

Exod 03-09-28b

We're ready now to resume our study in the book of Exodus where we pick up in chapter 17. We've seen the institution of God's provision in the form of manna. We saw the significance of that manna as a representation of what God provides to us for spiritual nourishment.

We saw the timing as it relates to the departure from Egypt, 45 days until they arrive in the wilderness where they need the bread and are grumbling and God says in the morning I will provide and for six days thereafter he provides and when you get to the 51st day after Passover which is the 50th day after the day of departure you wind up on the eve of the first Sabbath and the institution of Sabbath observance precedes the giving of the law on Sinai. It begins here in the wilderness and it is tied to provision. It is tied to their staple diet.

It is the men who are enjoined to go forth and gather, not the women or the children. The men are to go forth and gather for their families and Omer for each individual which is roughly two quarts give or take, a tenth of an ephah. So now in chapter 17 all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of sin according to the command of the Lord and camped at Rephidim and when it says journeyed by stages that's the way the New American Standard translates it.

It says in the New King James they set out on their journey. What they're grappling with is in Hebrew there's a doubled form of the word for journey. They journeyed their journeyings is what it literally is trying to tell us here and the arrival at Rephidim brings up the issue of water.

There was no water for the people to drink therefore the people contended with Moses and said give us water that we may drink. Now this rings of the past doesn't it? No matter how many times God provides it seems as though they have no long-term memory in this case not even any short-term memory. If you go to numbers they've only gone about a day's journey to arrive in Rephidim.

This is not that far that they have traveled from when they began their first. They've had manna now for a week. Every morning they arise and look out and here's the manna on the ground for them and the illogic of seeing the daily provision of manna and yet believing that Moses has brought them in the wilderness to kill them.

Oh but by the way breakfast is out there. You know your daily ration is out there on the ground but there's no point gathering it because God really brought you out here to kill you. It just does not follow but this is the corruption of our minds that happens when sin takes its place at the center of our thinking.

When we are short-sighted, when we are faithless, we are irrational particularly in the spiritual realm and we cannot apply the Word of God to our experience when it is not the object of faith. When we don't believe that God has a plan that God is a beneficent God. This is what I love about our Sunday morning worship when we sing and we begin with the doxology and it says

praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise him all creatures here below. It doesn't say all you happy creatures praise him but those of you that are having a tough time you can lay out and catch up on another verse. You don't have to sing this song of praise.

All creatures here below should praise God. He takes us for his sheep we sang this morning. He provides for us.

He cares for us. It could be a very different universe. We have no control over who and what God is.

What if he was unrighteous? What if he was capricious? What if he was the God of reformed theology and was inscrutable and unknowable and unpredictable and he might save us and then a few millennia down the road decide well that was kind of fun but I think I'll just wipe that all out and start over for my own inscrutable purposes and who are you to answer back to me? We are so blessed to have an omnipotent, eternal, infinite God who is good. What if the ruling principle of the universe was evil and capriciousness and you could count on nothing that he says because he's all-powerful. Who will stop him? Who will answer back to him? Who will say hey wait a minute that's not fair.

You think about what a blessing it is that God has integrity and God has character and God does not change and he is eternally good. What option would we possibly have if he weren't? And yet in our day-to-day existence when it comes time to trust him and trust in his ongoing goodness and his mercies that are renewed every morning and his great faithfulness, we don't treat it as a reality. Despite his past actions, despite his illustrated goodness throughout the pages of scripture, we just seem to have a kind of amnesia when it comes to our own situation and we're just not confident that he's going to come through.

It's one thing for him to do these extraordinary things in scripture but I'm not living in scripture. I'm living in real life and in my real life I just don't know if things are really going to turn out for the best. Yes we do.

We do know this if we stop and think but you look at the Israelites and you see how easy it is for the human mind to get wrapped up in its own subjective view of life and subjectivity kills faith. You cannot be faithful and be subjective. If you are walking by faith and not by sight, you are not subjective.

If you have your eyes on self, eyes on people, eyes on circumstances, by definition you are not walking in faith because faith is objective. Faith focuses on the object which is God and his word and his faithfulness. Though he slay me, I cannot see.

When you're a small child you have no concept. Drag you down to the dentist, drag you down to the doctor. I remember some of my earliest memories of trauma are being taken down to sickbay at Barstow where I was fetched up as they used to say and they didn't have a full-blown

naval hospital or anything there.

It was just kind of a dispensary for the supply depot there in Barstow. My father was stationed there and I was born there. When I was a young lad getting my vaccinations and so on, why they'd take me down there to this bizarre looking place with these strange instruments bolted to the wall and benches and people I'd never seen before and I was a little skittish about people I didn't know anyway.

And then they start dragging out these needles and saying roll up your sleeve. It's very frightening and I think why did my mother bring me here? I thought she loved me. Of course I got equally afraid when they took me down for a picture because it was all the same to me.

Stranger in a strange room with some equipment aiming it at me. How do I know I'm not going to get a big pain in my rear from this? So you learn to trust your mother and your father. You learn that you are not going to surely die.

You're going to survive and as you get a little older and more experienced you don't get gripped with abject terror and fright every time they put you in the car and say well we're going to the base. You realize that well it may be unpleasant for a moment but it is needful. You begin to understand that by taking this shot and having a little bit of unpleasantness you're not going to get polio.

About the first time I saw someone back when I was a youth there were a lot of survivors of polio. I had children in my elementary school with braces on their legs because the polio vaccine was a fairly new thing back in the early 60s and there were a lot of people that had suffered through polio. You say you remember that little thing you went through down there and they squirt the red stuff on the sugar cube and the inoculation? Well this is the kind of thing you are being protected from through this.

Better a little discomfort than this. But see that's a concept. You have to trust the person telling you that and believe it.

Israel has had the experience of provision out of nothing. God bars this provision. He creates manna seemingly out of nothing.

They're in the desert where there is no food. Every morning floating on the surface of the dew separated from the defilement of the ground by this layer of water is this angel's food. This bread of heaven.

And once the dew evaporates and it hits the ground it melts away. It is as though by contacting the ground that contamination renders it unfit and God removes it so they have to go out early and collect it. So they doubted at the sea.

God came through. They doubted when they ran out of food. God came through.

They doubted when they came to the bitter waters. God came through. And yet they do not seem to be able to carry forward the faithfulness of God into the present crisis.

And this is our problem. This is the problem you have. This is the problem I have.

We cannot achieve consistency seemingly in trusting God and saying all I need to do, I do not need to solve this problem. I do not have to figure out the answer. What do we have to do in any stressful circumstance in any situational crisis? What is our job? That is the question we ask ourselves.

What is my responsibility in this particular situation? Is this a stand still and wait for the deliverance of the Lord time? Is this a gird up your loins, take your staff in your hand and walk across on dry ground? God did not miraculously beam the Israelites across the Red Sea. They had to walk by faith through the walls of water that would seem to be in imminent danger of collapsing and drowning them all as it will do for the Egyptians. God made them do that.

You can see prophets and others that are miraculously and instantaneously transported from one place to another. God has that power. He did not do it.

Why? He required them to walk by faith through the scary walls of water. He said stand still and wait for my deliverance. When the deliverance comes, you have to walk by faith to seize and lay hold of that deliverance.

So when we face a stressful situation, we have a crisis, we have a problem, we do not have to solve the problem. We have to determine our proper, godly, biblical course of action. What am I to do? What is my responsibility before the Lord here? Am I in the stand still and wait mode? Am I in the walk across mode? Is there a part that I must play, a duty that I must fulfill in order to be qualified for and receive the provision of God? The Israelites just never even get that far.

Got no water? This whole thing is a mistake. This life is a mistake. Why am I not back in Egypt stomping mud into bricks? Who talked me into this? And there's no effort at all and application at living before God and trusting in God.

God is not even in the picture. Who can I blame for this? Moses. There's Moses.

Come here, you. You're the guy that messed up our wonderful situation in Egypt, as if. So the people contended with Moses and said, Moses, you give us water that we may drink.

What a childish demand. If I'm Moses, I'd stand up there and say, do I look like I'm Mr. Spigot here? Am I the Culligan man? I can just bring bottles of water and set up little dispensers. What do I look like? You know, I can part water.

I don't create water. Moses said to them, why are you contending with me? What do I look like? That I'm just, you know, I walk and my footsteps just spring up in little pools of water. What do you think I'm supposed to do? Why do you test the Lord? Why are you tempting the Lord to

wipe the crumbs off the table and start a whole fresh project? The people thirsted there for water and the people complained against Moses.

Now you will note God saw this coming. God knew how much they had in their skins and in their canteens and their thermoses. And he knew they would run out.

And God did not bring them to a mysteriously provided well of water. He didn't rain down water that they could collect in buckets. He said, I'm going to let them, I'm going to stress them a little.

I'm going to stretch them a little. I'm going to test them a little to see whether they will trust in me or not. And of course, at the first sign of heat, the plant withers and dies.

The seed in the shallow soil syndrome, right? Well, we wouldn't know this if every 750 yards they came across another well, we wouldn't know how shallow their faith was and how short-sighted their spiritual view is. We find out what we're like under pressure. When you squeeze an orange, you get orange juice.

When you squeeze a lemon, you get lemonade. When you squeeze a boil, you get the results of infection coming out. You don't know what's under the surface until you apply pressure.

And God will apply pressure to us to reveal what is on the inside. Jesus said, don't be surprised. Don't think it's something new.

In this world, you shall have tribulation. Count on it. Expect it.

Try to be a person who has something on the inside that is going to be revealed in the time of pressure, because you're not going to avoid it. It is going to come. It has been promised to come.

It's an opportunity, not an affliction. So concentrate on being ready. What is my part when the pressure is applied? What am I supposed to do? People thirsted.

The people complained. Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst? So Moses did the right thing. What the children of Israel do not do, Moses does.

He goes to the source. He goes to the Lord. What shall I do with this people? In Hebrew here, this says, a little more and they will stone me.

If this gets any worse, I'm a dead man. A little more and they will stone me. The Lord said to Moses, stand back.

I'm going to obliterate these people. He doesn't. God is patient.

He says, now look at this and see if you can answer this question. I've been puzzling over this

for days. Go on before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel.

Take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb. You shall strike the rock and water will come out of it so that the people may drink.

Now, for some reason in my entire life, all of the numerous world without end times that I've looked at this story, I never realized until we studied it this time that the entire assemblage of Israel was not there when Moses struck the rock. Who's there? A select few of the elders are the only ones that see this take place. God says, you go ahead of the people.

Leave the people behind. Take with you some of the elders of Israel. How many elders have you got? Generally, you're thinking in round numbers 70 or 72, about six from each tribe.

You don't take that many. Maybe one from each tribe. Maybe you take a dozen men with you.

Take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river. We struck in connection with water once before and good water turned bad. We're going to take that same rod and we're going to do some striking that's going to result in beneficial water.

One, the water of life turns to death at the Nile. Here, solid rock where there is no water is going to produce water of life. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb.

This phrase in Hebrew, stand before you, is one that is often used of a servant standing before his master or a subject standing before the king. It is sort of an obeisance mode or a service mode. I am at your service.

If you translate it that way, I will stand before you ready to serve is the idea here. This is the normal way this phrase is used. It's quite odd when it is used in connection with God.

This almost never happens in Scripture. That's a curiosity that we want to make a mental note of and we'll come back to. I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb.

I'm going to stand there to do something for you. You shall strike the rock. Water will come out of it so that the people may drink.

This, I think, is kind of interesting. You see the difference between the people and Moses. The people have seen God do miraculous things, but they have no confidence that He'll ever do it again.

Moses is going to take a bunch of witnesses and he's going to stand there in a dramatic moment. He's going to take the rod and he's going to whack the rock. How embarrassing is it going to be if nothing happens? What? We came out here a mile and a half.

You're whacking rocks with sticks. What are you doing? We had a whole couple of million people back here that need water. What are you doing? What did you expect when you were

banging a rock with a stick? What has that got to do with our problem? Moses believes God.

God says water will come forth. Moses thinks, in the entire history of mankind, I've got one of the best educations you can get on the planet. I have never heard of this.

We've been surviving in the desert. I've studied the nomads. I know all about civilization and Bedouin and everything else.

I've never heard of this. If he had said, go dig a hole, maybe. Whack a rock with a stick? What? So this is a step of faith, but you see the difference between Moses and the people.

The people can't digest and apply anything. So Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. Verse 7, he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah because of the contention of the children of Israel and because they tempted the Lord, saying, is the Lord among us or not? Well, you cannot understand this little episode apart from what immediately follows.

As is so often the case, if something seems a little bit obscure, a little bit unclear, just look in the surrounding context and things will come clear. Let's just note a few points before we go on to the Amalekites. First of all, there is a need.

This is a life and death situation. Water, everybody understands. If you're in the wilderness and you have no water, you will die.

You can't go more than a few days without water intake, especially in this environment. When they are faithless, God remains faithful. He cannot deny himself, if you remember the words of Paul in the New Testament.

But the people are not privileged to see the provision. Instead, this provision is going to be witnessed by only a few. If I had to guess, I would imagine one man from each tribe for a total of 12.

And the reason I think that is, the Christology, the foreshadowing of the work of Christ, who is stated over and over again in Scripture to be the rock, the rock of our salvation, the rock of our deliverance. The stone of stumbling and the rock of offense. Some will fall upon that rock and be broken, and in the broken and contrite spirit, God is pleased.

That is the sacrifice that he's looking for, a broken and contrite spirit. You fall on the rock, say, I need what this rock provides for my life, for my salvation. If we do not, the rock falls on us and crushes us.

It's all the same as with either judging ourselves or we will be judged. If we judge that we need the provision of God through Christ, we will go fall on the rock. If we don't, the rock will fall on us and judge us.

So, striking of the rock, he was bruised for our iniquities, he was wounded for our transgressions, Isaiah tells us. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all, and by his

stripes, by the strokes, we are healed. So this is a picture, if you're going to have any future, if you're going to have any life, it is going to depend on the rock and on what the rock provides in terms of the water of life.

Jesus is going to say when he goes down to the temple, come to me if you are thirsty, I will give you of the living water. He tells the woman at the well, I can give you water that you'll never thirst again. Well, all of this is fairly well known.

It's on the surface here. Most people recognize that striking the rock is a picture of the crucifixion of Christ. This is another picture of salvation, just like coming out of Egypt under the blood.

But, you will notice that the rock, he doesn't just lead them to a place where the water is already flowing. The rock has to be stricken. Who strikes the rock? The leadership of Israel strikes the rock, and it foreshadows the fact that Jesus will be betrayed and delivered into the hands of men by his own brethren.

And it is a part of the plan of God that it be so. It is also an indication that those who see the provision are going to go back and tell the others. There are witnesses who communicate.

And this is what I think is a very fascinating principle that is not often observed in this passage. If you go through the pages of scripture, you see over and over again that God uses human messengers to communicate the gospel. Why did angels not come down and preach at Pentecost? Why is it the apostles? Why is it that God uses Cornelius as the agent of delivering the message of the good news to the apostle? Why is it that the apostle Paul is sent place after place after place to share the good news? Why could God not simply drop in an angel, an angel comes in and lets the apostles out of prison? But who is it that preaches at the temple the next day? It is not the angel.

It is Peter and John. Human witnesses, human messengers are an integral part of God's plan. And this is the archetype.

The message of deliverance of the striking of the rock isn't seen by the vast majority of God's people. It is seen by a few chosen witnesses who take that message back. What we have in the pages of our scripture is the record of that witness.

From Genesis to Revelation, we rely on the testimony of eyewitnesses of the glory and the grace and the provision of God. And it is incumbent on us to hear and heed that witness. That's why we stress the study of the word of God.

That's why sometimes it's more interesting than others. Sometimes it's more stimulating than others. Sometimes it's the message of life that we need in a moment of crisis.

Other times it just doesn't seem to be that important. But it is this water of life. It is this provision of God for us, communicated through human messengers.

Why do we not get a word from the Lord in the middle of the night telling us which way to go? This impinges on the whole idea of divine guidance. We say, I'm faced with a decision here. I'm not sure what I should do.

Oh God, send a ball of fire. Send an angel. Send something to light the way for me.

Where do we get the guidance that we need? From God's word. It comes through human agents. This word of God itself was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by men.

There is not a book in the Bible that was written by an angel. This is how you know out of hand that the Book of Mormon is a travesty because it supposedly comes through the angel Moroni. Well, God does not give the message of salvation through angels.

There is always a human messenger. Even the Apostle Paul, when he meets the Lord Jesus on the road. Jesus does not give him the message on the road.

He says, you go talk to a man and he'll explain it to you. Over and over again. This is why our responsibility to speak the truth to one another in love, to spend time in fellowship with fellow believers, to listen to those who have been given a communication gift, whether it's here or on the radio or in books or whatever means, but the word of God comes to our ears through human messengers.

God sent prophets to the nation of Israel. When do you see the nation assembled and an angel coming down? At the dedication of the first temple? No. At the dedication of the second temple? No.

At any time in the wilderness wanderings does an angel appear and speak to the assembled congregation? Every single time it is Moses. Every single time it is Samuel. Every single time it is the prophet who mediates the message from God to man.

Why? Because you have to have a human mediator between man and God. And the man Christ Jesus is our mediator. And that is the pattern that God establishes throughout the pages of Scripture.

And this pattern is being established and set up here that's going to carry all the way through Scripture. The people at large are not going to see this act of life-giving salvation, of striking the rock. Chosen witnesses will see it.

Elders, faithful men will come back and tell the people what happened and lead them to the rock. This is why that great gospel song, lead me to that rock that is higher than I, lead me to that rock. And the whole song is about lead me.

Someone has to exercise leadership. In a family, it's the husband, it's the father. In a church, it's the pastor, it's the teaching elder, whatever you want to call them.

In Israel, it was the prophet. In the New Testament church, it was the apostles, followed by the

pastors that were trained by them. But always, always, always, human communicators, human witnesses to the truth.

We speak the truth to one another in love. Each of us has that responsibility. You may be in communication with people.

I know several of you all that communicate with people on the internet. I know all of us talk with co-workers and family members and others with whom we come in contact. We have been given the opportunity as well as the responsibility to speak the truth, to bear witness to the light.

Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works and glorify your Father. They don't see our good works and glorify us. They should know with whom we are identified.

They should know the source of our life and our strength, the water that flows from the rock. And when they see any good in us, they say, there's somebody living out their faith. There's somebody that's got that hope of the resurrection.

Remember the Thessalonians, I think it is, when Paul is talking to them. And he says, we go to towns and we want to talk about you all. And they tell us.

They say, we've already heard about those people. They are notorious for their hope of the resurrection. You can't talk to them without finding out that they're waiting for the return of the Lord.

They're looking forward to the kingdom. That's how we ought to be. These men who go forward, there's a reason for this detail in scripture.

And it is a reminder to us that we are not to hide our light under a bushel. Let your light shine. Put it on the lampstand.

Because it is only through human communication that evangelism takes place. It is only through human communication that teaching and edification and that which every joint supplies builds up the body. And it edifies itself in love.

So Moses does this. But he calls the place Masa and Meribah. This is not a glorious occasion.

This is a message that is delivered in spite of faithlessness. In spite of disobedience. And it is a challenge.

God says, I'm going to overlook your grumbling. I'm going to overlook your complaining. This is what God does.

God makes the first move of reconciliation. There is a problem. There's a gulf and a separation between man and God in this situation.

God makes the first. They complain and grumble. They're in sin.

They're in error. They're ready to stone Moses. God makes no judgment.

God incurs no discipline. Just as when they were asking for the quail, he didn't judge them. He didn't hammer them for grumbling and complaining.

He sent the quail in the evening and he sent the manna in the morning. He gave them the Sabbath day as a day of rest. Here for a second time, there's grumbling and complaining.

God passes no sentence, executes no judgment, incurs no discipline for the Israelites. He makes provision. This is his grace.

One time, a second time, he responds in grace to the need and the sinfulness of the people. There is going to come a time when the patience of God runs out and he says, you are a disobedient and stiff-necked people and I'm not going to continue to absorb this rebellion and this sinful lack of attention to grace and to provision. But these first two times, God responds completely in grace.

There is no discipline that falls on them. But Moses, this second time, says, I want to remind you all that you were grumbling and complaining when God made this provision. You were out of line.

You were alienated from the life of God. You were outside righteousness when God made this provision. Their basic provision of bread and water has been made completely by grace.

No works of righteousness on the part of the Israelites. So now, how does this tie in with the rest of the chapter? Now, Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. Does anybody remember who Amalek is as an individual, the father of these people? He is a grandson of Esau.

If you go back to Genesis, it might be around chapter 34, my memory serves, you will find in the book of the generations of Esau, when you go down to his descendants, Amalek is his grandson. So these are another set of extended family members that wind up being a thorn in the side of Israel. Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

There is a lot we could say about the Amalekites and about the situation in Egypt as the land lies devastated. Israel is coming out. Amalekites are moving in.

If you go study Egypt and you read about the Hyksos, the shepherd kings, the foreigners who are going to rule in the second intermediate period, you find that the evidence points to the Amalekites as being the shepherd kings. These are those individuals. Moses said to Joshua, choose us some men and go out and fight with Amalek.

Now wait a minute. How many days has it been since Israel left Egypt? A little over two months, right? What did God say when he brought them out and didn't take them by the direct route to Canaan? Why did he say we are not going to go by the way of the sea? People aren't ready to

fight. If they hit warfare, they will get all discouraged and turn back.

So he turns them around and they do this big 180 and they wander around and go down to the Red Sea. He doesn't take them that way because they are not ready for warfare. Two months later, now what does he say? Choose some men and go out and fight with Amalek.

Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. Obviously, some instruction from the Lord on how this should go. What is the difference between two months ago and now? They are still the people that came out of Egypt under the blood of the Passover lamb.

What is the difference? What are these people eating for food? Manna? What are they drinking for water in Rephidim? Water out of the rock? With the sustenance that God provides that they did not have two months ago, they have got the heavenly bread. They have got the supernaturally provided water. Now they can fight if certain conditions hold true.

Moses says tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. What does that rod represent? Delegated authority from God. This is the rod he had on Mount Sinai before the bush.

This is the rod that struck the river Nile. This is the rod that was involved in the plagues. This is the rod that was stretched out over the Red Sea.

Joshua did as Moses said to him. He selected the men. He went out and he fought with Amalek.

Moses, Aaron and Hurr went up to the top of the hill. So it was when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed. When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

This is hand in the singular. One hand. What is in the hand? The rod of God.

Anybody that has ever been in the military, a little punishment where they put your rifle out and you have got to hold your rifle out at a 90 degree angle, you know that you can't do that for very long. Especially if you try to do it one handed. You have got an 11 or 12 pound weapon out there, one hand or two, you are not going to hold it very long.

Well, try holding your hand above your head during the course of a battle that lasts for hours. All the blood is drained out and your shoulder is aching and you have got to let it down for rest. Well, any time he let his hand down, people just started getting overrun and slaughtered and massacred.

And having to retreat. So he would shake a little blood into his arm and lift the rod back up and all the battle tide would immediately turn and would go the other way. He is saying, wow, something about having this rod up is making all the difference.

People have speculated that there was actually some sort of supernatural power being inflicted by the rod. He does not stretch forth the rod. He doesn't aim it at the Amalekites.

He doesn't wave it at an Amalekites drop. This is symbolic. When the rod of God is raised to heaven, Israel prevails.

When the rod of God drops toward the earth, they do not prevail. It is symbolic. God causes the battle tide to change based on whether or not the symbol of God's delegated authority is visible and held high.

If it is not in view, if it is not the highest thing in the landscape, if God's power and God's plan and God's authority for this to take place is not in view, the people perish. When it is the highest thing in view, they prevail. So, you have these other two men, Aaron and Hur.

We will go into this a little bit more next week, but let me just give you something to chew on. What tribe is Aaron from? Levi. Who are the Levites? They are the priests.

What tribe is Hur from? You go trace it out. He is from the tribe of Judah. What does the tribe of Judah represent? Kingship, leadership.

Jacob has already made his pronouncement about the white teeth and the milk and the purple hair. He is wearing a purple robe and the scepter will not depart. So, Moses, who is the leader of Israel, has his hands, plural, held high with Levi on one side, priesthood on one side, kingship on the other side.

This ought to get your mental wheels turning. Two hands with a stick connecting them. A horizontal piece of wood, two hands held high.

Who is going to be the prophet and the priest and the king who is going to have his hands above his head, fastened to a piece of wood, and achieve a victory? Does this hark back to that rock being struck by that very same rod? I will give you that to chew on and we will delve into it a little more next week. Christ is our victory. Christ is our righteousness and peace and sanctification.

When He is held high, when His work is foremost in our minds and in our hearts, we will prevail. That is the great picture we have here. Let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the wonderful truth you communicate to us in your word. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will convict us, will remind us, impress these truths in our hearts, so that day by day, hour by hour, we will remember who we are and why you have placed us here in this time and in this place on earth. We pray that as a result, our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified in and through us.

We ask it in His name. Amen.