

Judges

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: 16 August 1966

Preacher: Oliver, Harry

[0 : 00] The portion that is on my mind to bring before you for a little while this evening you'll find in the book of Judges, chapter 5, verse 11.

Judges, chapter 5, verse 11. And it reads thus.

They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel.

Then shall the people of the Lord go down to the gates. Those words you find in the book called Judges, chapter 5, and verse 11.

This book of Judges covers a period of 450 years, we are told, from the time of Joshua to the time, thereabouts, the time of Samuel.

[1 : 30] And from time to time, the people of Israel left the ways, the good ways of God, the ways that they've been taught, the worship of the true and living God, as David declared him to be, and he is.

And yet so foolish as to leave him, who had been such a good God to them, time after time.

But though we have such a catalogue of their leaving, of their sins, it is recorded, I find, that out of that 450 years, there's about 100 years when they really went in these evil ways.

But a hundred years of evil doings, far too many. And it shows, it shows really, how heinous sin is in God's sight, in his eyes, to have it recorded in such a plain way.

And I purposely read that portion in that little book, that sweet little book of Ruth, which, which, no doubt, was a time of the Judges.

[3 : 22] And just at what period, well, we can't definitely say. But there was that time when there was some spiritual prosperity amongst them.

So much so, that it's recorded in this way, in the 129th Psalm, they no longer say, the Lord bless thee, the Lord be with thee, as they did in those days.

It was, so it would seem, as though the Psalmist would say, that was a peculiarly blessed time. Well, it was a wonderful day indeed, for to hear such words as that passing between the employer and the employees.

It's far different what it is today, in this day, when there seems to be so much regard for the rewards, in the way of money, and so on, in wages, and so forth.

We have all that going on today, these strikes, etc., that cause such disruption in the country, and give our senators and rulers many a headache, I'm thinking.

[4 : 51] But, however, although that is so, yet, in this day in which we live, I suppose, there's never been such a time when the tables have been so well spread, in a general way, as what they are today.

We know in individual ways there's been sumptuous times amongst the barons and the rich of this world. But the poor were very, very poor, and hardly knew where their next crust was coming from sometimes.

In fact, only the other day, a widow who we visited told us that our mother was in such a pass that they got no food in the house, and she made it a matter of prayer, and she was told that there was a bag of flour waiting for her at the end of the lane where she lived.

And at another time, when she's in just such a strait, someone quite unknown to her left a gallon of bread. Well, it's rather refreshing to hear that from what we might term an outsider, as far as we're concerned, nothing to do with us as a people, not as a sect then.

But there was that in those days, and that wasn't so long ago, you see. It might be a hundred years ago, but in any case, it was not so very long ago.

[6 : 40] But so it was. Now, in these days in which we live, you would almost insult people as you would do what my old dad has done.

I see him do it, leave a loaf of bread on someone who we thought was needy. But that is the days we live in. But I fear that that prosperity, whether it's artificial or real, whatever it is, is not having a good effect upon us as a nation.

No. We need to be kept alive. And sometimes the only way that we are kept alive is coming into dire necessity in providential ways.

And then we need to go to God for those things that we want put straight. And there is plenty to pray for in this day in which we live, certainly.

There are some crooked things amongst us, aren't there? Aren't there? Crooked things which cannot be made straight. As the word says, that which is crooked cannot be made straight.

[7 : 59] And that which is wanting cannot be numbered. Well, now, with regard to these words here, they come in a wonderful song of victory that Deboah sang.

And it was an occasion when, after the Israelites had been straying again and going to their, as it says, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.

And when he was dead, and the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, Canaan that reigned in Hazor, the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in ErosBeth of the Gentiles.

And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and well they might. For their enemies, it tells us, had gotten 900 chariots of iron.

And 20 years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel. And what could they do as infantry foot soldiers with the chariots of iron, which was, which had on their wheels, like a scythe attached to them it would appear.

[9 : 33] And very long too, quite a length apparently. And of course as the wheels went round, the scythe would go round, and they would be rushing and out amongst the poor soldiers who they were against, and they would cut them down and do much damage and much slaughter in that way.

And their enemies had got 9,000 it tells us here. And besides that, there was a mighty lot of men with them. Josephus tells us something like 100,000.

But let that be as it may. We know that when Jonathan, with his armor bearer, went amongst a great host of Philistines or Midianites, was it?

And what were they among so many? But he said, the Lord can fight for us, whether we be few or many.

And he went and wrought quite a great victory. Saul, he versioned, made his voice heard by saying, let the Hebrews hear, because Jonathan one time took a garrison of the Philistines.

[10 : 58] Yes, so different to the spirit of David. He soon made it manifest what spirit he was of.

Somewhat presumptuous and proud, it would seem. And therefore, because he went into wrong ways and did not follow the commands that were given to him, he was told there should be another one raised up in his place.

David, that wonderful king of Israel, with whom Israel rose up as a nation to be quite a mighty nation, as it were, although it was only a little nation amongst the nations of the earth.

Yet it made its influence felt far and wide. And incidentally, in that book that we were reading, the book of Ruth, you know in reading that history, how that she became the great-grandmother of David.

And therefore, Christ came in that line, even our Jesus. And so we read of how there was that typical setting forth, as it were, in Boaz with Ruth, as the bringing in with Ruth of a Gentile into that genealogy.

[12 : 50] And Boaz, it says, a near kinsman, a redeemer. One, redeemer is one who redeems. We were the whole race of humanity.

We were sold to Satan. We were given over to Satan by our federal head, Adam. We were God's creatures.

And therefore, he had a right to redeem, as it were, in whatever way he would. And he sent a redeemer.

And so it speaks of Boaz as a near kinsman. And you see in the margin, it says, Redeemer, it seemed to strike a right note in my mind.

A sweet setting forth, as it were, of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a redeemer. And how beautiful it is to think of him as a redeemer.

[14 : 03] You know, it brings to my mind how one time I was asked to take the deacon's desk, which I was not very glad to do because I prefer to sit in the pew sometimes, but however, I did take the deacon's desk and give out the hymns.

And I could not, as it were, set my mind at rest on the last hymn. Nothing else could I think of but that hymn, Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb.

And the, you know, we've got here they that are delivered from the noise of arches and the places of drawing water. Well, you know, when we come to worship God, that is one way in which we come to draw water, the water of life, as it were.

Well, to speak of that instant, to finish that, it was at Canterbury. And I could think of nothing else with that hymn, Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb.

Then the the archers came in. Well, you know, that hymn is so common. Everybody knows it so well. And it's just simply repetition to think of giving that hymn out.

[15 : 29] But nothing else could I find that would suit. Nothing else. It had, it kept coming. And in desperation, you might say, hoping that it would be all right, I gave it out.

Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb. And it was sung with feeling and when dear old Clement Wood came down out the pulpit door, he said, that last hymn, he said, that really clinched it, didn't it?

Well, there you are, I see. So, you see, with giving out hymns, you know, you're greatly favored here with our two young deacons, young, they're getting all middle-aged now, aren't they?

But, I feel for them, they have much exercise in trying to do that which is right and giving out the hymns Sabbath after Sabbath and weeknight as well as they do.

is no easy matter, you know. No. And there certainly is that which is we need to be delivered from the noise of archers in that respect.

[16 : 36] Perhaps you will follow my thoughts a little as I just mentioned that. They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water.

well, you say, but what has that got to do with us here? Yes, it has. I feel there's a spiritual significance.

I know that it certainly has the literal meaning that there was archers as it were.

I think I saw something here if I'm not mistaken. Yes, Dr. Shaw mentions a beautiful rill of water which runs into a large basin called Shrub and it says there drink and be off.

Why does it say be off? Why, because there's robbers about and they would lurk around that place and if they saw some rich man, some rich people, they thought there'd be a bit of loot to have, well, that'd be the time to just shoot at them.

[17 : 55] And that is a literal signification of the archers at the place of drawing water. But there is, I feel keenly that there is a spiritual signification and water surely signifies life, as it were, the very life itself.

And in fact, what does Christ say in the, in John, we find it there, he says, in the days of the feast, he says, if any man thirst let him come unto me.

And then again, in the times when he met with that Samaritan woman, if thou knewest who it was that spoke unto thee, thou wouldst have asked of him water, and he would have given thee the water of life.

she said, thou hast nothing to draw with. And then again, we have it in the, in the very last chapter in Revelation, if, about the water there, and the spirit and the bride say, come, and let him that hearest say, come, and let him that is a thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Precious words, aren't they? What does Jesus say? I am the life. I am the resurrection and the life.

[19 : 51] Yes. And let him that hear this say, come, and let him that is a thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Sweet words, you know, aren't they? There is a blessed invitation there for thirsty ones, but as dear old Mr.

May said once, said, it was said to one of our people, you couldn't preach from that text because you don't believe in free will, and how can you preach from that text?

Well, he said, we are the only people that can, for you say, whosoever will not let him come, whosoever is not willing, let him come. We say, he must be willing, willing, and only the Lord could make him willing.

Yes, the word of God can be misinterpreted, you know, in many ways. We've had much grief of late caused in our minds by one good man who seemed to stumble over a word in Hebrews, I think it is, but we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man, and so he said, Christ died for every man.

[21 : 38] No, no, no. He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, everyone who he died for will surely come to heaven.

Not for every man, we cannot preach a universal salvation, there's a universal condemnation, but not a universal salvation. There are characters who these blessings are given to, and you heard that by your pastor here many times, and it seems strange to me, after hearing the truth proclaimed, so clearly that any could follow after that, after a man who declared his belief in that way.

And, you know, it's only because he wouldn't listen, you know, you see, if he'd only listened to a little that others have to say about the same scripture, he would have got the right view of it, or if he had studied to find out what learned men have to say, because I was, myself, I looked into it, and I found a book that spoke about that very thing, and not only that, in reading on through that chapter, and through following verses, we find this, for it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons, you see, sons, unto glory, they're the everyman, that's who Christ died for, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings, for both he that sanctifies, and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he's not ashamed to call them brethren, well he doesn't call them brethren who lie in the world of wickedness, no, the brethren are those who he has elected and predestinated to salvation from before the foundation of the world, men.

But it's just a matter of looking into those things, and there needs to be no error at all. As I looked into a man who is more learned in these things, although my mind was quite settled about it, still I was glad to read, this learned man said, the Greek is masculine gender, hence man could better be read every son, so that he by the grace of God should taste death for every son, it could have been that, you see.

But that, by the way, that's getting away from our subject, rather, I'm afraid. Well, let us look at the subject of what we've got here before us, and see if we can gather a little from it what it really spiritually implies.

[25 : 01] They that are delivered from the noise of archers, we'll leave the literal part of it, and see if we can draw something of a spiritual nature from it.

Well, I have already hinted that this water, that he's implied in a spiritual way, means the water of life, even as this natural water meant the ordinary temporal life, so it, from a spiritual viewpoint, it means spiritual life.

And then what does it mean about the archers in the places of drawing of water? Well, and what places are there where we can draw this life-giving water?

Well, I think one of the most important places is on your knees. Yes. In private prayer.

And that's a thing that we stand in need of, every one of us. And we're guilty in neglecting so great of privileges we have.

[26 : 32] Yes. A mercy seat. we should show it. Yes. Yes. I'm guilty as well as you. We are guilty. We do not take, we do not prize it highly enough.

For, you know, a cost error gone. God the Father, He spared not His own Son that we might have this water of life freely.

and if we beg for it at the mercy seat, we shall surely obtain a drink of it here and there.

Yes. And then, of course, when in the assembling of yourselves together, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.

Well, what is it for? It's for prayer and praise and for seeking unto God. It is a place of drawing of water. But are the archers there?

[27 : 32] Oh, yes, the archers will come there. for it is Satan's agents, as it were, bringing things into our hearts.

When we would be worshipping him, you know, if you're a busy man, a man of business, or got a farmer, whatever it may be, and you go to a place of worship, and you want to, and you really, sincerely want to be engaged in worship, and listening to the ceremony, maybe, or listening to the prayers of others, or singing the hymns.

Well, and then those things, those things of time and sense will creep in. Or if you are a craftsman, you will suddenly find yourself finding a better way to do something, even, in the house of prayer.

Well, that's indeed. In the place of drawing of water, the archers are there busy. Yes, so you could name these places of drawing of water in various ways, and we've named what I feel is indeed an important place in mercy seat as a private, in the way of private prayer, it says, when they have prayed, to enter into thy closet, into a private place.

Have you ever done it? Do you do it often? Have you ever done it? I said, I'm sure you've done it once, twice, but do you do it often? And no, it's a good thing, you know, if we find our hearts rightly affected towards our God, and have to draw aside in private.

[29 : 31] I remember once coming home from work, and I had that realization that I wanted to get near unto God.

I wanted to have communion with him, and I was passing by a little wood, a shade sometimes we call them, and I drew in there and knelt down by a fallen tree, and I had some sweet moments there, yes, so sweet that I've never forgotten it.

And yet, you see, at another time you say, well now, I'm going up, I'll have a, I'll go and pray, and you can't find the words, and you can't find the right spirit.

Oh, I thought, what an opportunity, when I was up in the Orky Islands, to walk up one of those like a little mountain, there all by myself, and yet hoping to get near unto God.

But could I get that communion? No. God is sovereign, and it's just as he disposed, but do not try, do not attempt trying, all the same.

[30 : 48] We must not say what is to be, will be, not to get into that fatalistic spirit, no. But it is so that we cannot, as it were, order those things of ourselves.

It's well to try, it's well to assemble ourselves together. here. That is, that's as much as we do, is to bring our bodies here, but it's for God to give the blessing.

Oh, in the place of drawing of waters, the mercy seat, whether we assemble ourselves together, the archers are very busy there, yes, with their cares, perhaps there's too much draft coming in the window, or too much is too hot or too cold, and discomfort comes, and that causes the archers to let fly, there's many things in that, it's very simple preaching, isn't it, but never mind, that is the truth, isn't it, where there is a place of drawing of water, there the archers are busy, yes, but it's a good thing, you know, if when people will come together, if they can do what it says here, rehearse, ah, now we come to something better, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the

Lord, people, so I suppose when you go out to the door of this place, you'll be saying to each other, ah, well, that was a good hymn that we sang, I did feel the sweetness of that, hat, and so, you'll make each other's hearts, as it were, warm up a little, will you, is that what you'll be saying, or will you be saying, I didn't like that hat, but so and so got on, ah, the archers are busy, you know, very busy, as soon as you get out the door, yes, but what a good thing it would be, if, like this mother in Israel, for you notice this is where we come across, that word, a mother in Israel, I think of one dear soul, that was called a mother in Israel, and I was very thankful to get a letter from her, saying that she had received a little when

I was there, I was quite unworthy of that, but it quite broke me down, really, to think that God should even use such a poor instrument as I was, to give a mother in Israel a blessing, you'll find that is where it comes in this song, it says the inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel until that I, Deborah, arose, that I arose a mother in Israel, oh yes, yes, I think of that one, dear old soul, she's gone, the way of all they are, I think of another old dear, too, a Mrs.

[34 : 12] Coppins, many years ago, down at a little forestal chapel, and now is a lad, and she too is looked upon as a mother in Israel, and I think such ones are outstanding characters, this Deborah was an outstanding character, we can't all be mothers and fathers in Israel, not so much grace in some as are in others, but they're outstanding in their gracious words, and a good thing, if we can get near to them, like Bunyan did, you know, and heard those women talking, and it was made a means of grace to him, a place of drawing of water, there they shall rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel, then shall the people of the

Lord go down to the gates, how significant it all these words are, we've only got as it were a little light on them, and our minds are led in that right way to perceive the spiritual sweetness of what is said in these words, they that are delivered from the noise of archers, have you been delivered from it?

Oh, you have, you know, from time to time, although many times perhaps you come and assemble yourselves together and you've got nothing particular, there have been times when you have been able to say, well, there has been a sweetness in the streams today, and if such the sweetness of the streams, what must the parenting be?

Yes, they that are delivered from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, good occupation to rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel, then shall the people of the Lord go down to the gates, and so it goes on, awake, awake, Deborah, awake, awake, utter a song, arise, barricade, lead thy captivity, captive.

Yes, well we know there's another word that speaks about leading captivity, captive, in another place in the word of God, and we know that as a reference to the Lord Jesus, how that he takes the very captives, as it were, of Satan, and he brings them to be his own captives, yes, he captivates them by his love, by his mercy to them, as they have their sinnership opened up to them, he too brings the gospel to them, and they realize there is a way of escape from that war to come, that John the Baptist spoke of, who to the Sadducees who came to him, he said, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come, sometimes think we don't, don't stress that enough, you know, there is a wrath to come, yes, it's coming, my friends, it may not be very far off, we read about the days of

[38 : 06] Noah, and as in the days of Noah, so shall it be in these days, and it is, barely, we read about Noah, and also we read about Lot, and what strange character he was, he's a righteous man, we're told, and yet, you know, he must needs go and plant himself amongst those wicked people, and they made a lot of him and put him in the gates as an elder, as a judge or an instructor as it may be, and the world will, they'll make use of the people of God, because they know they can be relied on, I've noticed that very often as I've passed along this time state, the world is quick to take advantage of a man who is to be relied on, and they know, they know,

I heard one man come into my shop once, and he said, you chapel people always seem to get on, well, I don't know if that's the case, there is certainly a blessing attached to those who worship God, I believe, even in this life, and follow in that way, in assembling themselves together, but you know, I don't know what I can say to this, you know, I've given you, I've said quite a lot, but have I said anything about the text at all, and it looks to me as though that clock says time I left off, well, it's a good thing perhaps if I do, we must leave it in the Lord's hands, there is the word, and may you be given grace to ponder it yourselves, and meditate in it, and that perhaps be a place of drawing water for you, amen.

Amen.