

Elisha Needed Music  
By Bob Vincent

**Bible Text:** 2 Kings 3:9-19  
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Our scripture lesson is from 2 Kings chapter 3 beginning at verse 10, and that's on page 573.

“What!” exclaimed the king of Israel. “Has the LORD called us three kings together only to hand us over to Moab?” 11 But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD through him?” An officer of the king of Israel answered, “Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.” 12 Jehoshaphat said, “The word of the LORD is with him.” So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. (2 Kings 3:10-12)

The word of the Lord. [“Thanks be to God.”]

May we pray.

*Help me, Lord, as I expound on this text today. Open our eyes to truth in a practical way for the sake of Jesus. Amen.*

**This was a war between cousins.**

Now I want you to notice something here. This is in a context of war, and we notice here that descendants of Abraham and Isaac have all joined together.

So, we have Israel and Judah who are descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And then we have Edom, who is Esau, who along with Jacob, is descended from Isaac. So, these folks have kinship, but they also have kinship with the person against whom they're going, and that is Moab.

You may recall that Lot, who was Abraham's nephew, had two daughters, and the name of the one's children was Moab, and the name of the other one was Ammon. And so, what it is, you have the Ammonites and the Moabites. Why did they name their children that? Because they got their daddy drunk. They got Lot drunk.

One day the older daughter said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man around here to lie with us, as is the custom all over the earth. 32 Let's get our father to drink wine and then lie with him and preserve our family line through our father." 33 That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and lay with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. 34 The next day the older daughter said to the younger, "Last night I lay with my father. Let's get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and lie with him so we can preserve our family line through our father." 35 So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went and lay with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up. 36 So both of Lot's daughters became pregnant by their father. 37 The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today. 38 The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today. (Genesis 19:31–38)

Remember that Lot was a righteous man, we're told in the book of Jude, whose soul was vexed daily by the wicked things he saw in Sodom (Actually this is found in the parallel passage, 2 Peter 2).

And if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men ... (2 Peter 2:7)

But this righteous man had a vulnerability. And guess what? Every single person here, from the people in the farthest back to the people right up here, all have vulnerable spots that can be exploited by Satan.

And you know what? Alcohol is one of those spots. And when people drink, they often drink to excess. And when they drink to excess, they will do things they would never do otherwise.

Can you imagine? A man got drunk and produced grandchildren by his own daughter: Moab. Moab literally means from daddy (mô'āv, מוֹאָב). Mo-ab, Av is the Hebrew word father (אב). And Ammon refers to my people (literally, son of my people, ben-'ammiy, בְּנֵי-עַמִּי), Ammon.

So, he produced a child by the other daughter. And those are the Ammonites. Now, here you find that these sons of Isaac have gathered together, that is, Israel and Judah and Edom, Esau. And notice they've gone out to war.

### **Why is there war?**

Why are there wars? There's one reason. "I want what you've got."

Think about that for a moment. If you look at the history of warfare, except for wars that are fought purely defensively, all wars in history are, "I want what you've got." That's what it is. Where do wars and fightings come from? Says the Apostle James. They come from the conflicts you have inside yourself. You lust and covet, you want, and you fight in war. And so, look at that.

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. (James 4:1-3)

War always is rooted in lust, except for purely defensive wars, and it leads to chaos.

And I'm struck here, as these three kings have joined together to go against Moab, they've run out of water. And it reminds me of something that happened during the Crusades at the Horns of Hattin, when the Muslims got

the Crusaders who ran out of water, and they utterly defeated them and routed them (in A.D. 1187).

And I think about the Crusades that I've studied intimately in history, and that is the Crusades were a foolish, foolish thing that God did not bless, and it brought about terrible destruction. Do you know that the Crusaders burned down the synagogues of Jewish people, burned down the worship centers of Christians from the East? They were violent men. Wow. And they are defeated when they ran out of water. (See the end of this sermon for documentation)

So, you need to make sure you've got plenty of water when you go to war in a hot desert climate. So, they're in big trouble. And they begin to talk among themselves. And that's where you see here in verse 9;

So the king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. After a roundabout march of seven days, the army had no more water for themselves or for the animals with them.  
(2 Kings 3:9)

So, they're in big trouble. What are they going to do? Well, they find out that the prophet Elisha, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah, was there.

### **What about Elisha?**

Why was Elisha there? Because he loved God's people. He had a very difficult task. He was the successor of Elijah. He said, "He poured the water on his hands" (2 Kings 9:11). It meant that someone, when you wanted to wash your hands in ancient times, you didn't have running water. They would hold a pitcher, and they'd pour the water on your hands. And that was partly for ritual purity and partly also for general cleanliness.

So, they call for him. They **don't** call for him. What do they do? They go down to him. They're hat in hand.

You know, most of the time that's the total reverse. A politician says something to a preacher, and the preacher's like a dog that just suddenly saw a treat in his hand. And the preacher's there groveling and wanting to lick the hand of the politician and get in his good favor and graces.

But here's the different thing. These people knew that Elisha was a man of God. They knew he heard from God, and they were at their wit's end because they're going to die along with all their animals and soldiers. It's all going to be over for them. And so, they go to him hat in hand. And I want you to notice. When in verse 13, Elisha said to the king of Israel—now remember the king of Israel is the son of Ahab and Jezebel. But unlike his brother who died as a worshipper of Baalzebub (ba'al z'êbûb, בַּעַל זְבוּב), the lord of the flies. (בַּעַל זְבוּב: "flies" ... "Lord of the flies, God of the flies" ... NT Βεε(λ)ζεβουβ/λ. (Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner (1958), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), vol. 1, p. 261).

Unlike his brother, this man had put away the idolatrous practices of his mama and his daddy, and he was a better man than his brother, but he still did not repent of the sins of the Northern kingdom under Jeroboam. And so, there he is. And look at what Elisha says to the king of Israel.

What do we have to do with each other? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother. (2 Kings 3:13)

Did he still have the prophets of his father and his mother? Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They had the court prophets who prophesied, and they always told lies.

Don't you want to hear a liar? I mean, come on, let's be honest. Don't you want to hear somebody who will say to you: "Listen, life is great"? "You've got your best life now, and it's going to get better and better and better. And if you just do what I tell you to do and give me money, life is going to even be better. You're going to have more money and more health and so on."

Don't you want to be lied to? I mean, deep down inside, don't we want to hear words of encouragement rather than words that are true? What are true words? True words give us God's word so that we will humble ourselves before God and seek his face because our prosperity doesn't depend on our labor or other people, it's in the Lord.

Now notice what the king of Israel answers there.

“No,” the king of Israel answered, “because it was the LORD who called us three kings together to hand us over to Moab.” (2 Kings 3:13)

The man had discernment. Sometimes God gives spiritual discernment to political leaders, and this political leader had spiritual discernment. He said it was Yahweh, it was the God of Israel, the God of the Bible, who called us here to deliver us into the hand of Moab. And then look at verse 14.

Elisha said, “As surely as the LORD Almighty lives, whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not look at you or even notice you.” (2 Kings 3:14)

You think that Elisha would be the kind of preacher that would be invited to the White House throughout the entire history of the United States? What kind of person wants that? King George III, he wants somebody preaching the truth to him?

No, people want to hear good things about themselves. “You’re such a fine king, King George, even though you end up going crazy.” And he lost the Americas. Just look at it. And so, he says at this point, notice that next word in verse 15. And this is the key to where we are today.

**War brings a cacophony of confusion out of which we must come into the presence of God.**

But now, bring me a harpist. (2 Kings 3:15)

I want to meditate on that with you for a while. “Bring me a harpist.”

Why did he need a harpist? Have you ever been in combat? Some people here have. David has been in combat. Do you know what combat’s like?

Combat is chaos. Combat is fear and bravado in the face of fear, trying to stir up your courage. It’s all of the physiological things that happen to your body when you are terrified. It’s all of those things. And then the rising up of a lust to kill your enemies.

In other words, Elisha is in a place of violence and rage and fear and terror and chaos. And he said, “Bring me a harpist.” Why? Why? Because he needed to get in the presence of God. And this is a very practical lesson for you and me. Every single day of our lives, we need to have music that brings us in the presence of God.

Music affects you profoundly in your soul. Your soul is your mind. It affects you. It stirs your emotions. It stirs your will. It stirs you so that you are able to choose to do things you would never choose to do otherwise. How important music is! Elisha said, “Bring me a harpist.”

In other words, he needed to get in the presence of God.

While the harpist was playing, the hand of the LORD came upon Elisha 16 and he said, “This is what the LORD says: Make this valley full of ditches. 17 For this is what the LORD says: You will see neither wind nor rain, yet this valley will be filled with water, and you, your cattle and your other animals will drink. 18 This is an easy thing in the eyes of the LORD; he will also hand Moab over to you.” (2 Kings 3:15-18)

### **God guides us by Scripture and by the Holy Spirit’s applying the Scripture to our everyday circumstances.**

And that’s interesting. So, in other words, do you want to hear from God? Do you want God to direct your life? God speaks to us fundamentally, but not exclusively, from the Bible—fundamentally, but not exclusively from the Bible.

He also speaks to us by **words that are taken from the Bible and applied by the Holy Spirit to our hearts.**

“Do you believe that God can direct you in your daily life to make decisions that would be good and beneficial and helpful to you and to others?”

Yes, I believe that. I believe that God takes his written word as we hide it in our hearts (Psalm 119:11, 35, 97-101, 105, 130, 133), and he brings it out as we begin to pray to him.

“Lord, guide me. Lord, direct me. What do I need to do? Do I need to go here? Do I need to go there?”

“Do you believe that God will guide you?”

Well, yes, I believe that, and I’ve experienced the supernatural guidance of God in my life so many times as I meditated on his word and said, “Lord, show me. What do you want me to see here?”

**We must sing God’s praises in order to be delivered from the cacophony of confusion that surrounds us.**

Now I want you to think about singing with me for a moment. If you would turn to the book of Ephesians chapter 5, Ephesians chapter 5, and that’s on page 1823, page 1823, and it’s got a parallel in Colossians 3. He says:

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5:19-20)

*Parallel in Colossians 3:*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:16-17)*

So, God says here through his apostle Paul, that we are to use scripture and songs to encourage each other. We sing songs.

**What is a Psalm?**

You know when we sang, “As the deer pants,” where did that come from? That’s taken from a psalm.

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. (Psalm 42:1)

And so, as we think about these things, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, it's pretty clear what psalms are. That's the book of psalms, by and large, but there are other passages of scripture that have psalms besides the book of psalms (for example 2 Samuel 22:1-51, which reflects Psalm 18, and in the New Testaments as quotations from the Book of Psalms).

Why would you think of the Psalms coming in the Greek word for *psallo*, to strike? Because when you have a harp, you strike it with your fingers. You play it by strumming or striking the strings.

The word psalm (psalmos, ψαλμός) comes from the Greek word psallo (psallō, ψάλλω), which means to strike: “The original mng. of ψ. was ‘pluck’, ‘play’ (a stringed instrument); this persisted at least to the time of Lucian (cp. Par. 17). In the LXX ψ. freq. means ‘sing’, whether to the accompaniment of an instrument (Ps 32:2, 97:5 al.) or not, as is usually the case (Ps 7:18; 9:12; 107:4 al.). This focus on singing continued until ψ. in Mod. Gk. means ‘sing’ exclusively.” (Frederick William Danker, ed. (2000), *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*. Third edition (Chicago/London: Chicago University Press), p. 1096)).

The Hebrew word for a psalm is (mizmôr, מִזְמוֹר), “a song sung to an instrumental accompaniment ... 2. > tech. term for psalm ... Ps 3–6, 8f, 12f, 15, 19–24, 29–31, 38–41, 47–51, 62–68, 73, 75–77, 79f, 82–85, 87f, 92, 98, 100f, 108–110, 139–141, 143; Sir 44:5.” (Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner (1958), *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), vol. 2, p. 566).

## What is a hymn?

So that's what a psalm is. What are hymns? You'll find that there are hymns in the book of Psalms. Two psalms in the Greek Septuagint are also hymns and songs.

Εἰς τὸ τέλος, ἐν ὕμνοις ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς. (Psalm 66:1 in Greek Septuagint is Psalm 65:1, “Unto the end, among the Hymns, a Psalm of a Song.”)

Εἰς τὸ τέλος, ἐν ὕμνοις· ψαλμὸς τῷ Ασαφ, ᾠδὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἀσούριον. (Psalm 76:1 in the Greek Septuagint is Psalm 75:1, “Regarding completion. Among hymns. A Psalm. Pertaining to Asaph. An Ode.”)

## What is a song?

And then when you think about songs, you have to think about the book of Revelation that is so full of songs about Jesus.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. Καὶ ᾄδουσιν ᾠδὴν καινὴν, λέγοντες, Ἄξιός ἐστι λαβεῖν τὸ βιβλίον, καὶ ἀνοῖξαι τὰς σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ· ὅτι ἐσφάγης, καὶ ἠγόρασας τῷ θεῷ ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ αἵματί σου ἐκ πάσης φυλῆς καὶ γλώσσης καὶ λαοῦ καὶ ἔθνους,

Revelation 14:3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. Καὶ ᾄδουσιν ᾠδὴν καινὴν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου, καὶ ἐνώπιον τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἔδύνατο ἰμαθεῖν τὴν ᾠδὴν, εἰ μὴ αἱ ἑκατὸν τεσσαράκοντα τέσσαρες ἑχιλιάδες, οἱ ἠγορασμένοι ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς.

Revelation 15:2-4 And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: “Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Καὶ εἶδον ὡς θάλασσαν ὑαλίνην μεμιγμένην πυρὶ καὶ τοὺς νικῶντας ἐκ τοῦ θηρίου καὶ ἐκ τῆς εικόνας αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ ἐστῶτας ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν τὴν ὑαλίνην ἔχοντας κιθάρας τοῦ θεοῦ. 3 καὶ ᾄδουσιν τὴν ᾠδὴν Μωϋσέως τοῦ δούλου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν ᾠδὴν τοῦ ἀρνίου λέγοντες,

Μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστὰ τὰ ἔργα σου, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ·

**Redemption has been accomplished, and our songs must explicitly glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Now I want to make a comment, if you will turn with me to the right, to the letter to Timothy, and that's this. And he says, in 2 Timothy 1, and he says in chapter one and in verse eight, let's get it in context:

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. (2 Timothy 1:8–9)

Verse 10, that's the critical verse.

But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. (2 Timothy 1:10)

I want us to focus on that for just a moment. I want to attack the “doctrine of **exclusive** psalmody.”

**Some Psalms express despair and doubt about life after death.**

What do I mean by exclusive psalmody? There are Christians, and many of the Christians involved in founding the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, that hold we should only sing the book of Psalms. What's wrong with that?

You know what's wrong with that? It is pre-Christian. It is **before the resurrection of Jesus**. And you read certain Psalms, the psalmist is in total despair and never has anything but despair. In fact, some of the Psalms imply that we don't survive death.

No one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from the grave? (Psalm 6:5)

What gain is there in my destruction, in my going down into the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness? (Psalm 30:9)

Psalm 88 is devoid of hope and ends in despair.

O LORD, the God who saves me, day and night I cry out before you. 2 May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry. 3 For my soul is full of trouble and my life draws near the grave. 4 I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like a man without strength. 5 I am set apart with the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave, **whom you remember no more, who are cut off from your care.** 6 You have put me in the lowest pit, in the darkest depths. 7 Your wrath lies heavily upon me; you have overwhelmed me with all your waves. Selah 8 You have taken from me my closest friends and have made me repulsive to them. I am confined and cannot escape; 9 my eyes are dim with grief. I call to you, O LORD, every day; I spread out my hands to you. 10 **Do you show your wonders to the dead? Do those who are dead rise up and praise you?** Selah 11 **Is your love declared in the grave, your faithfulness in Destruction? 12 Are your wonders known in the place of darkness, or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?** 13 But I cry to you for help, O LORD; in the morning my prayer comes before you. 14 Why, O LORD, do you reject me and hide your face from me? 15 From my youth I have been afflicted and close to death; I have suffered your terrors and am in despair. 16 Your wrath has swept over me; your terrors have destroyed me. 17 All day long they surround me like a flood; they have completely engulfed me. 18 You have taken my companions and loved ones from me; the darkness is my closest friend. (Psalm 88, emphases mine)

That death is the great enigma is summed up by Solomon:

Anyone who is among the living has hope—even a live dog is better off than a dead lion! 5 For the living know that they will die, but **the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten.** 6 Their

love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished;  
**never again will they have a part in anything that happens  
under the sun.** (Ecclesiastes 9:4–6, emphases mine)

“Why? Are they inspired by the Holy Spirit?”

Yes, they are.

“Do they give an expression to things that people feel at times?”

“Sometimes I feel like a motherless child. Why do I feel so bad?”

In other words, the Psalms give us God-inspired human sentiment that people feel at times. But if you only sing the Psalms, you’re not singing about Jesus Christ explicitly, as the book of Revelation makes plain when the songs that are there, when the hymns that are there, focus on the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The Law made nothing perfect, and the Old Covenant is obsolete.**

In other words, the whole Old Testament, including the whole book of Psalms, is an imperfect—not in the sense of having error—but an imperfect revelation from God. What do I mean by imperfect? I **mean it hasn’t yet reached the point where Jesus has come and appeared and died on the cross and risen from the dead.**

If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest—one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? 12 For **when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law.** (Hebrews 7:11-12)

**The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless** 19 (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God. (Hebrews 7:18-19)

Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a **better covenant.** (Hebrews 7:22)

But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. 7 For **if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant**, no place would have been sought for another. 8 But God found fault with the people and said: “The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 9 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. 10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 11 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” 13 **By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.** (Hebrews 8:6-13)

It was necessary, then, **for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.** (Hebrews 9:23)

But now he has appeared **once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.** 27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28 **so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people;** and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him. (Hebrews 9:26-28)

Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” **He sets aside the first to establish the second.** 10 **And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** (Hebrews 10:9-10)

And so how can a book that does not mention Jesus explicitly—how can a book that does not—where David looks ahead and foresees the resurrection of the Christ, but he's not explicit about it.

I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, 10 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. 11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (Psalm 16:8-11)

How can it be that some of the writers of the Psalms end their Psalms in complete despair?

I'm glad that there are Psalms that end in complete despair because sometimes people need to think that way and feel that way.

But **Exclusive** Psalmody that fails to take into account how these words are used in the New Testament, that reflects life and immortality brought to light in the gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). In other words, the writers of the Old Testament, including David and Moses and other writers of the Psalms, Asaph, did not yet have that proof of life after death and the resurrection of the body that's there when Jesus rose from the dead, bring life and immortality to light.

**Consider the worship of the book of Revelation: it is Trinitarian and focuses on the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

And so, if you turn with me for just a moment over to the book of Revelation, you see these songs and how clearly they speak about the Lord Jesus Christ. And you see there, for example, in Revelation 5, page 1919:

You are worthy to take the scroll. (Revelation 5:9)

Who is that? That's the Lord Jesus Christ.

You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:9-10)

In other words, it's about Jesus. And then look down at verse 12:

Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise! (Revelation 5:12)

And then you look down at the bottom of the page, verse 13:

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" (Revelation 5:13)

In other words, the doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in the Old Testament, but somewhat cryptically, somewhat obscurely, but it comes out in its full force in the New Testament when the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, submits to water baptism, and when Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist, the last Old Testament prophet, the greatest man of the Old Testament, when he's baptized by John the Baptist, what happens? A voice speaks from heaven, this is my beloved Son, hear ye him. And then the Holy Spirit manifesting in the form of a dove.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17)

The Holy Spirit is not a dove, but he took on the appearance of a dove as he flew from the throne of the Father in heaven and lighted on the head of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have this profound revelation of the Holy Trinity: One God in three persons: The Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. The Father is not the Son. The Son is not the Holy Spirit. One God, three persons, profoundly there. The Father speaking in heaven, the Spirit coming from heaven to earth to baptize Jesus, and Jesus baptized with the Spirit and comes up out of the water in the power of God, because the Holy Spirit is the power of God.

So, we see these things here, and if you were to go further, you would see that. Turning back for just a moment to what we read there in 2 Kings chapter 3. It's important that Elisha has a harpist, somebody who can *psallo* (psallō, ψάλλω), who can strike the chords of the harp, because that brought him into the presence of God.

Now it's interesting, and I will continue this sermon, God willing, in two weeks when I return from San Antonio and that area. But the point I want to make is, that when Elisha was able to get into the presence of God, he was able to hear from God.

### **We must use music to get into the presence of God.**

I want you to think about your life with me for a moment. If you're like me, your life is filled with a cacophony of confusion. A cacophony of confusion. I like alliteration.

What do I mean by a cacophony of confusion? Television. Television. Television brings you bad news all the time. All the time. Radio, most radio, particularly talk radio, just brings you confusion. This radio speaker has one idea and this one has another idea. And look at America today. If there is ever a phrase that I would use to describe modern America in 2024, it is, "We are full of a cacophony of confusion," competing voices. If you believe what certain people say, like CNN, you believe certain things. If you listen to Fox News, you believe other things.

Which one's right? I don't know. He said, "Well, of course you've got to know, Bob."

Well, that cacophony of confusion keeps us all so confused, so we can't talk about things in reality with each other. It's all propaganda.

And what's the propaganda for? It's to make you confused. It's to have you just thinking, "I don't know what to do. I don't know how to think. I don't know how to vote."

I'm going to tell you this. Voting in this election is not that important. What is that important? Praying. Praying.

If you allow the hatred that is so much a part of modern America, and it is, with the cacophony of confusion, to get in your heart, you can't speak in an intelligent way to people who disagree with you.

And Dear Ones, I assure you, if your family's like my family, there are children who can't talk to other children at times about anything related to politics because they are so consumed in this cacophony of confusion.

It's not unlike the three kings who are there, and they call by going down to see Elisha and ask him to give them a word from the Lord.

### **We must love our enemies.**

What is important in this election? That you keep a heart that loves your enemies. If you cannot pray for Kamala Harris with a good heart, you're in sin. If you can't pray for Donald Trump with a good heart, you're in sin.

He said, "I can't believe you're telling me this."

Sandy and I had the beautiful privilege this past week, we received a DVD from Voice of the Martyrs, and it's the story of Richard Wurmbrand, who was tortured by the Russians, by actually the people from the Soviet Union, those soldiers who invaded Romania. And he was a Lutheran, and they tortured him.

They beat him on his feet. They sent his wife to prison. She was shoved into a canal when she was being forced to dig a canal. All these things happened. And you know what Richard Wurmbrand's plea to God was constantly?

"Lord, please help me to love the Russians. Lord, please help me to love the Russians, to love my enemies." He wanted to show them the love of Christ. That was what was consuming to that Lutheran pastor, Richard Wurmbrand. And he and his wife and their son eventually had their freedom bought by people, I guess, well, (the people who bought their freedom) weren't from Romania, and they were able to get out of Romania, and they came to the United States. What a beautiful story!

So, what is most important in this cacophony of confusion where you can't even think straight? In this cacophony of confusion when you can't hear

from God? In this cacophony of confusion when you don't know what to do?

Does God have a specific will for your life to direct you moment by moment in decision-making? I believe that he does.

But you miss out on it when the TV's blaring, when vile music is playing, and all those things. What do you need?

I don't know about you. "David (Majors our music director), bring me a harpist."

Let's pray.

*Lord, we pray that you would bless these thoughts as we ponder the need of the hour in the middle of so much confusion, the confusion of war, how we need to be still before God, how we need to be quiet before God, how we need to meditate on your word, how we need to listen to the Holy Spirit who will take your written word and guide and direct us, not only out of the book of Psalms, but out of other songs in the Torah and in the prophets and in the New Testament, particularly in the book of Revelation.*

*May our mouth be full of praise to you, the one true and living God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.*

## **Documentation about the Crusades**

The scenes of carnage which followed belong to the many dark pages of Jerusalem's history and showed how, in the quality of mercy, the crusading knight was far below the ideal of Christian perfection. The streets were choked with the bodies of the slain. The Jews were burnt with their synagogues. The greatest slaughter was in the temple enclosure. With an exaggeration which can hardly be credited, but without a twinge of regret or a syllable of excuse, it is related that the blood of the massacred in the temple area reached to the very knees and bridles of the horses. "Such a slaughter of the pagans had never been seen or heard of. The number none but God knew."

Penitential devotions followed easily upon the gory butchery of the sword. Headed by Godfrey, clad in a suit of white linen, the Crusaders proceeded to

the church of the Holy Sepulcher and offered up prayers and thanksgivings. William of Tyre relates that Adhemar and others, who had fallen by the way, were seen showing the path to the holy places. The devotions over, the work of massacre was renewed. Neither the tears of women, nor the cries of children, nor the protests of Tancred, who for the honor of chivalry was concerned to save three hundred, to whom he had promised protection—none of these availed to soften the ferocity of the conquerors.

As if to enhance the spectacle of pitiless barbarity, Saracen prisoners were forced to clear the streets of the dead bodies and blood to save the city from pestilence. “They wept and transported the dead bodies out of Jerusalem,” is the heartless statement of Robert the Monk. Such was the piety of the Crusaders. The religion of the Middle Ages combined self-denying asceticism with heartless cruelty to infidels, Jews, and heretics. “They cut down with the sword,” said William of Tyre, “every one whom they found in Jerusalem, and spared no one. The victors were covered with blood from head to foot.” In the next breath, speaking of the devotion of the Crusaders, the archbishop adds, “It was a most affecting sight which filled the heart with holy joy to see the people tread the holy places in the fervor of an excellent devotion.” The Crusaders had won the tomb of the Saviour and gazed upon a fragment of the true cross, which some of the inhabitants were fortunate enough to have kept concealed during the siege. (Schaff, Philip and David Schley Schaff. (1910). *The Middle Ages: From Gregory VII., 1049, to Boniface VIII., 1294*, of *The History of the Christian Church*. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons.), p. 105