want you to notice also that this is a lesson of experience.

It is part of the experience of the Lord's people. You see, some of you are not the Lord's people and you will not understand what I am going to say. But some of you will understand.

All those who are mature Christians or at least those of you who have been some years in the wilderness of life after you have received Christ who know what I am.

You were taught at the beginning that there was to be nothing but joy. The joy of the Lord. Fellowship with Jesus Christ. Enjoying sermons and every sermon was full and the Bible was full.

[17 : 37] And you sang because of your deliverance from sin as Israel sang when he got away from Egypt and across the Red Sea and then almost at once there came the wilderness and Marah.

The wilderness with no water. The wilderness with its bitterness. That is a lesson in the experience of the children of God. No, you can't get away from that any more than you can get away from your sin.

That is part of the covenant dealings of God. God obtained this in the covenant for you, my friend. God didn't mean that you should be forever happy in any way at all.

He meant that you would have your downs as well as your ups temporarily and spiritually and you will have them if you are a child of Christ. what a marvelous thing it was for Paul to have that unique experience of being cocked up into the third heaven and he heard words which couldn't be uttered which it was not lawful for him to tell.

It was a marvelous experience. I believe myself that nobody ever had it but Paul himself. I'm getting immediately after it there was the thorn in the flesh.

[19 : 10] He wasn't as it were even allowed to indulge in the remembrance of this thing. There was this thorn whatever it was like a wedge or a thorn or a staff a sharp thing a messenger of Satan in the babadim there it was and he couldn't get away from it and he prayed the Lord Christ or many times to take it away but the Lord didn't take it away.

Why? Because it was a covenant blessing just the same as the third heaven was. To him it seemed to be a curse it wasn't a curse it was an avenue of blessing to him.

And so you have the joy the first joy of salvation when a soul is delivered from sin and it cries and praises the Lord and weeps as those people to whom the Lord gave that vision leaps with the assurance of forgiveness saying no I was blind but now I see and then all of a sudden there comes a sense of corruption of the evil of one's heart and the person says I wonder if I was ever right I wonder if my soul ever praise Christ I wonder if I am a Christian at all if I am why do these thoughts arise in my heart why all this wickedness of imagination under God my friend this is a covenant blessing the same as everything you find it also in things even of the world there are joys that God gives you in the world and they are legitimate joys you know what I mean by that

I don't mean the joy that people get out of what they shouldn't get any joy from but I mean legitimate joys for example God gives you a family and they are wise and loving and affectionate and you get joy out of it and then God may come and take your child away and you have to put him into the cold why does God do that he does it because he is the covenant God he does it because he deals with you in a covenant way he does it because this is the appointment of the covenant and he does it because he has appointed that the one thing should be as much an avenue of blessing to you as the other the same with health and sickness see some people they get on for years and years most of us do and we have a table and an age and then all of a sudden something comes and blights so light there may be an application or there may be arthritis or there may be something quiet because God is the covenant

God this is the lesson of the wilderness the crossing of the Red Sea and the wilderness of Shire you can see sometimes in relation to the Lord's cause something that I'm not going to enter into I've been in it but sometimes some of the Lord's people have a wonderfully successful ministry at the beginning of the ministry young men and the Lord marvelously blesses them and then things begin to get stale and staler stale until at last it seems as if the places left a complete wilderness that happened in the days of the apostles it happened with the churches in Asia churches that were living they became dead churches that were full of land they left the first land oh yes it happened it happened even to some extent in the ministry of the mighty

[23 : 12] Charles Adams version when he was a lad at 19 he wasn't even 19 when he went to London and when he was a young man there with thousands gathering to hear him there were converse by the hundreds and by the thousands but before he died things were not quite like that he always had a measure of success but if you read his last sermons the sermon of his last year you see that there is a stale and there is a longing on his own part and he talks about the time when we had the revival the time when the Lord was with us the time when the Lord did wonderful works from manas and he mourns over these times why should these things be the sun after the red sea and the wilderness are shared in the experience of a minister of God well then these things are meant to try faith and to try patience and to try loyalty that's why the

Lord says them well now let us go on to the third thing very briefly and that is that here we have a lesson of what God is to say God whose people is the healer Jehovah Rohai the Lord who heals thee and my friends this is the primary lesson which the whole thing is meant to teach change now let us be very careful on this point because if we lose it we lose the sense of the whole sermon and of the whole narrative why did God do this to these people why did he take them into the wilderness of church why did we not give them what to drink well you can give many answers I said the trial of patience and the trial of loyalty and the pain and so on all these are answers but this is the main answer that is that he would teach them what he is he would teach them what relationship he stands to them that is the meaning of it all there is a certain relationship in which

God stands to his people and he wanted to teach this lesson and to deepen it in the arms I am God who is you that's the lesson of the whole thing and you didn't know this he said you didn't know it before but now you know it you didn't know that you're liable to all these things that became Egypt you didn't know that all these plagues that came on Egypt could come on you but I am telling you here and now at the beginning of your journey I am God who heals you I am the healer you know that believe that you can take the wilderness journey calmly and easily everything will be different if you know that I am the healer there is a doctor in your house there is a healer always going side by side with you whatever will come your way and God wanted to stress this lesson his own relationship with the people who may have brought out of

Egypt the relationship of our sick people and of our physician that is the relationship between God and these people and what does he prove when he does this well there are two things there are many things but there are two things especially first of all there is life and second there is his almighty now my friend how do you know a doctor does not necessarily love his patient not necessarily he cares for her but he does not necessarily love her in fact it would be absolutely impossible for a doctor to love all his patients but it would be humanly impossible it just doesn't happen but God as the healer loves all his patients and he loves them with an everlasting love he loves everyone of them that comes to them everyone who labors and is happy he loves them all

I am Jehovah Ruhi the God who loves you and because of my love I will heal you and there is this almighty no doctor can cure all his patients a doctor's power is limited but God's power is not limited and my friend I preach with you in his name don't limit the mighty one of his son don't limit him pray every day in life that God will deliver you from the belief of limiting him limiting him oh we all have own limitations and they're all too obvious especially if we have before the public eye but God is not to be limited and if only one thing that limits an episode in belief and devoured belief limits that God won't heal you you see this prevented Christ from healing in the days of his life he was in a certain place and there were many deceased and he could not do healing not much healing anyway there because of the people's unbelief their belief limited to the range of it well to use that word the range of impotent morally impotent to do the work that he would otherwise have done even though he was the son of

[29 : 06] God what a terrible thing in belief it is my friend never doubt the almightyness of Jehovah Rovi the Lord we see and when he thinks how does he do it he does it efficiently oh when he puts his hands upon his friend when he puts his hands upon there is nothing more to be done nothing more he doesn't send you as doctors have to do he doesn't send you to a consultant he doesn't send you from one to the other Christ never did that never he did it all himself when he sent the lampers to the priests it wasn't that the priests would heal the lampers oh no he was under the law and he was observing the law it was Christ to heal Christ never had any reason to send anyone to anyone else because he does it all efficiently in sin and once he lays his hand upon you you will never die of the disease that he drew once he touches as it were your sin your sin will never defeat him never there is no condemnation to them who are in

Jesus Christ this is why he died so that he could heal efficiently and efficiently he is and he is available every time we need him we can come to him now I spent a long time on this particular thing bringing out to you the meaning of the words that we have in the text I am just only going to mention them see what God says he says for I am the Lord who heal you see that the word am there in the Bible this Bible probably is in italics it did not at all appear in the original what is in the original is this I in a capital I am with capitals I am I am that I am which means to set the exist and eternal of

Jehovah that's who I am I am Jehovah I am the ever present I am the everlasting God I am the changing God the year come and go the heavens shall be folded like a vesture but thou art from all changes really the I am says I am the God of his thee oh friends what a marvelous thing this is what a tremendous comfort of the people of God the I am the I am sent Moses to deliver his people the I am promises that he will heal him amen is healing is certain it's not just amen but the will I am God to heal him of all I disease it was inconceivable that Christ came in the days of his flesh when anybody came to for healing you can't imagine anybody coming to

Christ for healing and Jesus saying to him I am sorry I can't do anything for you your diseases are such a nature that I can't heal you my friends it would be blasphemy to think that it would be inconceivable to think that there was nothing the son of God could not do and so we come to him who is always available and we know that he is the God who heals the great Jehovah who is always available and always ready and always able and what does he healer of he heals us in everything shall I just mention briefly to you some of the things from which he heals you from your unbelief these down to Moses oh shame on them God put up with their murmurings for 40 years and this was the beginning of it they had been delivered from Egypt and delivered from the terror of the

Red Sea and there they started immediately murmuring against Moses the man of God and God said I have the God who heals you and he heals us of our murmuring and did it that they were unbelieving why the God who delivered them out of the water surely he could give them water the God who made the water of the seas down like two walls or excited them could he not provide enough water for them to drink but they didn't believe that shame on that shame on down in God said I will heal that also I will heal you and he says I will heal your corruption are you troubled with evil thoughts and wild thoughts and blasphemous thoughts are you troubled with these things are you troubled with things that you would never tell anybody well

[34 : 32] God will heal you friend it's no use coming to me none at all because if you come to me you only come to a person who is afflicted with these things just like yourself but if you go to God God will heal you now this is no myth it's no myth remember that what I am saying is true God will take these things away from you and he will deliver you from the bondage of that corruption he will break chains in sand and set you free that's what he gave to do to open the prison door and the captive temptations and many other things have you a besetting sin something of which you say only I could be delivered from that there is that besetting sin always following way like my shadow it's been with me for many years and

I can't get rid of it I wish I could get rid of it my friend I am Jehovah go by says Jehovah the mighty God he will take it away he will go through but you say hasn't everybody got a set sin never mind what everybody has got I am telling you what God can do for you this is what I tell you everybody has got a pathetic sin it's his own fault the fault of his own nature and that's no excuse for you or for me what I am telling you is that God will heal your pathetic sin God will take it away this is what he promises we do it but what about remembered sin oh what sting there is in remembered sin and the gift of remembered sin I don't think there is anything in the book of psalms that draws out my sin but they do the psalmist not even psalm 51 more than these words that he says in psalm 25 remember not the sins of my youth he remembered them except but he didn't want

God to remember them other sins that you did a year ago or years ago they come back into your memory and they have a sting far more bitter than the waters of Marah everywhere to the Israelites my friend God would cure even that he cured the bitterness of Marah and he would cure the bitterness of remembered sin and he would take your guilt away and even if you don't cease to remember that you have sinned he will take the bitterness the sting of it all away how does he do it well you remember what these people see the difference between them they began to murmur against Moses and Moses began to pray what a difference there is between the converted and the converted when they are in see it here shining like the sun as clear as crystal they were brought into the wilderness of sherd for there was no water therefore and the people murdered against

Moses saying watch of the drink and Moses cried to the Lord for the difference there is between darkness and light between nature and grace between a person submitting to God and a person who doesn't know him they murdered against him he cried to God that's the difference well then God healed them by means God showed Moses a tree he showed the praying manner he didn't show them any tree they were only marmory and marmory never gets anything God doesn't dance in marmory except with a rod of affliction but Moses prayed and when Moses prayed God showed him something he showed him a tree and he said to him put that tree into the water and it would make the water sweet so he did Moses himself was helpless but Moses praying to

God was not helpless and so he put the tree in the water and the water was made sweet and what is this typical of one thing and one thing only it is typical of one who was on a tree Jesus Christ who was made a curse for us and he was put into the intensely bitter water of death and of soul decision it is he who was put into the water it is he who made them sin it is he who took the sting out of death it is he who was made sin for us who knew no sin it is with his stripes we are healed this is what it means God you read Isaiah 3 you get the answer to it all and listen friend it doesn't matter what it doesn't matter what disease you have I going to tell you tonight as an ambassador of

[40 : 01] Jesus Christ at least as one who preaches his word faithfully and truthfully I want to tell you this there is no cure for you whatever is wrong for you but in a crucified savior and you might as well not waste your money or waste your time on anybody here you would be like that poor woman who had the issue of blood and she went other worship and so it would be with you no my friends don't waste your time or your energy but go to him whatever disease you have there is healing for it in a crucified Jesus and there is healing for it nowhere else that crucified Jesus and so he removes the trial but what is the condition the condition is obedience to him this is what he says if you will hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God and do that which he fight in his sight and give ear to his commandment and keep all his status

I will put none of these pieces upon you which I have brought upon the Egyptians for I am the Lord that he to thee are my friends there are condition attached to the covenant and attached to the promise the of God if you think that you can have God in all his goodness and love and healing power and at the same time disobey him he's putting things all wrong that's not the way God puts them but remember that you can have your healing at the cost of obedience to his command and if you obey then you have the happiness of the Lord putting his hand upon you and healing you what sweetness is well if it comes with power to your soul as I remember on one occasion it came with power to my soul when

I was deeply depressed and cast down over my own sins and over my diseases and I remember one morning I never to be forgot the day in my experience when as I was waking up I heard as as as a voice from heaven saying to me Jehovah Ovi I am God who is you it's a never to be forgotten morning it's a wonderful promise if you had got whole worlds piled one upon another if you had got a multiplicity of worlds what would that be in comparison that one covenant promise of God I am God who is all sufficient for your diseases and we are just going to sing that before we part one from another to sing about it and let us pray Lord do thou know the precious to us and help us as we sing our parting song of praise may all souls be lifted up to bless the

Lord over God for all his benefits that he has stood upon us for Jesus sake we ask you amen God