

The healing of the deadly pottage

Part 1

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[00:00:00] In the recording of an address given by Mr. Fred Pettman at Bridewell Hall on the 21st of September 1963, his subject, The Healing of the Deadly Pottage. The second book of Kings, chapter 4, reading from verse 38 to 41.

And Elisha came again to Gilgal, and there was a dearth in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him.

And he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seize pottage for the sons of the prophets.

And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, [00:01:04] and came and shred them into the pot of pottage, for they knew them not.

So they poured out for the men to eat.

And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot, and they could not eat thereof.

But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot.

And he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat.

And there was no harm in the pot.

And then one other scripture in the second epistle to Timothy, chapter 1, verses 13 and 14.

[00:02:22] The second epistle to Timothy, chapter 1, verse 13.

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

So may God bless to us this reading from his word this evening.

[00:03:08] I want to speak to you a little from this rather strange portion of the Word of God tonight, from the second book of Kings, and to try and find what lesson or lessons God has for us in it.

I wonder whether you read the Old Testament very much.

There are many Christians who turn to the New Testament and who say, Well, we like to read the New Testament. It's simple and we gain advantage from it.

And they ignore the Old Testament to some extent. Well now, the Old Testament is full of divine truth.

[00:04:07] And if we ignore the Old Testament, then we ignore part of what God has given to us for our spiritual food and for teaching us divine principles. The Old Testament is wonderful. I know very well that with the light of the New Testament, it takes on an entirely different complexion. But that only makes it the more sweet and the more blessed. There are three passages, at least in the New Testament, which entitle me to say this to you tonight. The first is in Romans 15, where we read that, Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. So that there is not a single scripture of the Old Testament, that is, the things written aforetime, [00:05:07] there's not a single scripture which hasn't some lesson for us. And so we ought at least to ask ourselves what God has there for us. And then in the first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul says that these things happened. I know in that scripture it is particularly the things that happened to Israel in the wilderness journey and so on. But the principle still applies. These things happened for ensembles and they are written for our admonition.

And then lastly when we come to the first epistle of Peter, the second epistle of Peter, we read this, that no prophecy of the salvation but holy men of God is of any private intercession [00:06:07] as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Now that just means this, that while this story, for instance, that we have read tonight was an actual record of something that happened in the life of the prophet Elisha. Yet that cannot be taken as all that it means. It's far wider than that.

And so we look according to the second epistle to Peter for some interpretation which shows us the mind of God for us today.

And we do recognise as we approach the scripture with reverence that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

[00:07:03] The ministries of Elijah and Elisha form a story of what happened through about 70 years of Israel's history. Elisha was active for about 14 years and Elijah for 56 years, four times as long.

They occurred, these ministries of the two prophets throughout the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz and Joash, kings of Israel.

In the northern tribes and it was a period almost the darkest in Israel's history.

[00:08:09] You have only to read the accounts in the first book of Kings and again the second book of Kings to see how far Israel had departed from Jehovah so that the darkness was very deep.

Elijah and his ministry can be described as the time of judgment.

Elijah was the prophet of judgment.

You remember how he brought judgment upon the prophets of Baal and the prophets of the groves and again and again in his history you find God working in a striking power in the way of judgment. And that must ever be for the prophet Elijah always joined issue with what he found of evil. [00:09:09] He was always moving into action against the evil that was among the people of God and that meant judgment.

But you know it's a wonderful thing in the word of God how even in the midst of darkness and evil God's grace still goes out to men.

Just to illustrate it for the moment, the gospel of the grace of God still goes out to a guilty world today. You and I as we consider the state of things around us might well have thought that God must judge the world as one day indeed he will. But he doesn't do it. He's not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance [00:10:01] if that be indeed possible.

And so God's grace still goes out in the message of the gospel to a wicked world. And as we were thinking in our reading this afternoon God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. And so while Elijah is the prophet of judgment, Elisha is the prophet of grace.

And both prophets in their way are typical of the Lord Jesus Christ. Probably more particularly in a coming day.

You see there is a day coming when our Lord Jesus Christ will come and he will punish the world. He will judge the world in righteousness. [00:11:03] That is the testimony of Peter in the Acts.

And the judgment will fall upon this guilty world.

But then after that the Lord Jesus Christ will introduce his kingdom, his millennial kingdom. And that will be a time of unparalleled blessing in this world. So you see the ministry of Elijah, the prophet of judgment, is followed by the ministry of Elisha, the prophet of grace. The prophet Elisha is also I think a type of our Lord Jesus Christ in his first coming. You remember when he went into the synagogue at Nazareth that famous Sabbath morning.

[00:12:02] And he stood up to read.

And there was delivered to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And these are the words that fell from his gracious lips. The words at which they wondered. They'd never heard such words before. The ministry of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to bring sight to the blind, deliverance to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. What a ministry of grace it was. And that of course is what characterized him in his ministry here on earth. Elisha in his life is one who himself possessed nothing.

You remember what the famous woman of Shunem did.

[00:13:07] She said, I perceive that this is a holy man of God that passes by continually. And she provided him with the simplest necessities of the journey.

A bed, a table, a candlestick.

And it was just in accord with what the prophet needed. But of himself he possessed nothing. And yet he possessed the power to bring blessing to all.

How many there were in the life of Elisha in those 56 odd years who received blessing from him in one way or another. Just to take a moment or two to follow the course of this because I think it's beautiful and profitable. [00:14:03] Elisha is the man who removes the curse from the waters at Jericho.

They said to him, this place is pleasant and the situation is beautiful but the waters are barren. The ground is barren because it was salt. So he heals the waters of Jericho, blessing.

Thereafter those people would remember the day that Elisha came to Jericho and healed the waters. And then next in the story we read of how the armies of Israel and Judah joined with the king of Edom to fight against the king of Moab. And of how they got themselves into a mighty fix. There was no water to feed the armies. But the prophet Elisha comes to their assistance and he provides water for them. [00:15:02] And the whole multitude is saved by the action of the prophet of God, a ministry of blessing. How the newspapers of the day, had there been any, would have been filled with this remarkable deliverance to the armies that were gathered. And then not only does Elisha deal with the great things but the small things as well. You know this is just like our Lord Jesus Christ, isn't it? He is able to deal with the little things, the small things of life as well as the great things. So we find that the next is that a widow comes to him.

The creditors are foreclosing on her.

She doesn't know what to do. She is at her wits end. And Elisha provides the oil which she sells not only to pay off her debts and free herself but to live thereafter. [00:16:06] What blessing there was in that action, wasn't there? And then the next thing is the story of the woman of Shunem. A story again of blessing in more than one way. First of all, she is kind to the prophet.

Little did she know then that the deepest desire of her heart, the desire of every Jewish woman, was to be granted. And the barren woman becomes fruitful and she has a son. And then that son dies. He goes out into the field and the sun strikes him and he is dead. And it's the prophet again to whom she turns and who brings the boy back to life again. Then we come to our story here. It's a story of the deadly pottage that was healed. [00:17:01] In the same chapter, the verses that we didn't read at the end, the hungry are fed just as in our Lord's life the multitudes were fed by him. Isn't it so close to the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in so many particulars? And then the well-known story of Naaman gives us the leper cleansed. What a tale of blessing it is that we are following. Naaman is cleansed and brought to know the God of Israel.

And then the man who fell into a difficulty because he borrowed an axe and the axe head fell off into the water. He comes to the prophet. Well was it that the prophet was with the sons of the prophets that day. My friends to take the Lord Jesus Christ with you in your life is no idle thing for he is a friend of all.

We can turn to him in the difficulties of life whatever they may be. [00:18:04] And the prophet makes the iron to swim, gets the man out of his difficulty and enables him to be straight with the man from whom he borrowed his axe and to continue the building of the house for the sons of the prophets. And then just to finish off the story with one or two more instances the next thing we find is that the enemies of Israel are baffled. The young man comes into Elisha and he says, Alas master for what shall we do?

The armies were all around and Elisha says, Open his eyes Lord that he may see. Elisha didn't need his eyes opened, he knew already. But the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw and the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. [00:19:02] And then he deals with the enemies. They are blinded, blinded in mercy.

He brings them into the midst of Samaria and their eyes are opened and they see where they are. The king of Israel says, Shall I smite them my father, shall I smite them? No he says, you can't smite them. Eat, give them plenty to eat and then send them back to their own country. A ministry of grace.

And then the prophet provides food for the besieged in Samaria. The situation was desperate because of their wickedness.

But food is provided for them and the four leprous men are given all that they needed and more also.

And now lastly a very remarkable thing which perhaps you may not have noticed in the story. Elisha died.

[00:20:02] Unlike Elijah who passed into the heavenly glory without dying. One of the only two men in the New Testament who thus acted. He dies, Elisha dies.

But the time comes when hastily they throw in the bones the body of a man who died because Israel's enemies were approaching. And the dead bones of the prophet bring life to the one who had just died. Oh what a wonderful type of our Lord Jesus Christ who through his death brought life to all who trust in him.

And so I've illustrated to you at this point the ministry of grace in the life of Elisha. And now we have to come to our little story here tonight. And I do verily believe that God has a lesson for us in it.

[00:21:06] The story of the healing of the deadly pottage.

The first thing we read in this strange incident is that there was dearth in the land.

Now my friends, in this world today there is dearth.

A dearth of spiritual food.

It was because the people had sinned against God that there was dearth in the land. If you read the book of Deuteronomy chapter 28 carefully you'll find this, that famine in Israel was prophesied as the result of Israel's wickedness. God foretold that thus it should be. And so famine came upon Israel and there was dearth in the land.

[00:22:02] And in the world today, my friends, you know so well that there is a complete dearth, dearth of spiritual food. Oh, I know that there are all sorts of wonderful things going on in the world. Science has reached a point in its discoveries and development of those discoveries, reached a point unparalleled in the world's history but the deepest thinking minds of men, apart from Christianity altogether, the deepest thinking minds of men are saying that man's moral development as they put it has not kept up, kept pace with his scientific development. And that just means this, that there is a dearth of spiritual life and food in the world. It's because the world is away from God. It's because of man's wickedness there's dearth in the land. [00:23:03] And now a point on this.

We shall see in a moment what the sons of the prophets did. They speak of you and of me. Incidentally, we who are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. But if we as Christians seek to find our food, our spiritual food, particularly in the world around us, we shall never find it.

We may fill our minds with all kinds of things and try to satisfy ourselves by that means. And it is easy enough to ignore the word of God, to cease reading it, to cease praying. It's so easy.

If we are truly children of God we shan't lose our salvation that way. At least we shan't lose eternal life, we shan't lose our membership of the family of God [00:24:06] just to keep in touch, in tune with our reading this afternoon. We shall lose our spiritual power and enjoyment. And there are many, many myriads of Christians today who are starved or half fed because they have ignored the word of God and are trying to satisfy themselves with food in the world. John says love not the world, that is the world of men and women who don't want God, who won't have him and who try to satisfy themselves with the things that they've created and the things that they're doing. Well, we must not ignore what John says to us in this day in that respect. And so there was a dearth in the land.

But in contrast to that, the next thing we are told is that the sons of the prophets [00:25:05] were sitting before Elisha.

Bear in mind, won't you, that Elisha is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a happy thing that it is when his disciples, you and I dear friends, by his wondrous grace, if we've accepted him as our saviour and if the precious blood of Christ has washed our sins away, what a happy thing it is when we sit before him.

We have been considering a little lately at the conference in Zurich the wonderful place which Mary occupied sitting at the feet of Jesus and hearing his word. And my friends, that is really the place for every child of God. And so we are told that the sons of the prophets were sitting before Elisha. [00:26:02] Their faith was to use the grace of God ministered through Elisha.

They recognised Elisha as the one through whom God's blessing came and happy they were in their recognition of that fact.

And so we rightly look to Christ and his word and you know like those sons of the prophets we shall not be disappointed. Now the next thing we read in the story is that the prophet says set on the great pot and seize pottage for the sons of the prophets. As one writer has said about this, famine conditions would have suggested a little pot. That would have been enough with such restricted supplies. But you know when the grace of God gets to work, he doesn't give sparingly. [00:27:03] He doesn't give in a restricted way.

He gives good measure, pressed down and running over. That is what the grace of God does. And so the prophet, he doesn't say set on the little pot and get out as much as we can from it that may stave off hunger till we can find some more. That's putting it simply but he says set on the great pot and seize pottage for the sons of the prophets.

You know the word of God meets every need. I care not what need it is but the word of God will meet it. The trouble with us is that we won't go to it. We seek to settle things according to the wisdom which we possess and very often we make sad mistakes. But the word of God is sufficient to meet every need. [00:28:04] What God gives is sufficient in life for all. All the word of God is wonderful indeed. This inspired word of God that we hold in our hands this evening and from which we are studying. It's a wonderful thing the word of God. Thy words were found and I did eat them. And thy word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart so said the prophet.

Yes set on the great pot and seize pottage.

The prophet bade his servant to do this and the servant did as he was told.

I think you know that that speaks of the way our Lord Jesus Christ has given gifts from heaven.

It was Elisha who spake to his servant and told him, his servant, [00:29:01] to set on this great pot to seize the pottage. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given wonderful gifts from heavenly glory and we have been blessed and benefited by those gifts throughout the ages. How much we owe to the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter and the Apostle John, all the apostles. How much we owe to those who have followed them especially those in our own times who have expounded the word of God to us. The voices of some of them are silenced now in death. But speaking for myself I have benefited so greatly from those to whom God gave gifts and who ministered the word of God and who enabled me to fix in my mind the broad basis of divine truth [00:30:04] and who enabled me to raise the superstructure too in my own mind. Oh I owe so much to brethren who have now passed away to be with the Lord and I gladly take the opportunity of paying them my thanks.

And Christ has given gifts from heaven for his church. What are those gifts? Well we read of them in the New Testament, don't we, in Ephesians. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers they have all brought the word of God to bear upon us at one time or another.

Set on the great pot and seized pottage for the sons of the prophets. And now the next thing we read is that someone to whom the prophet gave no directions at all [00:31:04] and who was not content with what God had given he was restless and he went out to meddle with the feast that God had given.

One went out into the field to find what he could and he found wild goods.

The field you know in scripture speaks of the world rather the cultivated world if you like. The region of thought more particularly.

He went out into the field and he gathered. He had no difficulty in gathering as much as he wanted though it was a time of famine. But he in his supposed superior wisdom went out into the field and gathered a lap full of wild goods.

[00:32:01] And he came back and he shred them into the pot of pottage. For they knew them not.

Now just to talk of that for a moment.

The result of course as you know was that the meal was poisoned. It was poured out and as they began to eat they realized that the whole meal was poisoned and they cried out.

What does this mean do you think? Well let us look at it this way.

Even in the apostles day there were those who spoilt the work of God through the things that they brought in to the teaching which God had given. Let me give you one or two illustrations from the word of God. There was one epistle that Paul wrote with his own hand. The entire epistle.

[00:33:01] I know that you will tell me that he subscribed the end of every epistle with his own hand. He tells us so.

He says it's the sign of authenticity.

And he signed the epistles and he generally gave a little message at the end in his own handwriting. But beloved friends there was one epistle, one letter, Paul wrote with his own hand. He couldn't wait for an amanuensis, a writer.

He couldn't wait in the heat of his own heart. He must write and write at once to the Galatians. Why? Why because there were some who had come in and were spoiling, may I say, the work of the gospel.

The evangelist is the one who brings us the gospel. He preaches it in power and souls are saved. And at Galatia there were those who had come in privately [00:34:05] and they were spoiling the whole thing. The apostle, when he'd gone there, he had preached that Christ was the saviour and the only saviour. And that he was entirely sufficient of himself. His work on the cross stands complete and is the complete answer to our need. But there were those who came to the churches of Galatia and who were saying, yes that's all very well. We need Christ of course, we're not going to dispute that. But, but, but we must have something else. We need to keep the law of Moses. We need to be circumcised.

In order to become a good Christian you must become a Jew first. That's what they were saying. They were spoiling the free gospel of the grace of God.

And that is why Paul wrote so, may I say it furiously, [00:35:03] why he wrote in the heat and the energy of his heart, because he saw that the very basis of Christianity was being gradually eroded by this false teaching. One went out into the field and he gathered wild goods and shred them into the pot of potage for they knew them not. My friends, if anything tampers with the gospel of the grace of God in that way, then it's of Satan.

Paul says in that very epistle to the Galatians, he says, this is another gospel, it's not another, but there are some who would lead you astray. And then as a second instance, there were those who spoilt the work of the teacher. Read the epistle to the Colossians and you will find there that the apostle has to deal with those who were introducing the worship of angels. [00:36:04] Thus displacing Christ from his supreme place, the only place which he is entitled to occupy.

They were saying, yes but then we don't want to take away the worship of Christ but don't forget he is only one amongst a whole number of heavenly beings. Ask yourselves this question, has that come into the church or hasn't it? Of course it has.

And not only that but they were introducing ordinances and ascetic practices. And the apostle deals with them, he says why. You are being taught to touch not, taste not and handle not contrary to the doctrine which you have learned of me. Yes, they were spoiling the teaching of the teacher.

If you look back on the history of Christianity tonight, [00:37:01] since the apostles' day, you will find that the apostles' doctrine which we read of in the second of Acts has been spoiled by so many things. I haven't time tonight to deal with everything even if I were capable of it. But I will say this, there are several things which are patent today and which we in the position we take in Christendom have protested against. The introduction of a priesthood. You know how that has come into the church of God. Well Peter tells us that we, every one of us, whether brothers or sisters, we are a holy priesthood.

So that we need not to have a priesthood established to men yet that has been introduced into the church of God. It's not of God, it's iniquity.

And then not only that, but when Paul tells us in Corinthians [00:38:01] that the Holy Spirit is here to divide severally to whom he will, ask yourself, has that been displaced in Christianity? Of course it has.

The Holy Spirit has not the place largely that he ought to have as the one who presides entirely in the church of God.

And then today it's so sad to look about us and see how that wonderful truth about the one body, the church's one body has been set aside.

Yes, one went out into the field and he gathered his wild goods and he shred them into the pot for they knew them not. Paul's teaching of all kinds has come into the sum of Christian teaching and thought and it's spoilt it. Many souls today are in bondage.

The pure stream of divine truth intended for the enjoyment [00:39:02] and sustenance of God's people has been poisoned. Many are in bondage through bad teaching. We've met some of them. Oh, we've longed to bring the truth of God to them and to proclaim the freedom that there is for the child of God. But they've learnt badly somewhere or other and they're in bondage.

You know in our own spiritual experience we also can act like this man did.

We can easily spoil the simplicity of what God has given us. Mark, it was the prophet who provided the feast, who told his servant to set on the great pot and seize pottage for the sons of the prophets. It was God who provided that. It was the man who went out who wanted to spoil it. Now we can very easily do that in our own spiritual experience. [00:40:01] It's being done all over the place today and the result is that we are losing the comfort of the Holy Spirit which means so much.

The Holy Spirit is grieved, so largely grieved in Christian circles today everywhere. And he is liable to be grieved in our own circles and in our own spiritual life if we are not careful and we introduce into

our worship and into our thinking things that are not of himself.

Well now we come to the remedy. This is very wonderful.

They rightly appealed to the prophet Elisha.

They came back to the one who had helped them in the beginning and I think if there were a genuine appeal to Christ on the part of all his people he would perhaps grant healing [00:41:01] beyond which we have ever thought or asked.

What did the prophet say then? He said then bring meal.

Now before I speak of that, what is meal?

Well meal was made quite simply of flour mingled with water into a paste baked with fire and then crushed into a beautiful even powder.

Besides being used for food it was particularly used in the meat or meal offering that you read of in Leviticus. It was to be anointed with oil and sprinkled with frankincense and part of it was to be burned and the remainder was to be the food of the priests.

[00:42:03] No leaven was ever allowed to be mixed with the meal in the offerings. In the days when I was at work I sold many, many tons of this meal in the Jewish community.

So I know what it is. They use it freely at Passover time. It's manufactured very carefully and in fact they use it all the year through. It's very beautiful. It's even and fine especially what they call the fine meal which is the meal which was used in the offerings. Our version says it shall be made of fine flour but the real meaning, the real interpretation is it shall be made of fine meal. Now what does this speak of? Well, you know how often it has been ministered to us what the meal offering speaks of. The meal offering speaks of Christ. [00:43:01] Christ in the entirety of his perfect sinless manhood under the power of the Holy Spirit and ascending as a sweet savor to God. That is what the meal offering speaks of. Christ in his life and death and resurrection. The whole thing as something beautiful. It was to be anointed with oil. Oil speaks always of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. And so it was that when he was baptized the Holy Spirit came upon him. And it is said several times that he did what he did by the Holy Spirit who by the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God. That refers to the crucifixion, doesn't it? Yes, the meal speaks of Christ. But now Christ is risen [00:44:01] and he has become the head of his body, the church. So you see now it's not just a case of Christ as he was in his life but it is Christ as the head of his body, the church. We can't ignore now the teaching of the epistles. You see when the children of Israel came out of Egypt they ate of the Passover lamb that of course spoke of Christ in his offering of himself upon the cross for our sins. In the wilderness they ate of the manna that spoke of Christ in his life here below. But there was a third thing. When they came into the land they were told to eat of the old corn of the land and the manna ceased that very day. And so they ate of that old corn of the land. What was that old corn? [00:45:02] It was that which had fallen into the ground and died and sprung up again. And so now when we speak of Christ and of Christ being the answer we mean Christ in the way he is displayed not only in the gospels but in the epistles too.

There are some times we hear in the meetings well what we want is more of Christ. And I couldn't

agree more with that statement. We do need more of Christ. We don't know enough of Christ. We don't meditate enough upon the beauties of his life here on earth.

But let me remind you that God has given us more than that. He's given us the epistles. And so we read of Christ as the one who's become the head of his body, the church. And Paul in the first epistle to the Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 12 [00:46:02] says in reference to all these things so also is Christ.

Christ the head.

His body here on earth composed of all the members those who are believers in him.

And so what the prophet said was then bring meal and he cast it into the pot. That was the remedy.

So the remedy for spiritual ill is Christ in all the truth that he's revealed in God's word.

He says I am he that liveth and became dead and behold I am alive forevermore.

And you know just once again to go back to those instances how was it that Paul met the need of the Galatians?

He says well turn aside from these things and remember that Christ is all. [00:47:02] Only Christ is necessary. He brought shall I say a fresh application of Christ himself.

And then if you read the epistle to the Colossians again you'll find that what the apostle does there to counter that evil teaching is not so much to expose that evil teaching he does that.

But what he does is to minister Christ. He says in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily and ye are complete in him.

It's a ministry of Christ as the one who alone and by himself is able to meet all our need.

Yes, it was cast into the pot and the prophet said pour out now for the people that they may eat and there was no harm in the pot.

And now just finally a short word on the healed table.

[00:48:06] The wonderful experience that these sons of the prophets had wasn't it as they sat down to the feast. Formerly they might have taken that feast very much as a matter of course. They would sit down and they would eat of it and then forget it.

But now they sit down to the table and they eat of this in a new way altogether.

They say this is the table, this is the feast that was healed by the prophet. It was a new experience for them.

You know it will be a wonderful day for us when at last we meet in the glory of God and we look back over the pathway and we see how God has helped us all the way through. We shall have an acute

sense then of the grace of God that has met our deepest need. [00:49:04] Not only the grace of God that met us when we were in our sins and that provided the saviour to deal with our sins but the God who has brought us all the way through.

I am reminded again of that simplest of all portions of the Word of God, the portion to which the saint turns in his weariness and sometimes on his deathbed, the 23rd Psalm.

What is it that the psalmist says about the good shepherd, the great shepherd there? He says the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake. He restoreth my soul.

[00:50:03] Isn't that just what we've had before us tonight? He restoreth my soul. It's a healed table. My friends, as we come to remember the Lord in his death tomorrow morning, adopting the figure, adapting the figure in a new way, I think we are bound to think of that table to which we are invited by the Lord himself as the healed table.

It's the table that sets forth the way of our healing. He gave his body, the loaf, sets forth his body.

He gave his blood for us, the wine sets forth his blood.

And we have come into healing, perfect healing, so that like David we are able to come and sit before the Lord and talk to him and enjoy his presence. So may I leave this subject with you tonight, [00:51:02] this short, simple illustration from the Old Testament.

And may God bless you.