

A Message Sent From Heaven

Book of Judges

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Look with me in your Bibles to Judges 2 and I want to read for us from verse 1 down to verse 5 and speak with you on this title, "A Message Sent From Heaven." As I study these Scriptures from week to week, I never have ahead of time any idea of how the LORD is going to direct me to preach it, and oftentimes in reading and rereading and prayerfully considering, the LORD will give a thought upon which to build, and certainly as he does, then you can just see everything open up like a flower, a blossom, out of that seed, and that's somewhat how this message developed. As I read and reread it, there were many different avenues that my mind was pursuing, and yet as I continued to consider it, the LORD settled my mind on this thought, a message sent from heaven.

Let's read it. It says,

1 And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. 2 And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? 3 Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. 4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. 5 And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD.

Now this entire chapter begins to transition into the era after Joshua would die. We see that in verses 6 through 9 where the LORD removes Joshua from them and then raises up judges. But before he died, the LORD himself came unto this people once again and reminded them of who they were and how it was that they had been set apart from all the other people of the earth and on what basis they would be considered a covenant people.

There is a lot to see here by way of type and parallel with any who are the LORD's today, his church, the church of the LORD Jesus Christ. Just as Israel was a chosen nation, so sinners are chosen of God the Father. Just as Israel was brought out by the Passover lamb

from Egypt, from bondage, so the church, the true church of the LORD Jesus Christ, has as its foundation the Lamb of God, the Passover Lamb. And yet we have to be reminded again and again even as here, that unless the LORD reserve unto Himself a remnant, we would all be as Sodom and Gomorrah and I'm mindful of that as much as anybody. We can never take for granted or sit back on our laurels of what we think we know or, "All right, we've already heard this before so we don't need to hear it again." Paul in writing in his epistles said that this is the Gospel that is your salvation, and certainly just as we find repeated over and over again in the Scriptures, the Old Testament and New Testament, these warnings against idolatry, these warnings against following after the crowd or after other ways of worship, and the reminders that there is but one way of worship, we wouldn't see these repeated were it not necessary. So here again, I trust we find this particular message which God sent to Israel even before Joshua would pass away from them, and we see here in verses 1 through 5 this impression that it made on them.

Now, it might cause some of us to wonder, "Well, if God has purposed the salvation of His people and has brought it to pass, how do you explain then the unfaithfulness of some?" Just as we read here in these verses where He reminds them in verse 1, "I made you to go up out of Egypt," but then as soon as we get to verse 2, after He says, "ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars," and then we see this, "but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?" So does that mean that the purposes of God somehow have been thwarted? Well, I'm thankful that we have the New Testament, we have other Scriptures that help us understand these portions and one of those is over here in Romans 3, if you will look with me. The LORD directed the Apostle Paul even in his day to answer some of these objections. Here God has purposed His people, He has brought them out, and yet we find that for the most part they remained in unbelief. So how do you explain that?

Now, you ask the religious lost world and they will explain it that, "Well, God leaves man up to his own free will and there is only so much that he can do." We don't find that anywhere in Scripture, the answer. Here's the answer to that question in Romans 3. First of all, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?" Notice Paul says, "Much every way." When you stop and think about a nation that was privileged above all others, and when you get a map out and look it over and see just what Israel is, a little strip of land, that the LORD established for that people thousands of years ago, and with enemies all around it and even within it; it's so mixed up right now, Jew, Palestine, all types of races mixed in there and yet that nation continues to exist today.

You say, "What advantage does it have? How is it much in every way?" But here's the primary thing, "chiefly, because that unto them were committed the Oracles of God." When I say to you 'a message sent from God,' what I'm repeating to you every time I stand up here to preach, I'm taking these things that God was pleased to take and reveal through prophets in this nation, and declared them even today unto you. As far as I know, there is not a natural born Jew in this congregation. Maybe there is, but it doesn't matter. It's not a matter of becoming a Jew to be able to enter into these things. They were given, as we are going to see, as types and pictures of the LORD Jesus Christ and that work that

He would come and accomplish. But in answer to the question, "Well, what advantage was there for them if, for the most part, they perished?" Much in every way. In fact, I would say that having had, as it says here, committed to them the Oracles of God. You talk about an Oracle., That's a Revelation. That's the inspired Word of God that was committed unto them. You think about the responsibility that there was upon this people as a result.

So Paul says in verse 3, "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" Now, when it says "the faith of God," it's talking about objective faith. It's not talking about God believing, but the faith of God is that body of truth revealed in the oracles of God in verse 2 in connection with Christ in his death. Everywhere you see "the faith of God," it's an objective body of truth. It's the Gospel. You could transpose that right here and say, "For what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the Gospel without effect?" It's being preached today in many circles that if you don't believe, then you make the Gospel of none effect.

Your unbelief in no way renders the Gospel any less effective, and that's what Paul goes on to say here in verse 4, "God forbid." There is not a stronger word in the original to be able to express it than this. "God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." That's speaking of God. There is never anybody that could ever say of God that He failed or that His promise failed or His Word failed. Everything He has purposed, He has accomplished. That's why, as you read on in Romans, you come to see this even more fully. They are not all Israel that are of Israel. God never purposed that every one of them be saved. But what is certain is that He did save every one He purposed to save: the Joshua's, the Caleb's, the Moses's, the Aaron's, any others that may be unnamed, yet were the LORD's. The Rahab's. Even brought in from the land of Canaan some that He was pleased to save while He passed by others that were natural born Jews. That's His prerogative to do.

But again, anticipating objections, Paul in verse 5 says, "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say?" And he's anticipating objections from his hearers, his readers. This is what some would say. Well, if our unrighteousness actually furthers the righteousness of God, then sin on. You see, that's what's in the heart of unbelief and I believe that's what's at the basis of even this question that was asked of these Israelites where the LORD said, "I will never break my covenant with you. I'm faithful. But ye have not obeyed my voice. Why have ye done this?" You see, natural, lost men will always find some other reason or person to blame than take the blame themselves before God. And these were the ones, among these Jews. You see, that's that pride and self-righteousness that, "Oh well, if God has purposed me to be saved, then I'm going to be saved regardless and it doesn't matter how I live or what I believe or what I do." You see, that's the mindset of a lost depraved sinner.

Paul addresses that here in Romans 3, he says, "Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?" Then he says, "(I speak as a man)." So what he's letting us know here is, "I'm taking these objections that people are using against God and against the Gospel, and

I'm putting them forth as a man would reason." In other words, is God unrighteous Who takes vengeance? In reality the way the question is asked is people are saying God would be unrighteous, then, in taking vengeance, because if we can't do anything but what He purposes, then either way He is to blame.

And that's again, this strong answer in verse 6, "God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" Paul is not asking that question but, again, he's bringing up the objection of people, anticipating it. And this is what men say. When you begin to preach the sovereignty of God to people, isn't this the direction they go? "Well, then, how could he judge anybody if it's up to Him?"

But in verse 8, he says, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come?" He says, "whose damnation is just." In other words, any that reason that way have been left to their own desserts. Now, I believe and I believe you can identify with this, as the LORD began to deal tenderly in my own heart, and I say tenderly but at the same time broke it and brought me low, He caused me to see that had He left me in that lost estate, even in His sovereignty He would have been just in doing so but in mercy He saved me.

So this is the answer to what we see here in Judges 2. It's not God pleading, begging, as some men would have it when he says, "but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?" I liken that more to a judge that has a criminal, he's about ready to put away, sentenced to death, and he asks that criminal, "On what grounds could you even justify yourself? In light of the law, in light of everything you knew, the light you had, why have you done this?" It is not the judge bargaining with him. The judge is getting ready to sentence him. But it's for his own conscience sake and that's certainly how this question, I believe, should be asked here.

But come back here to Judges 2 and let's look at this as a message sent from God. This is a message sent from heaven, and the first thing I would have you to note here is the messenger. When you talk about a message, there is a messenger. Who is the messenger? Well, at a cursory reading in verse 1, it says, "And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim." Now most people when they see an angel, they think, "Okay, that's a created being that God sent in the form of a man that went up from Gilgal to Bochim." But as you read on in verse 1, this is not an ordinary messenger. No ordinary angel or created being could be able to say, "I made you to go up out of Egypt." You see, those words alone in the message should signal to us that this is an extraordinary Messenger that has been sent. And of course, we have studied this before and I don't want to leave here to go back to that study; I would just commend you to get a Strong's concordance or look it up on the internet, the Angel of the LORD, and look at these references throughout the Old Testament.

I believe we have here none other than God in Christ in a pre-incarnate state coming unto this people as a Messenger of the covenant and speaking as that Mediator, speaking as that only One through Whom salvation could be given. And I say therefore again, all the

more, adding to their condemnation because this wasn't Moses, this wasn't Joshua, this was the LORD Himself that is coming and speaking this message. That's why it's a message sent from heaven.

And notice, "I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers." That's not an ordinary angel that would say that, that's the LORD Himself. "And I said, I will never break my covenant with you." There has never been a covenant that God has made through a created angel.

Look over in Hebrews 1. You see, this is where you might wonder why all this talk about angels in the New Testament. People can take anything in Scripture and make any kind of doctrine out of it and some do. Some preachers are just waiting for an opportunity to start preaching a whole series of messages on angels, the angels of God. Dear friends, they are but servants. Yes, flaming servants, but they are servants of the Almighty God. Our focus shouldn't be on messengers but on God alone.

But here in this particular passage in Judges, if you look in Hebrews 1, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Those verses right there describe our LORD as greater than any creature or any aspect of this creation. Everything that came before were but types and pictures. He spoke in times past in diverse manners unto the fathers by the prophets, but hath in these last days, Christ is the fulfillment, the Son is the fulfillment of all these things. But what we're looking at here I believe in Judges 2, is more than just a type. This is the LORD Himself. As much as when those three friends of Daniel were cast into the fire and the king approached and said, "Did we not cast three? What is it that I see a fourth like unto the Son of Man?" You say, "How on earth did he even know to speak that?" That's the LORD causing this unregenerate king to speak forth, just like Christ said when they complained, the Pharisees complained in His day when He was entering Jerusalem, about everybody saying, "Hallelujah!" and laying palms before Him and telling Him to tell the people to be quiet and He said, "Even if I tell them to be quiet, the LORD is able to raise up of these stones, dead hardened sinners, praise unto his name." That's the God we serve.

In verse 4, it reminds us of that, in Hebrews 1, "Being made so much better than the angels." So I say here is one better than the angels. We would miss Christ if we read this portion, this Messenger, and see nothing but a created being. "As he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son? And again, when He bringeth in the Firstbegotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a Sceptre of righteousness is the Sceptre of Thy Kingdom."

Dear friends, that is Who is revealed here. This is the Messenger, I believe, that we have, and this is confirmed again in Judges 2 as you read on where it speaks specifically of the Angel of the LORD. Don't be confused just because it says "an angel of the LORD." "An" as in the sense of, here is a description of this Messenger. The word "angel" means "a sent one." Is not Christ a sent One? But here more specifically in verse 4, "it came to pass, when the Angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept."

So this is an effectual Messenger. I say all that just to say this and even as the LORD directed me to pray before the message, and if all you hear is my voice, we are all in trouble. As we gather together and open this Word, Whose Word is it? I'm more and more conscious of that. You don't need to hear my commentary about this Word, you need to hear the Word. I need to hear it. Even though I have prepared, I need to hear even now a Word from the LORD, have that refreshing to my own soul as I attempt to communicate Him to you. But that's Who the Messenger is.

Now, secondly, we see here those to whom the message was sent. It's true that there was a general population. Just like when I preach, it might be here, it might be on the radio, and might be over the internet, there is a general population. Many are called, Scripture says, but few are chosen. There is a general call that goes out every time the Gospel is preached. I believe that's what we have here in verse 2, "ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed My Voice: why have ye done this?" That is the general message that goes out to all sinners. God has commanded all sinners everywhere to repent. It's a command, it's not an invitation. And especially since the preacher doesn't know who they are, who are the LORD's and who aren't, we don't know the difference between wheat and the chaff, so we are commanded to proclaim the Gospel.

That's the general call but what I see here in verse 4, those to whom this message was sent, it does have its particular effect. In other words, God purposes that it has that effect and that is to bring them to repentance. Now, I know if you read commentators and they say, "Well, here we go. This is just profession here. These wept and they offered sacrifices and the next thing you know they were running down the road after idols." They weren't. I believe where God is pleased to truly bring home His Word to the heart of one of His own redeemed ones, He delivers them out of idolatry but they continue to inhabit or live among a people that is given to idolatry. We live among many idolaters. We know the nature of our own heart, and so even as the general call goes out to all, like we see here, "ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land," we don't exclude ourselves as if, "Okay, he is talking to them over there." Our own hearts are stirred as we consider these things and the LORD by His Spirit brings to light how full our own hearts are of idolatry, prone to wander. LORD, I feel it. Prone to leave the One I love.

But the effect that the Word will have on a heart of one of the LORD's, who truly is the LORD's, and that's the ones to whom the message is sent, is this right here, "it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that

the people." I like that. It doesn't say all of them did but, "the people." "Thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sin." That "people lifted up their voice and wept." I'd be a fool to think that every single person in Israel lifted up his voice and wept, but I'll tell you this, those to whom the message was sent lifted up their voice and wept.

"And they called the name of that place Bochim," which means weeping. That's what Bochim means. "And they sacrificed there unto the LORD." So there is a picture of a true work of Grace. So we've seen the Messenger, we've seen those to whom the message is sent.

You know, I've seen this over the years, how a message can be declared to a general audience and maybe only one or two ever be touched and the rest go their way, "Wasn't that a wonderful message? That was interesting." That's their response but they go right on in their blindness and idolatry, God leaving them to themselves. But that very same message that just passed over their ears like nothing, the LORD was pleased to take and bring home to the heart of one of His own. And it doesn't necessarily have to be something that the preacher knows about or people around him know about. I've had some come back to me years later and say, "Remember this message that you preached?" And I can remember the circumstance, I can remember a certain place. I don't remember the particular message but they do because the LORD brought it home to the heart at that particular time. That was for them and that's to whom the message is sent.

But thirdly, let's look here coming back to verses 1 through 3, what is the message? And the whole message could be preached right from this in these verses. First of all, and this is essential to the message of the Gospel, it's not what man does for God, it's what God has done for His people. That's the message of the Gospel. It's on the foundation of what God has done.

Do you see that in verse 1? "I made you to go up out of Egypt." It's not like the flea that crossed the bridge on the back of the elephant and when it got to the other side, the flea said, "Didn't we make that bridge shake?" That's the way that natural minded men reason in their supposed free will, that it's a cooperation between God and them. Look at it, dear friends, "I made you to go up out of Egypt." If any of us has been brought out of the bondage of our sin, out of the bondage of our will, it's because God made us to come up and for no other reason.

So that's fundamentally the message, but secondly, and he says, "and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers," but here is the second foundational truth to the Gospel and that is God's faithfulness. "I will never break my covenant with you." Now, there were many among Israel who were never part of that covenant. I know I keep repeating that but, again, here we have to look at the Scriptures to be reminded of this.

Look in Romans 9. Notice in verse 6, again, it's the same theme as we saw in Romans 3. "Not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect." You read this back here and God says, "I will never break my covenant with you," and yet the majority of these perished.

So did God go back on His Word? No. Here it says, "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." So it has to be understood, then, that when this message was being delivered, there was a particular people to whom God was speaking, Christ was speaking here, the Messenger, bringing this message that He would never break that covenant with them.

Paul goes on, "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham," in other words, natural seed, "are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy Seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the Seed. For this is the Word of promise," addressed to a particular people, for a particular purpose. That is the Word that God causes His people that He has chosen and that Christ has redeemed to hear. It's not our faithfulness, it's His faithfulness as the covenant God, that if He purposed in His Son even before time to save a sinner such as I am, He will be true to that Word. I cannot be lost. The LORD is going to show me that I was lost but He's going to show me that when Christ came and paid the debt, He bought me, He brought me, and now He has taught me.

When I read for you a little while ago in 1 John, look with me there, 1 John 1. This is the reason the LORD directed me to read this chapter for you in 1 John 1, and it's a verse that a lot of people like to quote without really understanding the meaning. It's like John 3:16, people love to pop that one out and try to prove somehow free will. It doesn't prove free will, "For God so," that's not so. You go back and look at the word, it means "in this manner." If you want to know how God loved the world, God in this manner loved the world, "that He gave His only begotten Son," not that everybody might not perish, but that those that believe, "he that believeth might not perish." That's not everybody. There is a whole world out there perishing in unbelief, but that he that believeth might not perish but have, enjoy, benefit from that Everlasting Life that caused them to believe in the first place. So even there, God's faithful. He will bring home to the heart of every sinner that Christ has redeemed, that faith to cause them to believe. He will not lose one. "Of all that the Father has given Me," Christ said, "then I should lose nothing."

Here in the verse in 1 John 1:9, how many times do people say, "Well, if you confess your sins. So let's have a time at the end of the meeting where we can confess these one to another. Anybody want to confess something tonight?" So everybody, "Okay, let's pray for Brother So-and-so." That's not what this is. When you look at it in the context, particularly in verse 8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," so it's talking about being sinners, not just doing sin but acknowledging before God that we are sinners. "I am sin." And the word "if" there is actually better translated "when." When the LORD brings one to confess his sins, that he is all sin, notice, "He," God, "is faithful and just," and it's in the present tense, to continue "to forgive us our sins." You say, "Well, when were sins forgiven?" When Christ died. But what He does is bring us to confess it; us to own it; us to say that when Christ died, my sin put Him there. And we take ownership of the sin, not of the salvation. The salvation is in the Savior, the sin is in me and I never stop confessing that. But He is faithful to continue to forgive our sins and to continue "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It means that there was already a forgiveness that was granted. There was already a cleansing that was granted and when we confess who we are, the promises, the hope is that He continues to forgive us. It's not

that He conditionally forgives you as you confess. No, our confession is, "I'm all the sin and He is all the Savior."

And I believe that's the sense here when the LORD said, "I will never break my covenant with you." It's His faithfulness to His Son. When it says, "He is faithful and just to forgive," He is faithful to His Son. Sooner it would be that Christ would be removed from the throne as the Son of God than one of His should perish for whom He died. It's impossible. Impossible. I don't know about you, but that gives me some comfort and hope tonight as I consider Christ and His great work.

So all of this is fundamental to the Gospel. It's what God has done. It's His faithfulness to His people and it's because of the work of the LORD Jesus Christ, and that's why any that are His make no league with the inhabitants of the land. When we talk about fellowship, we're not going out here in the world trying to find some fellowship just to feel better about ourselves or to build a bigger congregation or whatever.

Look here in 1 John again, chapter 1. What if it were just me the sinner and God the Father, and His Son the LORD Jesus Christ, could there be fellowship? If there were no other sinner that the LORD had been pleased to save and had left me alone, could I enjoy fellowship? Well, according to verse 3 of 1 John, yes, because he says, "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." I can't tell you how many times that has been a comfort to me in the face of opposition or isolation, when you just hunger, you look around and where is there anybody you can sit and fellowship with and you don't find it. But that doesn't in any way diminish the fellowship that there is with the Father through His Son the LORD Jesus Christ. What a blessing that is.

Now, our time is getting away and there is so much here but I did want to conclude here with the last aspect of this message sent from God, and that's the effect of the message. The effect. When you come here and you read this in verses 4 and 5, I've already alluded to this but this is depicting a true work of God. "It came to pass." I love that. God's Word is not going to return unto Him void. It will accomplish that for which He sent it forth, is what He said in Isaiah 55. For some, it's a Word of life unto life, to others it's a savor of death unto death but either way, it's going to accomplish His purpose.

But what a blessing of grace when it pleases God in the midst of all of the religious unbelief. You see, that's what's being described here, religious unbelief. There are religious atheists that abound today. They hold this Word, they call it God's Word but they are ignorant of the God of this Bible and we would be too were it not for the Spirit of God opening our eyes. But when God is pleased to bring this Word home, here is the effect that we see here. There is a humbling by His grace and it says here, "that the people lifted up their voice, and wept." This isn't just remorse. You can look at the word. It's a true heartfelt weeping and crying unto the LORD that is a manifestation of repentance. You talk about repentance, is it just a one time act? It's not even an act, it's a state of mind and heart to which the LORD brings us. It means to have a change of heart and attitude. You know, an attitude adjustment would be a good way to put it. Don't we need that every moment of every day? You talk about our own arrogance if the LORD left us to

ourselves, our presumption. Why does He 'hedge in' our way? Why does He cause us to just be so burdened at certain times over our own sin in this flesh and everything about it? Well, again, it's His way of bringing home His Word to our heart and cause us to, as we see here, lift up our voice and weep.

But I'm also reminded that it's like this hymn-writer wrote, "Could my tears forever flow, could my zeal no, linger, no. These for sin could not atone, thou must save and thou alone." You see, if all we read about here in verse 4 was the people lifted up their voice and wept, some might come away with the idea, "Well, then let's do that. Let's pray through until we all come to tears."

But the weeping was the work of the Spirit in the heart that directed them where? Look in verse 5, "And they called the name of that place [weeping]: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD." They were brought again to look to Christ alone. That, dear friends, is true repentance. Weeping alone isn't. Remorse alone isn't.

And if you ask me, "How do you know that the LORD has done a work of Grace in a sinner's heart?" His cry tells you everything. Even as here, they lifted up their voice and wept, but it's not just a cry, it's not just being depressed and saying, "I'm lost. I'm lost." Even Cain said, "My punishment is too great for me." There was a remorse. Esau, Judas regretted what he did but there was no crying to the Savior. He went out and hung himself. Just like so many enter into eternity and condemnation, even with tears welling up, considering a judgment they face but there is no hope.

Here is the hope, "And they called the name of that place Bochim," which means weeping, but it's in connection with the sacrifice of the LORD Jesus Christ, "they sacrificed there unto the LORD." When the LORD gives a sinner a heart cry, it is to the LORD. It's to His sacrifice. It's to what He has accomplished and there they look, they wait. It's not the preacher reassuring them, "All will be well. Don't worry about it. I see your tears." No, salvation is in the blood of the LORD Jesus Christ. God didn't say, "When I see your tears, I'll pass over you. When I see the blood, I will pass over you." But He certainly does bring those that He has redeemed to see their sin, own it. It breaks the heart but, oh, the blessing and hope of looking to Christ alone. That's what we see here.

What a message. What a message.