

A Spiritual Send-Off

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[0 : 00] Well if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this evening, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, 2 Kings chapters 1 and 2.

2 Kings, but if you take us our text, chapter 2 and verse 11. 2 Kings chapter 2 verse 11.

And as they still went on and talked, behold chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. As we come to the conclusion of our study of the life and ministry of the prophet Elijah, in many ways it seems so short.

It was only meant to be a short study, but you know, when we look at what's written about this important prophet, we realise that there's not very much here for us.

[1 : 13] In comparison, you could say to Moses, or to Joshua, or to Isaiah, or to King David. In comparison to these ministries, the ministries of these men, not much is really said about Elijah.

There's only about five and a half chapters given to the life and ministry of the Lord's prophet. And you know, it should make us realise that Elijah's ministry, it was a short ministry.

But it was a ministry that made a huge impact upon the kingdom of Israel and the people of Israel. Because as we've seen in our study, we began in chapter 17, Elijah, he just appears out of nowhere, just appears before King Ahab, out of nowhere, and he is there to address the covenant crisis in the kingdom.

Because the kingdom of Israel, as we saw it, was in a spiritual state of idolatry. And they were in a spiritual state because the king of Israel, Ahab, he had led the covenant people, Israel, into covenant unfaithfulness by causing them to worship this idol called Baal.

And when Baal was rolled into Israel at the hand of Queen Jezebel, all the hearts of the people, they became divided. And the commitment to the Lord became half-hearted. And because of this, Elijah's first sermon, it's a pronouncement of judgment.

[2 : 42] And that because of the idolatry and unfaithfulness to the Lord, the Lord is going to bring this covenant curse upon the land. There was going to be no rain for three years.

And as you would expect, after three years of drought, there was a severe famine in the land.

People were dying. The kingdom was in disarray. And the king was completely powerless over the situation.

And so as we saw, it went from a spiritual state, but it led to a spiritual showdown. We went to the top of Mount Carmel. Chapter 18 reminded us that after three years of waiting upon the word of the Lord, Elijah appears before King Ahab for the second time.

And Elijah, he boldly confronts King Ahab. And then he challenges the prophets of Baal. And then he even questions the Lord's people as to why they were still limping between two different opinions.

And Elijah gives the Lord's people, he gives them this ultimatum. He says, if the Lord is God, follow him. Go after him. Pursue him. Be committed to him.

[3 : 49] Live your life for him and for his glory. If the Lord is God, follow him. But then he says, if Baal is dividing your heart, if Baal is what you're holding on to, if Baal is your God, then follow him.

But as we saw in chapter 18, the Lord answered by fire. He proved that he's the covenant king of his people and that he's the sovereign God who is to be worshipped. And yet having been warned about the spiritual state of the kingdom and having witnessed the spiritual showdown on Mount Carmel, we came into chapter 19.

And we saw that the hearts of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, they were even harder to the Lord and his salvation. And the hardness of their hearts, it had this effect upon the Lord's servant because it sent Elijah into this spiritual slump.

Elijah, he ran away. He ran away from all his problems. He ran away from all the people who were causing the problems in his life. And he came and sat down under this juniper tree and he asks the Lord, take away my life.

I am no better than my father. Elijah had given up. He'd given up on King Ahab. He'd given up on Queen Jezebel. But as we saw, the Lord wasn't done with Elijah.

[5 : 09] The Lord raised Elijah up out of a spiritual slump. The Lord preached to Elijah a spiritual sermon. And then the Lord recommissioned Elijah for his spiritual service.

The Lord wasn't done with Elijah because the Lord had told Elijah to go and call Elisha. He was to go and prepare the next generation to serve the Lord.

But more than that, the Lord had told Elijah to go and confront Ahab one last time. And that's what we saw last week in chapter 21 of 1 Kings.

We saw that as Elijah came and met King Ahab, he gave to him a spiritual seminar on godlessness. And sadly, it was Ahab's godlessness that brought him to his end.

And that's how 1 Kings ended. And that's how 2 Kings begins. 2 Kings begins, you could say, on a positive note.

[6 : 09] King Ahab is dead. But 2 Kings, it also begins on a negative note. Elijah's ministry is complete. Elijah's ministry is finished.

And what we see in this section is that Elijah, in 2 Kings chapter 1 and 2, we see that Elijah is given what you could say a spiritual send-off. He's given a spiritual send-off.

But before he's given a spiritual send-off in chapter 2, Elijah is to go and confront. He's to go and confront a falling fool. That's our first point this evening.

A falling fool. Look at chapter 1 and verse 1. We see this falling fool. We're told, After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel.

Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria and lay sick. So he sent messengers, telling them, Go inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.

[7 : 10] But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria. And say to them, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?

Now therefore thus says the Lord, You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die. So Elijah went. Now the book of 2 Kings, it marks a new era for the kingdom of Israel.

You could say that change is in the air. King Ahab has been succeeded by his son Ahaziah. And the Lord, he's going to replace Elijah with Elisha.

There's this new era dawns. There's change in the air. But you know, it's not only King Ahab that's been succeeded. We see here that his son Ahaziah is also going to be succeeded very, very shortly.

Ahaziah, we read, is not going to be around for much longer because he's on his deathbed. And he's on his deathbed after falling through the window lattice in his upper chamber.

[8 : 19] And an upper chamber, it was usually on the third floor or the third story of a palace. So Ahaziah, I don't know whether he was sitting in it or what he was doing, but he fell out of the window three stories high.

And his injuries, they have left him in a life-threatening condition. Ahaziah is lying on his deathbed. But you know, what we read here is remarkable because we see who he turns to for help and healing.

In the closing moments of his life, you would think that Ahaziah would turn to the Lord for help and seek the Lord with all his heart. But instead of turning to the Lord, who was the covenant God of his kingdom and his people, Ahaziah turns to the God of Ekron, this God called Baal-zebub.

And we're told in verse 2, it says, Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria and lay sick. So he sent messengers telling them, Go inquire of Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron, whether I shall recover from the sickness.

And you know, what we have to see here is the sad reality of many people. Not only here, but the sad reality of many people in our country and in our community.

[9 : 39] Because here is Ahaziah and he's brought up in a country that once feared the Lord. Here is Ahaziah and he's brought up in a community that once had the Lord as the focus of their lives.

But because of the infiltration of other gods and other distractions and the half-hearted witness of the Lord's people, the country and the community is now in spiritual chaos.

Their hearts are hardening to the Lord and their hearts are hardening to his covenant promises.

And that's what we see with Ahaziah, that despite his near-death experience of falling out of a window, and he's now lying on his deathbed, with death slowly taking over his crippled body, and yet his heart is harder than ever.

And you know, we're actually given a description of Ahaziah at the end of 1 Kings. You see 1 Kings chapter 22 and verse 51.

We're told there, Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria, in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. And he reigned two years over Israel.

[10:51] Notice what it says. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

He served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done. It's an awful description of a man.

But you know, even though Ahaziah was so hard against the Lord throughout his life, you would think that after falling out of a window, things would change.

You would think that because he's now still on mercy's ground, that Ahaziah would turn to the Lord for help. You would think that it would be a wake-up call to Ahaziah to now seek the Lord with all his heart.

You would think that he would realise that the Lord is speaking to him, and that the Lord is warning him about the reality of life and death. You would think that Ahaziah would see that life is uncertain, death is sure, sin is the cause, and Christ is the cure.

[11:55] You would think that this event would make an impact upon his life. But instead, he turns away from the Lord. In fact, with the hardness of his heart, Ahaziah commits the unforgivable sin.

He blasphemes against the Holy Spirit. He rejects the warning of the Lord. He hardens his heart towards the Lord.

And he turns away from the Lord. And we're told at the end of verse 2 how bad it was for him that Ahaziah, he commands his servants, Go inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.

Ahaziah, you could say, is a sad candidate, because instead of turning to the Lord for help, he seeks the help of Baal. He seeks a false god.

He seeks the help and comfort of Baalzebub. And Baalzebub, he was a Philistine god, because Ekron, the city that's mentioned here, Ekron was within the Philistine territory.

[13:07] And Baalzebub, which is interesting, was said to be the god of the flies. That's what it means, Baalzebub, the god of the flies. I don't know how good you are at reading.

I was never good at reading before I was converted. But I'm sure you've heard of the book or the novel, *The Lord of the Flies*. And that's where William Golding got the name, or the title of his book, *The Lord of the Flies*, his 1950s novel.

I've never read it. He took that name or that title from this passage. And it was the god that Ahaziah turned to instead of the Lord. Because Ahaziah, he turned to Baalzebub, the god of the flies.

Now, as I said, I've never read *Lord of the Flies* or seen the film. Maybe you have. But I'm led to believe that it's a novel about this group of British boys who are stranded on an uninhabited island and their foolish attempt to govern themselves.

I'm led to believe that the book is about the conflict between morality and immorality, between obedience or disobedience to the law.

[14:18] And, well, in many ways, that's what we see with Ahaziah. Ahaziah, he's king in Israel. He thinks that he sits enthroned on the throne of his own heart, the throne of his own life, and the throne of his own destiny.

And despite the warnings of the Lord, he refuses to bow down in obedience and submission to the Lord. And the result is disastrous. Because the Lord, he gives the prophet Elijah a mission and a message for king Ahaziah.

Elijah is sent to intercept Ahaziah's messengers and tell them what the living and true God has to say to Ahaziah. We're told in verse 3, The Lord wants Ahaziah's messengers to ask Ahaziah, is it because there's no God in Israel that you're going to inquire of Baalzebub, the God of Ekron?

And, of course, you could say it's a rhetorical question. Because there was a God in Israel. And that God was the covenant Lord, the covenant king of his people. But the Lord is asking this question because he knew that Ahaziah's heart was hardened.

And the Lord knew that Ahaziah thought that he was in control of his own life and his own future. But the Lord wants to quickly remind Ahaziah that his breath, his very breath, is in the hands of the Lord.

[16:06] And the Lord says to him, Thus says the Lord, You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die. And, you know, we look at Ahaziah and we think he's such a sad case.

But the thing is, he's not an isolated case. Because there are so many people around us. And they're in our homes. And they're in our families.

And they're so like Ahaziah. They've grown up with the gospel of the covenant God. And they've had so many opportunities, so many warnings from the Lord.

But it doesn't seem to soften them to the gospel. It only seems to harden them. And you sometimes wonder, when you look at these people, you wonder what it will take for them to turn to the Lord in faith and repentance.

But for Ahaziah, he was a falling fool. And his heart was hardening. His heart was hardening. And, you know, this was affirmed by a fiery 50.

[17:14] This is the second point. We've considered a falling fool. But secondly, a fiery 50. A fiery 50. Look at verse 5. The messengers returned to the king.

And he said to them, Why have you returned? And they said to him, There came a man to meet us, and said to us, Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the Lord, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?

Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die. He said to them, What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?

They answered him, He wore a garment of hair with a belt of leather about his waist.

And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite. Then the king sent to him a captain of 50 men with his 50. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, O man of God, the king says, Come down.

But Elijah answered the captain of 50, If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50. Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his 50.

[18:27] And so as Ahaziah is lying on his deathbed, he had sent messengers to inquire of this god, Baalzebub, the god of Ekron. He wanted to know if he was going to live or die.

But as soon as Ahaziah made his request, the Lord called upon Elijah. The Lord said to Elijah, Go and intercept Ahaziah's messengers to give them a message from the Lord.

And what's remarkable is that as soon as Ahaziah's messengers had spoken with Elijah, they abandoned their mission to go to Ekron. They abandoned going to see Baalzebub and they returned to Samaria.

What was meant to be something, you could say, like a week-long journey from Samaria to Ekron, Ekron back to Samaria, it turned out just to be almost a two-day journey for Ahaziah's messengers. And as you would expect, when the messengers showed up at Ahaziah's bedside again, he's surprised at their swift return. The king wasn't expecting them, nor was he expecting the message that they brought with him.

[19:37] Where they came back and they said to him, There came a man to meet us and he said to us, Go back to the king who sent you and say to him, Thus says the Lord, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron?

Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die. The messengers had returned to Ahaziah, not with a word from Baalzebub, but with a word from the Lord.

But you know what's amazing? Is that even though Ahaziah's messengers didn't know who Elijah was, they knew what he had said was the truth.

Even though they had never met this man of God before, they were convinced that Elijah's word was a word from the Lord. And they were so convinced that what Elijah had said was the truth that they ignored the orders of the king and they turned around and returned to the palace in Samaria.

You know, the question that comes to my mind straight away is, who convinced them? Who convinced these messengers that Elijah's word was from the Lord?

[20 : 53] Who convinced them that they should disobey their king's command and submit to the authority of the Lord? And the only answer we can come up with is the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the only person who can convince anyone that the word of God is truth. And you know, there's such a contrast here because Ahaziah is, well, as we said, he was blaspheming against the Holy Spirit.

He's rejecting the Spirit. He's turning away from the work of the Spirit and the conviction that he's been put under because of all that he's gone through.

And yet, here are his messengers and they're being convinced by the Spirit. And this is what should make us realise that, what should make me realise, that we need to rely less upon ourselves and more upon the Spirit.

We need to rely upon the Holy Spirit more and more and more. Of course, that doesn't mean that as Christians we sit back and just do nothing. No.

[21 : 58] What we see here is that Elijah, he had to faithfully go with the word of God to the king's messengers. But Elijah knew that without the Spirit they would never be convinced that the word of God is the truth.

Elijah had to rely upon the Spirit. And that's the reality. And sometimes it's a hard reality for us to get our heads around. That we can't convince anyone that God is real.

We can't convince anyone that the word of God is the truth. We can't convince anyone that they're sinners. We can't convince anyone that Jesus is a wonderful saviour. We can't convince anyone without the Holy Spirit working in their life.

It doesn't matter how many discussions or deliberations or debates we have with that person.

Unless the Spirit is working through the word of God they will never be convinced that it's the truth.

But of course that doesn't mean that we sit and do nothing and just say well the Spirit will do it all. It doesn't mean that we'll sit and do nothing and say nothing. Because the Spirit promises always to work through us.

[23 : 06] He is indwelling us therefore He will walk through us. You know Spurgeon lived in a day very much like our day. It was a day in which the authority of the Bible was questioned at every turn.

But Spurgeon reminds us that the word of God can take care of itself and the word will do so if we preach Christ and Him crucified.

You know if we preach the truth and cease defending it He says never mind about defending Deuteronomy or the whole of the Pentateuch just preach Christ and Him crucified.

And you know that's what we see here Ahaziah's messengers they're convinced that the man of God is speaking the truth because the Spirit of God is working through the word of God and that's how it works.

the word the man of God is to speak the truth the Spirit of God is to apply the truth and the Spirit works through the word of God.

[24 : 11] But as you would expect here Ahaziah he's having none of it. He's wondering who has undermined his authority and Ahaziah he's suspicious because the only man to ever undermine the authority of his father was Elijah.

and he says in verse 7 what kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things? And they answered him he wore a garment of hair with a belt of leather about his waist and immediately he knows it is Elijah the Tishbite.

You know as soon as the messengers describe this man of God who spoke the word of the Lord to them Ahaziah knows it's Elijah. But instead of taking on board what the Lord has just said to him and finally repenting and turning away from his sin instead of doing what he's meant to do Ahaziah demands to see Elijah.

He demands to see the Lord's prophet. It says in verse 9 then the king sent to him a captain of 50 men with his 50. He went up to Elijah who was sitting on the top of a hill and said to him O man of God the king says come down but Elijah answered the captain of 50 if I am a man of God let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your 50 then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his 50 and you know when we read these verses we should immediately be reminded of what happened on Mount Carmel back in chapter 18 because on Mount Carmel we saw that the people questioned who the real God was was it Baal was it the Lord who's the real

God and the God who answered by fire proved to be the real God and of course it was the Lord who answered by fire and it was the Lord who proved that Baal is a dumb idol and that he's the living and through God and Ahaziah he knew all this he knew what had happened at Carmel he had heard about it maybe he had even been there himself and so when Elijah poses the question if I am a man of God and my word is from the

Lord then let fire come down and consume these fifty men when Elijah poses his question the Lord once again proves that he is the living and through God and that Elijah is his servant but Ahaziah is determined he's determined in his heart and mind to prove that the Lord is not God again we're told in verse eleven again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty and he answered and said to him oh man of God this is the king's order come down quickly but Elijah answered them if I'm a man of God let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty and you know in his commentary Dale Ralph Davis he asks what do you do when someone is so thick that he doesn't grasp what fire means you send more fire that's his answer the point he says is that the first commandment really matters to the Lord and Ahaziah just doesn't get it and Ahaziah he really doesn't get it because he sends a third group he sends a third group of fifty soldiers to Elijah but this time the captain doesn't give the king's order because the captain knows that he's only a breath away from death and remarkably the captain he fears the Lord and death more than his own king

[27 : 55] Ahaziah because we're told that this captain this third captain fell on his knees before Elijah and pleaded with him saying oh man of God please let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight and with that plea the Lord tells Elijah to go and confront king Ahaziah and personally give him the message of the Lord we're told in verse 15 then the angel of the Lord said to Elijah go down with him do not be afraid of him so he arose and went down with him to the king and said to him thus says the Lord because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron is it because there is no god in Israel to inquire of his word therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up but you shall surely die so he died according to the word of the Lord that Elijah had spoken and you know there's something so sad about the record of

Ahaziah's short reign that in his hour of need in his hour of need he refused to seek the help and comfort of the Lord Ahaziah's heart was hardened all the way to death but what we must notice is that Ahaziah's departure from this world is then being compared with Elijah's departure from this world because Ahaziah you could say was hell bound Elijah's desire or Elijah's departure was going to be heaven bound and that's what I want us to consider lastly I've considered a falling fool a fiery fifty but lastly a final farewell a final farewell look at chapter 2 of verse 1 now when the Lord was about to take

Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal our study on the life and ministry of Elijah it concludes with the conclusion of Elijah's life and ministry for King Ahaziah he's just departed out of the scene of time into eternity and now you could say it's Elijah's turn but you know for us looking on it seems that Elijah had only just begun his ministry because as we said in comparison to Moses or Isaiah or David their ministries were years and yet there are chapters written in the Bible about them and yet for Elijah there are only five and a half chapters written about this the life and ministry of the Lord's prophet Elijah's ministry was a short ministry but it was a ministry that made a huge impact upon the kingdom of Israel and upon the people of Israel and now Elijah's ministry it's coming to an end but you know what's remarkable about this chapter I find it so interesting everyone knows that his ministry is coming to an end but nobody's talking about it and you see the other prophet Elisha he's on edge he's on edge and he won't let Elijah out of his sight just in case Elijah disappears and he'll never see him again we're told in verse two Elijah and Elisha Elijah said to Elisha please stay here for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel but Elisha said as the Lord lives and as you yourself live I will not leave you so they went down to Bethel everyone knows Elijah is going but no one wants to talk about it openly everyone knows that there's going to be a change in the ministry of Israel but no one's discussing it with Elijah everyone knows that Elijah's short ministry is now finished in Israel and that he's done all that he can and he's done all that the Lord has asked him to do and everyone knows that it's time for Elijah to step aside and for Elisha to come to the fore but Elisha doesn't want to hear any of it everywhere Elisha goes they ask him do you know that today the Lord will take away your master from over you and Elisha says yes I know it keep quiet and what's so funny is that Elijah is walking miles and

Elisha won't let him out of his sight they walk as we read the chapter they walk from Gilgal to Bethel Bethel to Jericho Jericho to the Jordan and every time Elijah tells Elisha he says to him wait here just wait here and Elisha says no I will never leave you I'm not going to leave you you're not going to go out of my sight but as Elijah and Elisha as they finally reached the Jordan we're told then in verse 8 then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water and the water was parted to the one side and to the other till the two men two of them could go over on dry ground and you know when we read verse 8 and these words the

[33 : 12] Jordan parting we're to think of the children of Israel we're to immediately think of the children of Israel standing on the banks of the river Jordan and how it says in Joshua chapters 3 and 4 how the Lord parted the water so that the children of Israel could cross the Jordan over into the promised land because when the children of Israel when they were about to cross over the river Jordan you remember Moses had just died Joshua had stepped up to the fore and they're all asking they're asking how can we go forward now that Moses has died and Elisha he's asking the same question going over the same river how can I go on if Elijah is taken away there's this uncertainty and dread in the heart of Elisha about the future of what the Lord has for his people and yet look at what happens in verse 9 when they had crossed Elijah said to Elisha ask what I shall do for you before I'm taken from you and Elisha said please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me and he said you have asked a hard thing yet if you see me as

I am being taken from you it shall be so for you but if you do not see me it shall not be so and as they still went on and talked behold chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven and Elisha saw it and he cried my father my father the chariots of Israel and its horsemen and he saw him no more then he took hold of his own clothes and he tore them in two pieces Elijah's Elisha's worst nightmare came through the Lord took Elijah away the chariots of fire and the horses of fire they came they separated them and Elijah was taken up into heaven in this whirlwind and Elisha saw him no more but as we said the book of second kings had marked a new beginning and a new era for the kingdom of Israel because when Elijah's mantle fell to Elisha Elisha went back to the Jordan it's amazing they had crossed over the Jordan river out of the promised land then Elisha he's standing on the river Jordan crossing back into the promised land and at that moment of crossing over the river Jordan into the promised land it marked a new beginning and a new ministry under the Lord's prophet Elisha the times may have changed but the Lord hadn't changed the Lord was still working the Lord was still calling men to serve him for the extension of his kingdom and the glory of his name and you know what it should always remind us is that God's power is not limited to certain individuals God's power is not limited to certain individuals Dale Ralph Davis he puts it very well when he said he says our help is in the name of the Lord not in the charisma of his servants

God's leaders change but God's power persists and sometimes God removes his most illustrious servants so that we will not make idols of them and think that they are the only conduits of God's help sometimes God deliberately displays his might through lesser instruments so that we will not be transfixed on the pizzazz of God's servants but on the strength of God's arm and you know it's a valuable lesson for us because we can often focus upon the man of God and not the God of the man we can focus upon the man of God and not the God of the man and you know when we look at Elijah we're to be in awe not of the man of God but the God of the man because Elijah as we've learnt in his looking at the spiritual state the spiritual showdown the spiritual slump the spiritual seminar and then the spiritual send off we've learnt that Elijah was a man just like us and you know what our study of the life and ministry of Elijah ought to remind us is that the best of men are only men at best the best of men are only men at best but the wonderful truth is our help is in the name of the

Lord may the Lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray O Lord our gracious God we give thanks to thee that thou art the Lord who is always in control that every day of our lives is in thine hand and we give thanks Lord that every day we begin it that we are able to begin by casting every care into thine hand knowing that thou art one who cares for us we thank thee O Lord for the ministry of Elijah that reminds us that the best of men they are only men at best and help us then we pray to serve the Lord with gladness to serve him with fear and with passion to give our utmost for his highest realizing that Jesus has done in us and for us exceedingly abundantly above all more than we could ask or even think and help us then we pray to or to give our all for his kingdom that we might see thy glory thy glory in this land that more and more would come to taste and see that the

word good and trust in thee and be blessed watch over as we pray bless thy word to us we ask and go before us for Jesus sake

[39 : 14] Amen we're going to bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 89 Psalm 89 from verse 13 down to the verse marked 16 Psalm 89 from verse 13 page 3 4 5 thou hast an arm that's full of power thy hand is great in might and thy right hand exceedingly exalted is in height justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place mercy accompanied with truth shall go before thy face and you know I love this verse verse 15 oh greatly blessed the people are the joyful sound that know in brightness of thy face oh Lord the ever on shall go we'll sing on down to the verse marked 16 of Psalm 89 to God's praise thou hast an arm that's full of power thy hand is great in might and thy right hand exceeding exalted in sin light justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place mercy mercy accompany it with truth shall go before thy face oh glory greatly blessed the people are the joyful son that know in brightness of thy face oh

Lord they ever on shall go in thy name shall all the day rejoice exceedingly and in thy righteousness shall they exalted be oh I the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore amen