

Judges 3:31 (Ken Harman, Walt Porter, R. Klassen) 210591

Des Moines Conference: 2001, Shamgar-Judges 3:31, More on Shamgar, Lessons of the Wilderness

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Open—K. Harman, W. Porter, R. Klassen

The second sentence. Now therefore, we are all here, present before God. To hear all things that are commanded thee of God. We've been reminded recently. That God can use instruments of an unpredictable sort. We'll pray and ask God's help for this meeting. Our gracious, loving Father and our God. I'd like to turn for a verse to start with in the Book of the Judges. Judges Chapter. Three. And verse 31. And after him was Shamgar. The son of enough which slew of the Philistines? 600 men with an ox goat, and he also delivered Israel. And then? To Ephesians. Chapter 6. Verse 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. But on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil, where we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand an evil day, and having done all, to stand. Therefore, having your loins gird about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance. And supplication for All Saints. And then we'll turn to a verse in. First Peter, I believe it is. First Peter, chapter 5.

We might begin at verse one. The elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ. And also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind either, as being Lords over God's heritage, but being in samples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory, the fadeth not away. Suppose that's enough. All right, going back to Shamgar, sometimes about all we know about Shamgar is what we sing in the Sunday school. And I suppose we could ask any of these children to stand up and they could sing that little chorus. Shamgar had an ox code and so on. So there's not too much spoken of about Shamgar. But we had before us in the previous meeting about how God is able to use anybody. And umm, it doesn't need to be an eloquent person. That's why I'm here. But God is willing to use, as we had before us, an empty vessel. I appreciate the little hymn that her brother Cassandra read prior to giving thanks for the food. The empty vessel. And to fill us with that, with the desire to be used as a vessel for him. And taking no glory for the instrument. How wonderful this is to be able to look beyond the instrument. And see that God has something for us. And so we look at Shamgar here, and he lived in a day where there was no king in Israel and everyone did that which was right in his own eyes. And it's a shameful, a shameful story to read. And yet I've been so encouraged in reading through the judges because it is so much like the day in which we are living right now. And. And we see that God has given us the things that were written before time, were written for our learning, that we, through pay, comfort and patience, and through the comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. And so we look at these scriptures, we say, what is God telling us here? We go back to the time when in Israel's history where they were the people of God, and yet they had found themselves under the enemy's power. Time and time and time again a wonderful dis to read about Joshua, you know. Coming into the land and the children of Israel coming into their privileges, entering into the land to enjoy that which God had given them. Beautiful to see this. And we thought, you know what, they could have only remained there and enjoyed the land that flowed with milk and honey. All that God had provided for them was there. Plus he said, I will be with you, I will be your God. And they found time and time again that all they had to do was commit themselves to God and He would go before them and destroy the enemy. And they had enemies in the land, and as they went in, they confronted these enemies and they defeated them one after the other after the other. And they found whenever they tried to do it in their own strength, they were defeated. But God was faithful. And he kept on. Sending ones in to encourage them to. Depend on me, depend on me. And so we come to the time as we read. If we just. Go back in Judges just for a bit in the second chapter. And we'll read just the odd verse here, and chapter 2 and verse two. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land. You shall throw down their altars. And what does it say? But you have not obeyed my voice. Why have you done this? And then verse 7. And the people serve the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had been, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being 110 years old, and they buried him in the border of his inheritance in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gash. And also all that generation were gathered under their fathers.

And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and Sir Balaam. And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed their other gods of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger. And they forsook the Lord, and serve Balaam and Ashtaroth. And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. And He delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies roundabouts, so they could not any longer stand. Before their enemies, well, we could go on and it's a repetition it seems, of the same thing. And they were delivered into the hands of their enemies and then God would raise up. Someone to deliver them. But it wasn't until they cried unto the Lord, and they would cry unto the Lord in their ***** and he would raise up a savior. Well, the first three enemies that we meet in the Book of Judges. Shushan, Richard. Sam. And there is Eglin. And then there is Jabin first three. Shushan, Russia. Sam, What does that mean? It's the blackness of double wickedness. Double darkness, if you will. Eglin was a fat man. And he is portrayed to us, I believe, as the flesh, the ugliness of the flesh. And Jaben is a picture of that king who the thought of his name is that he's on a mound. And he also had other kings under him. And we right away think of what we get in Ephesians, the principalities and powers in wicked in high places, and the wickedness, the darkness of those principalities and powers there that are in that unseen world that you and I are contending with. We don't see them, but they're there. And we have to. There are part of our enemies. And so we get the lust, we get the world, which is figurative. We get figured in Shushan

Orisha them. The world in its wickedness, its blackness. Darkness, double wickedness, and we get the flesh and we get the devil, our three enemies that we are contending with all the time. And God has raised up, He raised up judges to deal with those enemies. And he is able to do it now. He is able to do the same thing now. Those are the same enemies that confront you and me. They're the same enemies that keep us in *****. They are the same enemies that the Saints of God have to that prevent the Saints of God from possessing their possession. But we get in the book of Ephesians is we're blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. And He wants you and me, brethren, to enter into them. How much are we enjoying our possessions? How much do we enter into these possessions? Every one of us in this room, everyone young and old. If you have the Spirit of God dwelling in you, you are a believer in the Lord Jesus. He has given you the power and He has given you the life to be able to enter into all these blessings that He has given us. We might not enter into them fully, but you know the little bit we can enter into them. We enjoy them, but there's enemies of our souls that wants to keep us and hinder us from entering into them. One of these enemies. We are three of these enemies. We mentioned there's another one and it's the Philistine. The Philistines were the ones that Shamgar conquered. How did he do it with what he had at hand? Shamgar was. Perhaps a peasant? He had an oxcope. He handled oxen. He was not a very diplomatic person. No doubt like you, Hood was in the next one. Nor was he the warrior like we did an autonomy all the first one, but he was perhaps a simple peasant. And he used what he had in his hand to deliver the Saints of God.

And with that aux code he slew 600 Philistines. I believe it's the first time the Philistines are mentioned here. Where did the Philistines come from, do you know? Well, Philistines, it is believed, came perhaps from the Isles of the Mediterranean and from there, and they came over into Egypt and they followed Egypt along, which is in your map, in the back of your Bible, the way of the Philistine. And they came up into the land where God says I have placed my name. That's where the Philistines ended up. But they didn't know anything about the brick kilns of Egypt. They didn't know anything about the blood on the doorpost and on the lentil. They didn't know anything about the first born being slain. They didn't know anything about going to that Red Sea and being and being confronted with the enemy and crying to God. And he delivered them, and they went through on dry land through the Red Sea. They didn't know anything about that. They just simply came across and they went up and they came into the land of the easiest way, and they got into the land where God had placed his name. The children of Israel came into that land too. They started in Egypt. They ended up in Canaan, but they came by way of all of the blood. They came by way of resurrection. They went through the Red Sea and they came into the land. They went through Jordan, that first of all the Red Sea. It was a death of Christ for them. And then they came by Jordan, and that was their death in Christ with Christ. And so they recognized all this, and that brought them right up into the promised land, and there they were able to cross that land. And there are those stones in the bottom of Jordan and those stones up on the shore which we know is in Jordan. There is just for the eye of God to see that they are dead with Christ. And then the stones on the other side are life of Christ. Now what a wonderful picture this is. And it's in the land now. They're brought through into the land and they're able to enjoy all these things. But the Philistines came through a different way. And I believe, I would submit this, that the thought is the Philistines are characteristic, would represent that part, that system in this world today, that ecclesiastical system, it was known as Christendom. We are part of the brethren. Don't let anybody say we are not part of prison. We are. We're in this world, we're in Christina, but there is that part in Christendom that is a systematic thing that that. Hinders the people of God and that brings them into captivity and keeps them from enjoying their blessings. Keeps you from enjoying the Word of God. Keeps me from enjoying it. And yet all the time, outwardly, it is that which is Christian. But that is another enemy. Another enemy. And it is a very real enemy, I believe, that we don't realize. That we are contending with. I've been going to. Conferences for the last 50 years. And there's many of my acquaintances that I don't see anymore. And I'm sure there's each one here can say the same thing. Where's brother so and so? Where is sister so and so? Where is this one, this young person that you know? Well, they've left. Where did they go? Well, they went into the camp. They wanted some place where a little more activity. They did not see that wall, that way of separation unto God, and so they're gone. They have been lured away by the enemy. These are very real things. There was a time in my life when I had to come to that point. And I got to, I got to the point where I had to see that it was a system. It was not the people. Let's separate it. We have to keep it separated. Sure, the people are in the system. But it is the system that is wrong. And it was that system that I had to get to the point where I could see it's not a case of finding this group better than that group and then leaving after me to decide that that's where I should be.

When I saw that the whole thing was wrong. We made it clear. And then we have to get our focal point has to be Christ. And we look up there and we sit beside him and we say, we look down, we say, what does he see? And that's what I see. And if we don't see that? We won't get the true vision of what it is all about. And so we need deliverance. Perhaps. And it can start right here. Right here in our own souls. Let's get a look at Christ, see what is honoring to him what He is worthy of. Focal point, not brother, so and so. Not this group or that group. They might be very, very nice groups, they may be very enjoyable. They may have lots of activity, a lot for me to enjoy and entertain me. And if you've got any gift, they're they'll welcome it, They welcome you and they'll use it. But if Christ is our focal point, we will see that we have to start there. And then we find that everything else falls into place. I challenge you young people and older ones too. That you begin there. Get along with God as we are told. It's important that we need to get along with God. And see what he would tell us. And get the answer from him. Shanghai appreciated the Saints of God. He appreciated the land. He appreciated what God had given them. And the time came in his life. Let's turn to the fifth chapter, just for a moment, and we'll see what it was like in the time of Shamgar. In verse six, in the days of Shamgar the son of Anna, in the days of jail, the highways were unoccupied. The travelers walked through byways. The inhabitants of the villages ceased. They ceased in Israel until it I, Deborah arose that I arose a mother in Israel. They chose a new new gods. Then was war in the gates. Was there a short? Was there a shield or spear seen among 40,000 in Israel? My heart is toward the governors of Israel that offered themselves willingly among the people. Maybe that's as far as we need to go. The result of the enemy coming in the land, into the land was that the highways were shut up. It was dangerous for them to go out onto the highways. The villages were no longer because they needed protection and so they didn't want to be left alone. They went, they assembled in perhaps towns. The villages were shot up, the highways were were not safe to travel on, it says here. And so there was. The inhabitants of the villages ceased. The visible, we might say the visible unity of the of of the people was gone. The visible unity of the people was gone then in verse. Three, they chose new gods. Then was war in the gates, and so idolatry had become their religion and they had forsaken God. And then in verse. Still, in that verse, was there a shield or spear seen among 40,000 in Israel? There wasn't anything in their hands that they could combat the enemy. Their power was gone. They couldn't protect themselves and so the enemy had literally. Had literally taken away their unity, their liberty, and all that they should have been holding. It was gone. Why? Because they had not obeyed the word of God. So Shamgar rises up and he says this is not right. We need our liberty. God is our God. We are in ***** here, and so these Philistines come in, and he rises up in the energy of the Spirit of God with this ox foot, and he slaves 600 Philistines, and it says that he also delivered Israel.

And Israel had peace. How can we do this, brother? Do we rise up in this same way? No. It has to begin here. Right here. I read those verses in. Ephesians about the putting on the whole armor of God we wrestle not against. Flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers

in heavenly places. Our enemy is very, very real and we need to put on the whole armor of God. I don't know what armor Shamgar had. It doesn't look like he had any armor except that desire to serve God and to deliver his people. Are we concerned about the whole Church of God, or are we just concerned about our own little number? The truth of God is for the Saints of God. God has a place, He has a path for faith, and I thank God I can say from the bottom of my heart I know I'm there. But there is a. The Saints of God in general are in ***** and we need to pray for them. We need to realize that the truth of God is for them too, and for ourselves. How can I deliver the Saints of God? Oh, I can't go out with an army. I can't go out with an ox goat, but I can use what's at hand. And I ask God. To help me to walk, to please him, then make straight paths for my own feet, and then I might encourage you. To go on for him to. Or you can make straight tiles for your feet and encourage me. And in that sense we can each working together. We can be deliverers together of the Saints of God to keep us in the enjoyment. Of our possessions, of that which is good, of that which God has given us. He wants us to enjoy them now, not wait until we get there. When we get there, there shouldn't be that much change. We stepped from this scene into that scene as their brother brought before us. Enoch walked with God 300 years. And that he was not. And I like that thought, you know, that Enoch was walking down here. He got up in the morning and went to bed at night. He got up the next morning and he went about his daily chores duties and he but in it all he pleased God. He walked with God. Is that my desire? Is that your desire? Her brother was bringing before some previous meeting. That doesn't matter what you're doing, working with your hands, a thing that is needful that we may have to give to him that needed. That's one thing that we can serve God. Just the little things of life, those things that God puts in our hand to do. And we can do them with all our might and do them to the glory of God. And in that way we can strengthen the hands that hang down and the feeble knees. Maybe our own needs and our own hands that need to be strengthened first, but in so doing. It encourages others too, isn't it not an encouragement to see a young brother or a young sister or an older one too, To just have their, their, their face set, as it were, as a Flint to go on? It is. And how encouraging that is. And the opposite is true as well, when we see them fail and succumb to the enemy. But you and I, brethren, we can do the little bit that God has given to our hand. And there I read in Philippians in first Peter chapter one and verse chapter 5 rather first Peter chapter 5. About God's heritage, the people of God. Shamgar served the people of God. And he served God in doing so, and he delivered them. He did what God had given him to do, and then he goes off the scene. Like someone has said, we use the knife to ourselves. We serve all and we pass on.

That's our life as we go into this world. Use the knife to ourselves. We serve all and then we pass on David. He served his own generation and fell asleep. Everyone of us, if the Lord doesn't leave us, if the Lord doesn't come first, we're going to serve our generation in some way or other. Wouldn't it be nice to be a shamgar? Wouldn't it be nice to be an off meal? Wouldn't it be nice to be an E hood or, or one of those, those judges that we read out there that God used in a simple way? And I believe, if I'm correct in saying this. That everyone of those judges we read of, There's 13 in the book of judges. And 13 is the number of rebellions. That's what we find in the Book of Judges, isn't it? But everyone of them, I believe, comes from a different tribe. There are from a different walk of life. They're not all the same. They're not all great people. Othniel was a Prince, you might say, and he was one. He was a nephew of of Caleb, and he came from a family that really was a relative of Esau. God uses whoever he wants, He's gracious and he brings in from the oddest place. Rahab was a harlot. And we just heard about Jacob, who's a Rascal. So. Let's not look at ourselves and say, oh, I'm just too bad for God to use. I just I've wasted my life. Hey, there's a henceforth from here. Let's go on. Let's be an E HUD. Let's be a chem guard. Let's be enough. Just remember that. God has given us a portion and it's God's land right now. It's God's testimony. It's God's people and the time is very short. I was just impressed in this thinking. In this last meeting somewhat dimension the year the year was mentioned 2001, the Lord was crucified when in about the year AD 29 or 33, we're not sure exact date. 2001 Do we stop to realize how much longer, how much time has gone by since the Lord died? Isn't he patient? And he's waited that you and I might be able to be. Co heirs together with him of all that he has earned by his death. We are Co heirs with Christ. We can be Co sufferers with him too. And then we'll walk. When he calls us, we'll step into glory with Him. To inherit, to enter into our inheritance in a real way. But all we can, we can fight for it right now, you know, we can be overcomers, we can be Shamgars. And so there in the book of First Peter, we are told, let's read that just for a moment. Before we close. Again. Peter failed. You know, it's so appropriate that Peter writes this by the Spirit of God. He says, feed my flock, please feed the sheep of God. Who told him to feed the flock, The Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, he says. It says here when the chief shepherd shall appear. Peter knew what he was talking about. Peter knew what it was like to fail. But he also knew what it was like to be an overcomer. And God, the Lord Jesus said to him, feed my flock. And he said, Peter, I prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and when thou art restored. What does he say? When our resort. Strengthen my brother. Strengthen thy brethren. How can we strengthen our brethren? Can you sisters strengthen your brother? You sure can. Yes, you can. The brother said to me once, many years ago, and I don't think I've never forgotten what he said. It's just a simple thing, he said. You know, if you want to, if you want to help your brethren.

Walk with the Lord, just like that walk with the Lord. Something for the conscience. As I walk through the scene, am I walking with Christ? Am I conscious of the enemy? Am I aware of what God has given me? Am I enjoying them? Have I bought them? Have I paid the price? Have I bought the truth and am I keeping it? And so in Peter says here feed the flock of God, which is among you. Taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly. Not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. Neither as being Lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock I. I know this is speaking to the elders there, but can't each one of us take this to heart? Feed the flock of God which is among you. And for those who are the brothers taking the oversight? Not sitting down and saying, waiting for somebody to say, will you do this for the people of God? Or will you do this? We're not being nominated to do it, brother, but. Ehud felt, or I should say Shamgar had the sense in his soul that something had to be done to deliver the Saints of God, and he used what he had, and he smote the enemy. He delivered not only himself, but the Saints of God. And we can do this, perhaps in a small local way, but they're the flock of God. And it says taking the oversight, those of us to whom it speaks to. I can't point you out, but does it speak to your heart? You say I'd like to feed the I'd like to help the people of God. Then that's speaking to you. Do something about it. Use what God has given you and say, yes, Lord. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, it says ye shall receive a crown of glory. The fate is not away. Let's do it, brother. There's still time. But it won't be for very long, because he that shall come will come and will not tarry, and we will not be able to. To pick up the loose ends, shall we say, and do something then that we should have done, but now is the time. And I just encourage your own heart as well as my own, that let's look at these ones who delivered Israel and say, by the grace of God, I want to be a shame guard. Let's turn to a verse in Exodus chapter 4. I'm not going to. I want to speak to some others this afternoon that may be Shamgars. And maybe they don't know it yet. I think as the older ones lookout on a group like this. They have to say there's an awful lot of potential here. Potential to. Honor the Lord and be a blessing to His people. And also as our brother has mentioned. Potential to be castaway. Next to this chapter 4 and verse 13. Moses is speaking to the Lord. And he said, Oh my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. Now Moses here, as we know, is trying to get away from his responsibility. And some of us may be as we're sitting in our seats, maybe we would like to. Get away from some responsibility. Because the work of being a shepherd seeking to. Speak a word in due season. Is sometimes not an easy thing. But I think the question for each one of us is. Are we one whom the

Lord will send? As our brother Ken was mentioning. That doesn't mean we're going off to do some great work. It doesn't mean the Lord is going to send us off to a foreign land to preach the gospel to those that have never heard.

Maybe you have a brother that's going astray. Maybe there's someone in your assembly just needs a little word of encouragement. Are you there for him? Send, I pray thee, by the hand of whom thou wilt send. And I want to go on a little further in Exodus in chapter 30. Exodus chapter 30 and verse 13. By the way, Moses here had taken that challenge and had gone. As he felt the Lord sent him to do. And he became that one the Lord wanted him to become. And may each of us among us, as has been mentioned, you don't have to be a brother. There is a lot of work for sisters. There are those whose hands hang down. There are those with feeble knees. And they need at least an example. In Exodus 30:13 it says this. They shall give everyone that passeth among them that are numbered half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary. I just want to take that phrase out of this verse. Among them that are numbered now, there came a time in. In the life of a young Israelite. Boy that he got to a certain age and it was time for him to take his place. Among them that are numbered, we've sometimes heard that expression. You can count on me. I wonder today if there's a desire with us to be counted for the testimony of God. There was one, you know, in the New Testament that the Lord speaks of. She was just a widow and she had two mites. It was all her living. How much did she give to the Lord? None. One. No, no, she gave them both. And I want to challenge each of us. Are we willing to pass among them that are numbered? Have you taken up? With what God has given you. The work he's given you. You know, he's given talents, he's given pounds, he gives to each of his own something that can be useful. To the people of God. And we don't want to put it in a napkin. We don't want to bury it in the earth. Are you willing to stand up? Among them that are numbered. Let's look at a passage. I think it's first chains. Chapter 18. First Kings 18. We'll start with verse. 41 And the setting for this story is that Elijah was up on Mount Carmel, all the prophets of bail, and they were going to find out who the Lord was, if the Lord was really there or not. And after that fire of the Lord had fallen in verse 38. And the prophets of Baal are slain in verse 40. Then we find an interesting passage that I just want to speak about a little this afternoon. Verse 41 And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink, and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, and he cast himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked and said, there is nothing. And he said, go again seven times. And it came to pass at the 7th time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand.

He said, Go up Santa, have prepared thy chariot, and get thee down that the rain. Stop the knot. And it came to pass in the meanwhile that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. In the hand of the Lord is on Elijah. And he girded up his loins, and he ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. I like to take this sound of abundance of rain. As the blessing of God coming down from heaven, I'm from Walla Walla, WA. We have a lot of wheat farmers out there and they appreciate the rain. Some of us don't like the rain because it gets our car dirty or it makes a mess for playing ball or whatever. But generally speaking. Rain is that kind of a picture to us of blessing of God coming down from heaven. The earth and the plants, they sit there and they wait for that refreshing rain from heaven. Well, Elijah said. There's a sound of it, but it isn't here yet. You know me, it's a good thing for us to desire the blessing of the people of God. We want that rain to fall on God's dear people. Elijah went up to the top of Carmel while he was waiting for this to happen. He had a sense that it was coming. He said there's a sound of it, but he went up to the top of Carmel. And I just like to think of Elijah as representing the older ones here among us today. There are those that have been in the way a long time. There are lows like Elijah that have fought very definite battles for the Lord. And the Lord has brought in blessing. I like to think of this older one. Now he's waiting for the blessing of the Lord to fall. He's on the top of Carmel and he says to his servant. Go up now in verse 43, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked and he came back and said there's nothing there. What do you want me to look for? And I like to think of this as. Elijah, by his servant, was surveying over the sea of faces, just like I'm doing today. You know, the older ones have been here a long time and they've looked out over God's people. And they're looking for blessing to come. And they say, I wonder where blessing is going to come from. And he sends his servant to look and he comes back and he says, I don't see anything. He says well, go again. He goes again, He comes back to that. I still don't see anything. Goes again, goes again and finally the 7th time he comes back and he said. I see a little cloud coming out of the sea. Now, what kind of a shape was that little cloud? Middle of verse 44. A little cloud out of a sea, like a man's hand. And I like to think that Elijah was cheered in his soul to see a little hand reach up out of that sea. And say he wanted to take hold the things of God. Is there anyone here today? They will purpose in their heart. That they want to be among those that are numbered. There's a lot of potential here. And the older ones are looking on, wondering is there anyone that's going to come along, take a hold of the truth of God? There were those that were read we were reading about just a few minutes ago. It had a purpose that God's inheritance. Would be maintained for his people. Do you have a desire like that today? Thank the Lord if you do. And I think I can say for those that are older, I have a few Gray hairs, but I think I can say for those that are older that it's such a cheer to their heart. To see those that will reach out and take a hold. Of that truth and be willing to be counted. And what does it say after that then verse 45. Came to pass in the meanwhile that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.

Mr. Darby says a great pour of rain, and that's what we desire, isn't it, brethren? The Lord had poured out a blessing on his people. Who will be willing? To take up the cause. Who is willing to be counted for the testimony of God? Who is willing to put in their two mites? And give the role to God's testimony so there can be blessing for his people. Again this meeting by singing 242. And. This is what it says. Sing aloud to God our strength. He has brought us hitherto the next birth. Sing aloud to God our strength. Sing with wonder of his love. Next verse sing aloud to God our strength. He is with us where we go. What a wonderful thing for us to realize that we have a promise from God that He will never leave us nor forsake us. We know that he is for it. How do we know that he that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all? How shall he not with Him also freely give us all things? There were. Two things that children of Israel had to learn. When they left the land of Egypt. God's purpose was to bring them out of Egypt. Into Canaan, the promised land. But we see that. Israel. Spent 40 years. In the wilderness. This was not God's purpose that Israel should spend 40 years in the wilderness. But it was in God's ways. Now why would we? Believe that God, in his ways, would allow his people to spend 40 years in the wilderness. I believe in when we read in Deuteronomy, we see the reason. There are two lessons that we need to learn. The one is. Is that in myself dwelleth no good thing. There's nothing to look for in the flesh. This is the most important lesson for us to learn that we are helpless and hopeless. There's nothing in the flesh the Lord Jesus could say without me you can do nothing. The Apostle Paul said in my flesh. Dwelleth no good thing. That's the truth of God's Word. But it doesn't stop there. The other lesson that God had for his people to learn was that of His faithfulness in spite of what? Man was in spite of what his people were, how they complained and murmured against the Lord. God was faithful. He brought them through the wilderness into the land of Canaan. Our God is faithful. He will bring us home at last. And this is what we're looking for, isn't it, beloved? Thanks to God to be with and like our Savior. Do we deserve to have such a place of privilege? I'm sure you can stay with me. We have failed. And we don't deserve anything, and if it weren't for the grace of God, we would have nothing.

I would like to look at. A verse in Psalms the 34th. Some pardon me, I think it's the 39th Psalm. Just to encourage our hearts to show us exactly what. We're made out of. Psalm 39. Verse 4. Lord, this is a prayer of David. Lord, make me to know my name. And the measure of my days, what it is that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand breath, and mine age. It is as nothing before thee. Verily, every man at his best state is all together vanity. Zero pause. Meditate. Man at his best state is altogether vanity. That's quite a. Lesson for us to learn, isn't it, especially in this world. Where we live, where man is set up as being something he set up to. As the one to be looked at as being. Everything. But man at his best state. Altogether, vanity. That's what God says about man. That's what we can know, too. Let's turn to. Psalm 89. Some 89. Verse 47. Remember. How short my time is? We're going to stop at that point. Remember how short my time is? This rather interesting that this Psalm. Ends one of the books. And the 90th Dom begins another book. Of the Psalms, you know there's five books in the Psalms, but in the next Psalm. It says. In verse 9. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath. We spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years, our three score years and 10. And if by reason of strength they be 4 score years, yet as their strength, labor and sorrow for it is soon cut, cut off, and we fly away. Three score 10 years. Beloved, the one who stands up here speaks, speaking to you tonight. Three store in 10 years. Not that I would draw attention to myself. But the days of my life. Vanity. When I look back over. My youth. I have a lot of memories. But I don't know where the time went. It's gone. Young people, Children. Your life lies before you. We've already heard this afternoon. That. Only one life that will soon be passed.

Only what's done for Christ will last. There's nothing in the flesh, as we mentioned, that can honor please God. In order for us to please God. There's got to be a new life. The life of Christ. And then to live in the good of that life, that there may be fruit. For him. We have no strength of our own because we've already noticed. The Lord is our strength. Without him, we can do nothing. With him, we are invincible. One is reminded of Jehoshaphat, king in Israel. Who was confronted with the tremendous army of the Ammonites? Let's just turn to that a moment because I believe it's very helpful that we find that in Second Chronicles. Won't read very much of it, but just to get the point. It says in verse 13 and all Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, their wives. And their children. Then upon Jehaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaya, the son of Gil the son of Matina Naya, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation. And he said, Hearken ye all, Israel. Ye and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou King Jehoshaphat. Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid or dismayed by reason of this great multitude. For the battle is not yours, but God, but God. Tomorrow, going down against them, behold, they come up by the way, by the Cliff of Ziz, and ye shall find them at the end of the brook before the wilderness of Jeruel, and ye shall not need to fight in this battle. Set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem, fear not nor be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord will be with you. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all chewed in. The inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. And the Levites, of the children of the Coasites and of the children of the Chorites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel. With allowed with a loud voice on high. This is our physician, beloved brother. We are weak. The testimony of the Lord Jesus is not going to be increased with numbers as the days advanced, but I believe it's going to get weaker and weaker. That does that hinder God? Not in the slightest. God delight to work through weakness. Someone has made this statement. God does not work. Because of. Weakness. Are does not show himself because there is difficulty. But he works in spite of impossibility. Now how can we? This account that we read about in. Second Chronicles, 20. How could that possibly? Win the battle. Naturally speaking, it was impossible. There was number way.

But we underestimate, I believe I underestimate God sometimes. He doesn't need. Made. To do his work, he's given me the opportunity to do it, but he doesn't need me. He could do it far better. Himself. But what God wants? Is our heart. The Father is seeking worshippers. And that's what he delights in. He delights in. Obedience to His word, He delights that I, you and I should. Look to Him and see that all our fullness dwells in Him. In the Lord Jesus Christ, in Him is everything. Our life is hid with Christ and God. God is completely through with the flesh. There is no use even trying anymore to please God that way. It's totally by the grace of God. After we're saved and when we think of. The Apostle Paul, probably the Lord's greatest servant. Who was used more mightily than any other man that we know. You know God gave him a thorn for the flesh. You might say, well, why he couldn't fail. Oh yes, God knew he could fail. In our translation it says the 4th thorn in the flesh, but I believe the correct rendering is a thorn for the flesh. Sometimes we need a thorn for the flesh to be reminded how frail we are. Paul did, and he gloried in his infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon him. We've had a delightful. Three meetings so far. And oh, how delightful it is to be occupied. With the one who meets God's approval, the man in whom was found all his delight. Man at his best state is altogether vanity. But the Lord Jesus. Was that perfect man recalled upon, you know, in Psalm 37 to mark that perfect man? And as we read through the Gospels, we can see that perfect man there was. No flaw in him, he was perfect in every way. We just heard about that lamb in Exodus and we see how that it was to be without blemish. And that's what we find in the Lord Jesus. I believe yesterday we learned about that corn of wheat that fell into the ground. And we see that God was so delighted in his own beloved Son that He wanted a family just like Him. Beloved, you and I are part of that family. In one Peter Two we read that. Christ Jesus left us an example that we should follow his steps who did no sin, neither was guile thong in his mouth. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself unto him. The judgeth righteously. This path in this world for you and me is not going to be an easy one, but it's going to be a happy one if you follow the Lord Jesus and follow in His steps. He made himself of no reputation. The one who created the universe. The universe which man has never ever even begun to measure its depth. He's got all the stars numbered and named.

Imagine such a one. That same one became one of us. He became a man. And through weakness and defeat, he won the Median crown. He trod all his foes beneath his feet by being trodden down. We've learned that it's not a position that we really delight in being trodden down, but. If a creator of the universe, the God of glory. The king of Eternity. If he was willing to be humbled, shouldn't you and I be willing to be that way? We heard this afternoon that God uses broken Bethel, beloved. I pray that each of us may be a broken vessel, that we might be used. Of God. Before we pray, I'd just like to read a verse. Might not even tell you where it is. You don't need to turn to it. It is Ezekiel 34, verse 26. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing. And I will cause the shower to come down in his season. There shall be showers of blessing. Our God and Father we have.

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