

# The Valley of Weeping (Baca)

by Keith Malcomson

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*This sermon delves into the journey through the Valley of Weeping, emphasizing the purpose and divine plan behind facing trials and brokenness. It highlights the need to leave a testimony, a spring of blessing, in the midst of struggles, and the ultimate destination of appearing before God in Zion after going from strength to strength through fellowship with believers.*

**Scripture:** Psalms 84:6, Psalms 30:5, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Hebrews 10:24, Psalms 84:8

**Topics:** "Trials and Brokenness", "Testimony and Divine Purpose"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I want you to turn in your Bibles to Psalm 84. Psalm 84 in the Old Testament, and we're continuing with our series on the valleys. We've been working our way through looking at valleys.

This is more than teachings. This is more than just expounding a series. We're looking for the mind of God, the will of God, the word of God, the heart of God.

We're looking that God speaks to us. Church, I hope you realize by now, I hope you understand enough of what we're doing. We're not just teaching messages.

This pulpit ministry is an avenue for God to speak into lives, for revealing of his will. I believe that with all my heart. I don't just teach messages.

This is more than teaching. This is a ministry of the heart of God. I am so aware of that, even for myself.

And so we come to part seven here tonight. I believe it's part seven. And this is my message tonight as we turn to Psalm 84, the valley of weeping, or we could call this the valley of Baca.

Reading from Psalm 84 to the chief musician upon Griffith. A psalm for the sons of Korah. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts.

My soul longeth, ye, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Ye, the sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young.

Even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. They will be still praising thee, Selah.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, and whose heart are the ways of them, who passing through the valley of Baca maketh it a well. The rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength.

Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer. Give ear, O God of Jacob, Selah.

Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

For the Lord God is a sun and a shield. The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Let's pray together. Father, we ask that you open up our hearts.

You prepare our hearts to hear the word of God. We believe in a God who speaketh now through Jesus Christ, your son. Lord God, you're a God that's involved, caught up in our personal, individual lives, whether we're unsaved or saved.

We know the reality of your mighty dealings, that you speak. Lord God, that you put yourself in the message to make yourself known. Lord God, that an individual can know that you're concerned about them, that you're speaking to them.

Lord God, that you're directing them in those issues. And Father, we know that you're not a far off. We are longing for your courts.

We long for your house. We're so desiring you. My God, this world can never satisfy our heart.

Nor God, the things of this world, the things of mere religion could never satisfy the deep longing we have tonight. My God, we long for you. We desire for you.

Nor God, our hearts pant after you as the water breaks. My God, as the deer longs after the water. Lord God, so our hearts pant after you.

Nor God, we desire to dwell in the house all the days of our life. Nor God, we want to experience the blessing of those that trust you, the blessing of those that dwell in your house, the blessing of those who carry the very ways of God in our hearts. And Lord God, we do pray when we find ourself in the Valley of Bacchae.

Nor God, will you lead us through. Nor God, when our eyes run down with tears, when our heart is broken, when we despond either because of tragedy or pressure or persecution or confusion or disillusion. My God, I pray our hearts will be turned towards you.

Nor God, I pray that our wilderness, that our Valley of Bacchae can be turned into a place of great blessing, that you would receive all the glory and the honor and the praise. Will you bless us right now as we open and expound your word. In Jesus' mighty name.

Amen. My message, the Valley of Weeping, the Valley of Bacchae. Bacchae means weeping.

And so we come to this valley. And this has been very much in my mind from we began this series. This has been uppermost in my mind, the Valley of Bacchae, the Valley of Weeping.

And we're going to deal with it here. Spurgeon, that great preacher said this about Psalm 84. He says, you could call this Psalm the pearl of all Psalms.

He said, if the 23rd is the most popular and the 103rd is the most joyful, the 119th the most experiential, and the 53rd the most plaintive, then this Psalm 84 is the most sweet of all Psalms. The sweetest. We're dealing with what the greatest preacher maybe in history or recent history called the sweetest of all the Psalms.

There is a sweetness with it. And I hope you taste just a little bit. We're not going to expound the whole Psalm here tonight.

We're barely touching on it. But I hope you experience something of the sweetness of it. But it won't be sweet to you if it's message is not real in your heart.

It cannot be. But there is a great sweetness. I want you to see before we really get into the core of this message about the Valley of Weeping, before we get to that valley, let me just show you what this Psalm is about.

It is about those who have a desire for God's house. Those who long to dwell in God's house. Look how verse one starts.

How amable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. That actually means lovable. The tabernacles are where God's people gather together in God's house.

In ancient Israel and Jerusalem, there was only one tabernacle. This is before the temple was built. The tabernacle was there before the temple.

The temple replaced it. The tabernacle is actually the dwelling place of God's presence where they meet with him, where they worship, where they unite together. What does he say at the very beginning of this Psalm? How lovable are thy tabernacles.

Can I ask you tonight, do you love God's house? Do you love meeting together? Can you say that God's church is lovable? You not only bear with it, you not only begrudgingly gather, but you actually love the gathering of God's people together. Or what about verse two? My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for thy courts, O Lord. Here he is talking about the tabernacle, the courts of the tabernacle or the rooms of the tabernacle.

And he said, my heart actually longs after these courts. Or what about verse three? He says, thine altars. Verse four, he talks about thine house.

Verse 10, he talks about thy courts and thy house again. In other words, this entire Psalm is all about God's house. It's all about a deep desire and longing for God's house.

You see those who understand a pursuit of God, those who are truly longing after God in a very deep way, they understand the place of the church or the place of the tabernacle, the courts or God's house. You understand that you can't separate them. Any Christian you find who says, I pursue God, I'm spiritual, I'm after God, but has a low view of the church.

I tell you there's something fundamentally wrong in that person's heart, something tragically wrong. They don't understand why God even has a church. You see the church is the place where God ought to be sought.

And if God is not uppermost in our gathering, if he is not the focus of our praying and our worship and our preaching, if the pursuit of God, this seeking after God with all of your heart or to cultivate a heart that says, I long for you, I am fainting for you, I am desiring, I desire you more than life itself. If that isn't central to the gathering of God's people, then our meetings are a curse. They are tradition.

They are mere religion. If we can have gatherings without Christ being uppermost, there's something terribly wrong. If he is not the focus of it all, then we've missed what it's all about.

And so he says, my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God, but never separate that from sin. My heart fainteth for thy courts, O Lord. I am fainting.

Have you ever been there at home and your heart is literally going, I feel like I'm going to faint if I don't get to God's house. You see, I'm worried about Christians today because we've lost our spiritual appetite. We've lost our fervor.

We've lost our hunger. We've lost our thirst to meet together. And it's because apostasy comes in, and coldness, and deadness, and tradition, and dryness, and barrenness, and we lose spiritual desire.

And you know what? Church becomes formality. No wonder we lose our children. No wonder we lose our young people.

When even the kids know, you don't even desire to be here. You would actually rather be somewhere else on the Lord's day. I want to tell you from a child, I've never wanted to be anywhere else than in God's house.

This is God's day, not your day. There's nothing else in this that you couldn't drag me anywhere else. You all know it is extremely rare on a Saturday for me to do anything with anyone because I'm preparing for God's house on a Sunday.

On Saturday night, it's unbelievably rare in 30 years that I'm with anyone on a Saturday night, even if I'm not preaching because I'm preparing for God's house. That's how precious it is. You see, my older sister died in a cop death, and my mom was backslidden and hard.

She was making excuses why she couldn't be in God's house and wouldn't be in God's house and said, Lord, when the baby grows up a bit, then I'll be in God's house. On that Sunday night, as my dad preached seven miles down the road in a church, she went to the cot and little Ann lay dead and lifeless, three months old in that cot. That night, as she cried by that bedside, by that cot, she says, if you ever give me a

child, another child, that child's going to be in God's house from the earliest point.

I want to tell you, I've lived in God's house from a baby. I slept on seats, under seats, over seats. I've done it all.

I want to tell you, but it was in God's house. And so you see, this entire psalm is remarkably about this passionate desire for God's house. See, we could try and sound more spiritual by saying, no, it's only about a passionate desire for God, but then I'd have to, I couldn't teach or preach this psalm because it talks also about a passionate burning desire for the house of God and the gathering of God's people.

Both go together. Both are healthy. You don't have one without the other.

If you lack one, then you don't have the other. They go hand in hand and they compliment each other. Surprisingly with this psalm, this valley of Baca, this valley of weeping is on the way to Jerusalem, on the way to worship.

This psalm is all about gathering together in unity, in the same place to do the same thing. And amazingly, this is where you find the valley of weeping. In this psalm, the most beautiful psalm, the most amazing psalm, where do we find the valley of weeping in this psalm? You can miss it easily.

And yet we see that it's while God's people are gathered, going up to Jerusalem, going up to the house, the tabernacle of God, the dwelling place of God, that's where they encounter this valley of weeping. It is on the way to God's house, Jerusalem, to Mount Zion. And this psalm was written as a song for those traveling up to God's house to sing so they could learn how to go on their way in fellowship together.

I want you to notice this psalm is broken down into three parts because we're only going to deal with the middle part here. You have verse 1 to verse 4. Verse 4 finishes with the word selah. S-E-L-A-H.

It's a Hebrew word, selah. Then you have verse 5 to 8. Verse 8 finishes with the word selah. And then you have verse 9 to verse 12.

This word selah means in the midst of this song, stop. Stop at this point. Stop after these few verses.

Stop. Begin to think what you're singing. Begin to consider what you're reading.

It's so important what you've just read here or just sang. Stop everything. Stop what you're doing.

Stop getting distracted. Begin to think on it. Begin to understand what you have just read here.

And we're not going to deal with the first part or the third part. We're going to deal with the middle part. Three verses.

Verse 5 to verse 8. As we begin to look at this, there's so much in all the psalm. But I want to home in here on the valley of weeping. Why would God put the valley of weeping, the valley of bakka? Why do we find it in one of the sweetest psalms or the pearl of all psalms? Why do we find this valley of weeping right here? I've got four points for you here tonight in this message.

Number one, the blessed man who walks into the valley of weeping. I want you to stop and consider it. The blessed man or the blessed woman who actually walks into this valley.

They don't abide, stay in this valley. They walk into it. And I want you to see this man or woman.

I've called them the blessed man because the Bible calls them that. The blessed man or woman who walks into this valley. When you find yourself in the valley of weeping, you could say there's nothing blessed about this.

How can I be blessed if I'm in the valley of weeping? But I want to tell you, this valley, it's only those who are blessed walk into it. Not sinners. In fact, it states clearly sinners are excluded from this valley.

Oh yeah, I know sinners weep. I know that. But there's a kind of weeping and a fruit of weeping that sinners do not have.

Only a real Christian has. And so the blessed man who walks into the valley of weeping. Look what it says here in verse 5. And so you see in verse 6, it talks about passing through the valley of Becca.

But in the previous verse, verse 5, it speaks about the person who passes through this valley. See that word blessed. It can be translated happy.

It's a word in the Old Testament used 45 times. Blessed. 18 of those times it's translated as happy.

You and I understand happy in this world as being because your circumstance are good, you're happy. That's what happiness means to us. If everything's going well, you're happy.

If it's all going bad, you're sad. You don't have happiness when everything's going bad. That's our thinking.

But this word blessed is very unique in the Bible. It's not a word based on circumstance. It's a divine blessedness.

It's what God calls blessed. There are always reasons given for why someone is blessed. Every time you read this word blessed 45 times in the Old Testament, it tells you why they're blessed.

It gives a reason for the man or woman who's blessed. If it calls you, you're blessed, then it gives you the reason. And you know here, it gives you two reasons why you're blessed.

This man who's going to walk into the valley of Becca very shortly, he's very blessed because of these two reasons. And it gives two clear reasons for being blessed. This word blessed is used in Job chapter 5, verse 17 of Job.

Do you think Job was blessed? Do you think he was happy? Do you think he was laughing and rejoicing and singing? Listen to what it says in Job 5, 17. Behold, or look, look at him. Happy is the man whom God correcteth.

Not many people get happy over that, do they? But the Bible says blessed is the man. You're in trouble if God doesn't correct you. You're not blessed.

If God brings a rod of correction on you, you are very blessed of God. You're a very happy person. Therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.

You know what it says in the New Testament? If God doesn't correct you or take you out to the shed at the end of the garden and chastise you, if he doesn't deal with your sin, you are a bastard. You are illegitimate. You don't belong to him.

You're nothing to do with him if he doesn't chasten you. If you can continue in sin and God never deals with you, you're not born again. Do you hear me tonight? Who hasn't sinned here? Who hasn't failed God? But if you can carry on your sin and you begin to justify and say, sure, I'm okay, you are not a child of God.

Don't deceive yourself. You can't be. And so it says blessed.

There's many reasons for being blessed. And in verse 5, it gives two. Notice what they are.

It gives two statements. Blessed is the man in whose strength is in thee. That's the first thing.

What's he saying? His strength is in God, not himself. The church is ruined because there's so many strong people in it. They go, I'm strong, I can do that.

They can volunteer. They step into things they should never touch. They say, I'm able to do this.

They say, I've got strength and ability and stamina and skill. You know what? I'd hate for someone to be in an instrument in this church who thinks they're gifted or to sing who thinks they're able. You know what? If your strength isn't in God, you could be a very dangerous person.

I'd hate for you to preach or do the Lord's table. You go, I can do this. I'm able to do this.

If you're not in awe that your strength comes from the God, that you don't have any ability or any gifted, if he withheld it for one second, you're in serious trouble. I would rather someone tremble in here who stuttered over their words, who sat down crying because they think they made a disaster of it. Man, I'm going to ask you to preach again.

No, I made a disaster of it. You really think so? I'm a preacher with experience. I know what I'm saying.

I've seen the skilled, eloquent preachers of our day and they don't impress me. I'm alarmed at so many preachers. They're dangerous because they're not trembling.

They don't come to the sacred desk trembling, speaking for God, representing God. Don't you realize you can't do that without his grace and his mercy? And so this blessed man, it says their strength, their stamina, their boldness, ability to stand, the ability to go forth. This is talking about a journey to God's house.

It's talking about a mission, the pursuit of God. Do you know this person is blessed? Do you know why? Because as they're making this journey to seek after God and to seek after the real church of God, you know what? Their strength isn't in themselves or their knowledge. They actually know they can only move forward in this journey if the source is in God.

Their strength has to be from God. Can I ask you, are you powerless, helpless, useless, hopeless without God? Is he really your strength? Have you made him so your strength that you have no confidence in your flesh? You know, it says in the New Testament, the mark of a genuine Christian is they have no confidence in themselves or in their flesh. That's basic biblical Christianity.

And yet we have a negative church. We have a kind of Christianity today. It says we can do it.

We're able. We'll do it. What apart from God? You ought to be helpless, hopeless unless you draw your strength from God.

Where is your strength? You see this blessed man, he's blessed for this reason. My strength is in God. I have no strength, no resource.

I can't even make this journey. I can't even seek after God. I can't even approach the house of God without God being my strength.

I draw on him. I draw on him. I need him.

I've got nothing to preach. Do you realize if I'd be like Peter sinking in the water, if I stopped to think what I'm going to preach in the days ahead, I'm in serious trouble. If he doesn't keep giving, I've got absolutely nothing to say.

There's the second thing here it says as well in verse 5, in whose heart are the ways of them. It's a strange term. It's actually saying in whose heart are thy ways, God's ways.

So who's this blessed man? Not only is his strength in the Lord, but the ways of God are in his heart, not his ways. You know the Bible speaks about people who are filled with their own ways, filled with their own ways. You do not want to be around someone filled with their own ways.

But this is a man whose heart is filled to capacity with the ways of God. And you know what? He's blessed. See if your heart is filled with God's ways.

I mean filled. I don't mean the odd little trickle or some little bits of information, but your heart is filled with God's ways. You're an extremely blessed man or woman.

You may not have much in this world, but if you have God's ways in your heart, you're a rich man. You're a rich person. You're someone I want to sit with and need to talk to tonight.

The word ways there, God's ways in their heart. What does that mean? The word ways here means a highway, a public road, or a well-traveled path. But this is God's ways.

It's God's ways of working, operating, thinking, his character, his nature. It's how God always works. You see, I've met Christians.

They know nothing about the ways of God, the character of God, the way God walks, the way God constantly walks all the time in every generation. How he walked with Enoch is how he walks with men today. He has not changed.

That's why it says in Psalm 103 and 7, concerning God, he made his ways known unto Moses. His acts he made known to the children of Israel. And I hope you realize Israel and Moses were rather different.

See, God made his ways known to Moses, his acts, deeds, miracles, pillar of fire, Nana in the wilderness, your shoes don't wear out for 40 years. Those are his acts, but they didn't know God's ways. That generation perished in the wilderness.

But look at Moses. God says, I revealed my ways unto him. How I walk, my well trodden usual path, the only way I work, walk, my character, my nature.

So look at this blessed person. God is their strength. He is the source of all their strength.

In their heart, they carry his ways. Are you someone who just knows the acts of God or do you know the ways of God? Do you know the way God thinks? You know, we take Christianity, thank you very much for salvation. Then we change all this, we flip it, we begin to manipulate it, our ideas of God's house, our ideas of how mixing together or a marriage or some other issue.

And we begin to mold it. Are the ways of God in your heart, do they dominate what you are and who you are? So I've just revealed to you the man who walks into the valley of weeping. This isn't a casual compromised Christian.

This is a man awaiting us who's relying on the strength of the Lord, who has these ways in his heart. This is the man that walks into the valley of weeping. Do you see what I'm saying here? This kind of man is going to walk into a valley of weeping.

Point two, the man who walks through the valley of weeping. I've just showed you the kind of man that walks into it. Do you think because you're spiritual, God's going to save you from a broken heart? No way, no way.

In fact, that may qualify you that God lets you walk into the valley of Becca. Valley of Becca is not just for anyone. He doesn't even let every Christian walk into any valley of weeping.

You know why? You couldn't sustain it. And so he wants you to be in a certain place to walk into the valley of Becca. The valley of Becca is so important.

He doesn't just lead anyone in there. But you know what? You're going to have to face this valley if you're pursuing after God. The man who walks through the valley of weeping.

Look at verse six. Still speaking about the same man. Who passing through the valley of Becca makes it a well.

The rain also filleth the pools. The valley of Becca. This word for valley.

Remember we said there's about five Hebrew words for valley. Sometimes they mean a wide place or a very narrow place. It can mean different things, but it's still a valley.

Valleys can look very different, but they're still valleys. This word for a valley means a wide open plain and veil. The valley of weeping is very broad, very long, very deep.

It's extensive. It's not a narrow ravine. It's not a trickling pool.

It is very broad, very barren, very dry. And that's what this valley is. And look what he calls it.

Valley of Becca. The word Becca here. If you look it up, this particular Hebrew word is only used once in the entire Bible in the Old Testament as it's written here.

Becca is only used once. It's not mentioned anywhere else. Some people try to find out where it is.

It's impossible to find out where it is in relation to Jerusalem. Some of them think it's associated with some other place. They can't prove that.

It's utterly unique, this valley of weeping. Only mentioned once, but there's two Hebrew words that are closely connected to it. So tight that these three words go together.

So the valley of Becca has two words connected to it. And they only are missing, they're spelt the same, but they have little strokes and little bits that are missing that just make them slightly different. Let me explain what those words are.

The next one next to it means weeping, to shed tears, to weep bitterly. So this valley of weeping is not a casual cry. It's not a one-off cry.

It's not just a night of weeping over feeling sorry for yourself. It's not that kind of weeping. It's where tears roll down your cheeks.

The word weeping here, or Becca, means to make loud lamentation. It means to bemoan, bewail, mourn. It means to be in pain, to be in deep agony, perpetually, to experience a pain that almost puts you in the grave.

That's how deep this weeping is. It is where you're in a state of weeping. You know, the next Hebrew word is a word used for the mulberry tree.

Four times. It's connected to weeping. Four times it's used.

And it's closely connected to the word Becca and the word weeping, or deep lamentation. Imagine calling a tree that. And so this tree is used four times and appears in the valley of Rephian.

Do you know what it is, this mulberry tree? It's a gum distilling tree. In other words, it drips. You can go on YouTube and see some of these.

It drips balsam, this tree, or sap. Sap begins to drip. And those little drips look like tears.

And they're the size of tears. And what they do with that balsam, or that balm, they gather it from the trees. Those trees weeping, it's the word for deep lamentation, weeping, groaning.

And you know what you do? You gather those tears. And it's used for many things in the land of Israel. It is a good thing.

You want to gather these tears. Remember how it says in the Psalms that the Lord gathers the tears of his saints. Don't you realize you've never, as a Christian, cried a tear that God doesn't remember? You can forget.

God never forgets. He stores. Every single tear is so precious to him.

He gathers it, collects it, and he'll remember it. You know why those tears affect something? They affect the heart of God. God cares about tears.

The deeper the groaning, the more he remembers it. He looks out after it. You see, I believe this valley of Baca is a remarkable thing.

I believe those who, remember, it's the man who walks through the valley of Baca. It doesn't stay there. It says he walks through.

I believe those who visit this valley are going to have a great impact on the body of Christ. I believe when you're a certain kind of Christian that walks into this valley, in that valley, when you meet weeping, I know you may not understand it. You may be confused.

You may be hurt and bad. You may want to die at that time. If you haven't been there, keep walking.

You're going to visit this valley one of these days. If you've been there, keep walking. You are going to walk out of this.

I assure you, if you're there in the will of God, those tears are not wasted. That's impossible. There is a valley.

You remember in a valley, you can't see anything. You've got mountains around you. You're hemmed in.

You're having to walk straight ahead to get out of this thing. You don't want to walk up these mountains. You're just trying to get out.

The mountains hem you in. You might see others on the mountains having glorious experiences, but you're in the valley of weeping. You're broken.

You can hardly even lift your head. You're there, isolated. But I want to tell you, keep walking.

There's God's will in it. I'm in the valley of Baca. I have been for several months.

I have never wept like I've in the past several months. Never. Again, it's hit me the past three weeks.

I'm in agony of soul that I cannot even explain to you. It's getting worse every single day. It's like Candace died yesterday.

I can't tell you how intolerable that is. But I want to tell you none of that is lost. The valley of Baca, it's a pursuit after God.

I'm not here in vain. I don't understand it. I don't like it.

I am broken. I am undone. I'm telling you, I know what the valley of Baca is.

And do you know who came to me many times over these months? When I was in danger of feeling sorry for myself, do you know who came to me? And all you ladies ought to know her, Isabel Weir. And not one of you's know her. Isabel Weir.

John Brown of Priesthill was a Covenanter, one of my heroes. I've mentioned him before. He was a farmer, not a preacher.

And he married Isabel Weir in 1682. 1682 in Scotland. He wasn't a preacher.

He wasn't a miracle worker. He was a farmer with only a few fields. He worked hard, but he was a spiritual man of God.

I believe he was a blessed man of God who had the ways of God in his heart. He actually organized the field preachers. See, this was a time of terrible persecution.

People were dying for their faith. Persecution was in the land. And in fact, in that hour, laws were brought in by the authorities that you had to go to the local church.

They put the ministers in each of the churches. Episcopal ministers. And now you didn't have your pastors.

400 of them were put out of their churches in Scotland, removed, not allowed to preach in the church, made illegal because they didn't submit to the governments of the day. They didn't yield and say, we'll only preach what you tell us. So 400 ministers were put out of the churches and a law came in on the land.

Every person in the land, you had to go to these official churches with official ministers who are going to represent the king. You've got to do this. It was tyranny.

Well, you know what John Brown, a priest, tell? He refused to go and listen to the Episcopalian minister. He refused to take the oath of allegiance to the king. He said, there's only one head of the church.

And unlike the church of England that says, God help us, King Charlie's going to be head of the church of England. If you didn't think it was over for the church of England before, I tell you in a few weeks, it is finished. You're going to watch its burial ceremony as this wicked, vile man stands there, coronated, saying you're the head of the church of England.

Unbelievable. Well, even back in those days, John Brown said, only Christ is the king, the head of the church in Scotland. We can never yield.

You see, you're under danger. Do you know when he proposed to Isabel in 1682? And I'm sure Ethan didn't do this. I'm going to quiz him afterwards.

I want to know what he said. Do you know what John Brown done? He went to Isabel and says, before I propose to you, I want to tell you there's a strong likelihood that the authorities are going to come for me. I could be put in prison.

Did he share this with you? I hope he did. I could die. And says, whatever this pathway means, I'm standing by your side.

I've counted the cost. So he proposed to her. They got engaged, then married on their wedding day, peed in the prophet.

One of the greatest preachers of that hour, a truly gifted prophet who moved in the gifts of prophecy and in the ministry of a prophet, he married them. You see old paintings of him marrying and preaching at the wedding. And as they're joined together in holy matrimony, they become husband and wife and he's blessed them and he's joined them together before the Lord.

Then at the end, he said, Isabel, this marriage is going to be short and bloody. Keep your burial garments very close to you and love your husband because you're only going to have him a short time. Short time.

Three years later, Graham Claverhouse, a captain in the Scottish army, a Judas. I've got a covenant on my wall in my study back home. None of you's are getting it.

And see on it, it's a photocopy of one of the old originals. And Claverhouse's name is signed there in his own blood, saying we're going to uphold the covenant. The church in Scotland is going to be free.

I bear witness. I'll always protect the church. He was a Judas.

He betrayed them and he'd become a soldier that hunted down Christian men like John Brown. Well, here he is. He comes to the house of John Brown.

John Brown was out working the fields. He picks him up, brings him down to the house. And as Isabel looks out the window, she sees the horsemen and she goes out to meet them boldly.

You know what? She's heavily pregnant with her next child. She's got a baby in her arms and she stands at the door to meet Claverhouse and his soldiers, all armed up with their weapons, ready to take her husband. Then Claverhouse said to John Brown, go to your knees and pray because now we're going to take your life.

He said, will you submit to the king as head of the church? John Brown said, I cannot. The church only has one head and one king and his name is the Lord Jesus Christ. Then he says, go to your prayers because you're going to see your maker.

He gladly went to his knees. You know, John Brown, he stuttered. That's why he never became a preacher.

He stuttered. He couldn't be coherent. But when he went to prayer all through the years from a young boy, he was eloquent in prayer, powerful in prayer, but could never put his words together when he was speaking.

And he went to his knees and began to pray for the soldiers and pray for his wife and pray for his children. And when he had finished, Claverhouse ordered six soldiers, shoot him. And they wouldn't.

They couldn't. So he took his own gun out and he shot him dead. Turned to Isabel, who's holding the child, heavily pregnant and says, what do you think of your husband now? How callous these men are.

She said, I always thought much of him in life, but never so much as I thought of him as on this day. These are the real Christians. I'm talking about the Valley of Baca.

You don't go there because you're compromised. You go there because you're in the will of God. There are valleys of Baca.

See, in the past several months, when I've been there feeling despondent and I thought of Isabel watching her husband die, I didn't have to do that. I went, how did Isabel ever walk through this? After this, she moved to Northern Ireland. Her two sons moved decades later to America.

Somewhere there's weirs in America descending from this godly woman. She had to walk through this. You know what it says about the Valley of Baca here in verse six? It says passing through the Valley of Baca.

I want you to see that the word passing through, it means crossing over, conducted or carried over to get to the other side. You know the thing about the Valley of Baca when you're pursuing God and you're pursuing God's house. I mean the real church.

Are you hungry for the real church? I'm not satisfied with what we're seeing in this hour. Give me the real church again. I want a revival that restores the church again.

I am tired what men have made the church. There's a real church. There's a real church.

I mean the real thing. You know this Valley of Baca, those pursuing the real are going to find themselves in the Valley of Baca, but they don't stay there. It says passing through.

Do you see how gracious God is? It seems to infer that annually you will experience some situation that brings you to tears and brokenness, but keep going saints of God. You're only passing through. God's going to take you to the other side.

Do you have a broken heart tonight? I do. I'm devastated, but you know what? I'm passing through. My journey isn't over.

I'm not going to abide here. There's some things to do in this will and purpose of God. There is a Valley of Baca, but it's never God's will just to stay there.

You may find yourself there, but not to abide. It says in Psalm 30 verse 5, weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. It says in Revelation 21 and verse 4, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

There's a day coming when the Bible says, see people say there's no crown in heaven. That's not true. Where'd you read that? It doesn't say that.

It actually says here that God shall wipe away all tears, and that's not in this lifetime. It's talking about the hour to come in eternity, in the presence of God. God's going to wipe away tears.

Then he tells you what sort of tears. That isn't just crying over your failures, crying about how you didn't do the will of God. Sometimes I thought that's what it was about, but it doesn't.

No, it gives the reason here. Why? What sort of tears does he wipe away? There shall be no more death. Do you know there's a lot of tears over death? Every day I cry, every day.

I don't know how I'll walk through this. It says neither sorrow, there's things in this life bring you sorrow. God will wipe away the tears, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.

Pain can make you cry. Although they drug you up so much now, you don't feel pain. Two years ago, Candice would wake me, say I'm in pain.

I'd grab her hand and would pray until the pain went, and it frequently went. For the former things are passed away. See, the Valley of Bacchus is only for a time.

It's a thing of this earth, but it's very real. God marks the tears. God cares about your sorrow.

God cares about the times where you go, I can't make it. I'm struggling. I'm not sure I can make it to Jerusalem.

I am walking in the Valley of Bacchus keep walking, Saint of God, keep pursuing. Are you here pursuing after God, seeking after God, wanting reality? Are you broken? Are you hurting? Is there things going on in your heart that no one else in this church even knows? God knows. God knows.

He said, there's a day I'm going to ultimately wipe away every tear. So I believe there's a time in eternity there'll be no more crying. It'll be impossible to cry unless it's with joy and glee.

There's an hour where there won't be any more brokenness and the answer is in God. God himself will finally wipe away all tears and there'll be no more. You'll never experience sorrow of heart, despondency, feeling suicidal, feeling like giving up, feeling like you're not going to make it to the hill of the Lord.

God himself sees these things and cares. The third thing, the purpose accomplished by the Valley of Weeping, is it all pointless? It's horrendous if you think there's no point in this. The purpose accomplished by the Valley of Weeping, do you think it's accidental? Do you think it's just a mistake? Do you think God's plan isn't in it? Do you think it's just there? You're just going through it? You're just like everyone else? Or do you think there's a purpose in it? Does God's word say there is a purpose? If you find yourself in the Valley of Baca pursuing after God, desiring God's house, hungry for the real, don't you know there's a purpose? It says there in verse 6, how passing through the Valley of Baca, make it a well.

There's a purpose in the valley. You're in the valley and you go, why am I here? This is pointless. I shouldn't be here.

Nothing is being accomplished by this. That's not true. You're there broken, weeping, and you say nothing is happening.

That is not true. Look what it says. Passing through this valley, you make it a well.

Baca, this Valley of Baca is dry. It's barren. It's a thirsty land.

It's a valley. It's a place of deadness. But when you get a real Christian walking through the Valley of Baca, it will never be the same again.

That particular valley is going to be changed by them. They're going to leave something behind. Do you know what Isabel left behind the pool in the Valley of Baca? I have gone back to it in the past 30 years.

I've often gone back to Elizabeth's words, looking at her dead husband. What do you think of your husband now? I think more of him now than I ever did in life. And I thought an awful lot of him in life.

That's a woman of God. That's a woman who's just lost her husband. She's got a baby in her womb, a child.

You two mothers about to bear. Can you imagine facing that when you're heavily pregnant? Do you know what Isabel done? She left a well in this dry and barren wilderness. Oh, what courage, what words.

You know, there's covenant. I've got volumes of their books on my shelf. They are gold.

Keep your crappy, rubbish, contemporary Christian books. Go back and read Scott's Worthy, The Testimony of Real Saints. Or read about the Huguenots being persecuted in France, of the son being tortured outside the house, and his mother has to be inside the house, listening his screams all night long.

Don't tell me we have super duper Christianity in this hour. I'm sick to the back teeth of it. It's useless.

They were real Christians. You know what, when they find themselves in the Valley of Baca, it was a tragic, terrible place. You know what they've done? They left a pool behind.

They left a pool. What about the old mother who gave five children to be missionaries in the early 18th century? Five, and they all died on the mission field. A Christian man, Comter, once said, mother, old mother, do you regret sending your five children to the mission field and you lost them all? Now you're in your old age, you've got no one to care for you.

Do you regret it? He says, the only thing I regret is that I don't have a sixth. She's left a pool. That testimony's in my brain.

I can give you all these testimonies. Or what about Margaret on the Sulway Forth? As I come in, 18 years old. Remember, her old friend, 80 years old, she died before they let her die.

And she had a watch. She's on a pole. And then just as she's about to drown, he says, you don't need to die.

Look at your old friend, your old Christian friend. Just compromise. And then as her old friend drowns, he says, what do you think of your old friend? 18 years old.

He says, I see Christ in his body wrestling. These are giants. You know what they've done? They've left a pool behind in the Valley of Baca.

It says they make it a well. This Valley of Baca that's so terrible that breaks their heart, that causes them to cry tears without number. They feel like they're never going to stop crying because of what's just happened to them.

Yet it says these ones make the Valley of Baca into a well. The word make there means to place there. These tears of sorrow actually get turned into pools of blessing, sources of blessing for others.

That's your personal responsibility. Are you in the Valley of Baca? You've got to turn it into a well. What is a well? A fountain, a spring.

It's a dry and a barren wilderness. That means others who walk into this wilderness are going to find now a spring of water. Your tears that come down your eyes and that pool isn't filled with your tears.

No, no. It's just these tears that break your heart. These tragedies actually make you raise up a spring of water to dig, to leave behind for other travelers.

Other travelers get here and they're going, I'm in the Valley of Baca, but oh look, there's a spring here. There's a testimony. I wonder who dug this.

Isabel dug that spring. How real, saints of God. How, how real.

It says in Isaiah 35, 7, and the parts ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water. That's what I'm saying. Or Job 35, 10, who giveth songs in the night.

Go back and read the old classic hymns and you read people of broken hearts writing the greatest hymns. See this shallow generation. They've got nothing to contribute.

It's shallow. It's empty. The preachers of this are, they've never hurt.

They've never broken. They haven't been wounded. And so they can't preach to this generation.

Listen to what Paul says here in 2 Corinthians 1 and 3, blessed be God, even the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies and the God of all comfort. That word comfort, God is a comfort. It means that God draws alongside you and he speaks to you and he exhorts you and he helps you and he urges you to keep going.

That's what comfort is. He is the God of all comfort. He draws alongside you when you're in trouble.

Then listen to what it says, who comforted us in all our tribulation. So I'm in tribulation. The word tribulation there means, it's the Greek word flips us.

It's used in Matthew 24 for the great tribulation. It's the same word, tribulation, intense pressure, anguish, persecution, like a crowd on every side gathering against you. Intense, unrelenting pressure that almost sends you crazy or physical persecution against your body.

So what does it say? It says, this God of comfort comforted you and all of your tribulation. He comforts you. You're in tribulation.

You're in the valley of Baca. So he comforts you and watch what happens. That we are for this reason that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble.

Trouble is the same word. Do you see God gives the reason here? So you're in tribulation. You're in trouble.

You're in anguish. Your heart is broken. Tears are pouring down your eyes.

I'm comforting you. You know why I'm comforting you? Why God is comforting you? So that others who pass through the same things, you will comfort them. You're going to minister to them.

So you're broken. You're in the valley of Baca. You know what? You are going to minister.

What I minister to you, you're going to begin to minister to others. And it goes on to say, which are in trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the suffering of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth in Christ.

What a remarkable thing. So we see those passing through the valley of Baca, they leave a spring. They minister something.

I am devastated. I'm going to leave a spring in this valley of Baca. I can't feel anything.

I can't see anything. You would not want to hear some of my prayers. You would not.

I'll never utter some of the prayers that I prayed. But can I tell you something? I'm going to leave a spring in this, but it doesn't end there. Look at the next statement.

The rain filleth the pools. You see, you leaving a spring, that's your responsibility. In the valley of Baca, you have to make a spring.

You've got to leave a spring there. But it goes further than that. If you do this, it says, the rain filleth the pools.

That word for rain, and this is God. You can't do this. You can't bring rain in the valley of Baca.

You can't make it rain. You can't bring this rain. This word rain is the Hebrew word for the early rain.

Remember in Joel, it says the early and the latter rain. What was the day of Pentecost? It was the early rain. So Israel had three rainy seasons, three different Hebrew words for different kinds of rain.

So you know, when it says rain, you can check out which season or what is the purpose of that rain? What is that rain? So the rain here that it says, you're walking through Baca, you're passing through the valley of Baca, you leave a spring behind. Then it says God comes and fills up the pools with his rain. It's the early rain, the first rain.

It's the rain that prepares the ground for a harvest like on the day of Pentecost. It's an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. You see, you can't do that.

If you're passing through the valley of Baca and your heart is broken, I mean, you're devastated. Tears are flowing down. You don't even think you can stop crying.

You know, four or five months, I cried every single day. Then it stopped, thank God. And I thought, I'm working through this.

I'm getting through this. And then it hits in the most unexpected way. I go, oh God, I'm not sure I can manage this.

But you know what? There's a purpose. The rain's coming. The rain is coming, thanks to God.

I'm encouraged more than ever. I'm in my valley of Baca. I am going to leave a spring, but more than that, I'm looking for God to send that rain, to bring in a harvest in this city of Limerick.

Oh God, only you can do that. I'm in the valley of Baca. It's not in vain.

There's the people in this city, 3,000 that need born again. There's a harvest. We've got to reach by God's grace and mercy.

Fourth and finally, let me finish here. The final destination of those who have been in the valley of Weepin, but they're no longer there. The final destination.

It says in verse seven, they go from strength to strength. Every one of them in Zion appears before God. Remember, it's this journey to the house of God.

It's a journey in pursuit of God himself. It says that they, these who have been in the valley of Baca left a testimony. What testimony are you going to leave in Baca? What is your Baca? What's your Baca? What's your valley of Weepin? Are you going to leave a testimony there? Or do you just come out and go, thank God that's over? Did you leave a testimony? What's breaking your heart tonight? What's devastating you? What's crushing you? Are you going to leave a testimony? These dead, what's the final destination of all this? They go from strength to strength.

Who ever heard of coming out of the valley of Baca, out of an entire long monotonous valley of Weepin that seemed to have no end. And when you get out the other end, you go from strength to strength. Surely you think you go from strength to weakness.

I've just got out by the skin of my teeth. No, whoever come out of this valley, you know what a testimony they've come out. They go from strength to strength.

This word strength is an interesting word. We've dealt with it many times. Do you know it's the word used in Proverbs 31 verse 10 for a virtuous woman, a virtuous woman.

It's the same word. It actually is the word used for a company of people. So you go from company to company.

You get out of this. What are you doing when you come through Baca? You go from company of believers to company of believers. The word can actually mean a powerful group of soldiers, an army, a gathering of God's people.

So an individual godly woman is called a virtuous woman, but also a group of God's people like you in this church. I hope I can call you a virtuous church, a company of soldiers. I hope you know your soldiers.

Are you ready for the fight? Are you standing shoulder to shoulder? Are you here united in this warfare together? Are you there standing against the enemies? You see this word, a company, you go from company to company. You know what it's saying, those who have been in Baca, they don't isolate themselves. You know the great danger when you isolate yourself from the house of God? You're sick.

You're in trouble. When you draw back from fellowship, go, you know, isn't it our tendency? I'm weeping. I'm broken.

I'm struggling. I'll never get out of this. So I isolate myself.

That's the wrong thing to do. When you're most broken, you need to be in God's house. When you say, I can't bear to go to God's house, you need to be here.

How many times have you ever walked into God's house and you go, I can't even bear to be here. I don't want anyone even to speak to me. By the end of the day, you're rejoicing.

There's something about the company of God's people to be around soldiers, to be around those who understand. And so this person, they don't isolate themselves. They want to be in the company of believers.

I want to go from a group of soldiers to another group. I don't want to be with cowards. I don't want to sit with a bunch of Christians.

Grumble, grumble, grumble, moon, moon, moon. I don't want that. I want to be with soldiers.

You know what? These companies, they're all moving on the same journey. You will find them on this journey. We want the real church.

We want to find the real God. We're so hungry. We're so thirsty.

They're companies of believers. See it, this Valley of Bacca leads them into fellowship with groups of God's people who've been through the trials, been through a broken heart, been through trials. See in God's real church, you're going to find the real quality.

I've been there. Brother Keith, I'm so broken. I've been there.

I understand. I can weep with you. Do you know for months, every time I get a report, someone's sick, every single time, get a message, a text, I read it.

Someone's wife's got ill. I burst out crying. I'm so broken.

I can't even tell you. I care. I really care.

Do you know what? I want to be in the company of God's believers, companies of God's people, places of strength, places where you find rest or refreshment. This is all a part of the journey. We're going to reach our destination together, not as an individual.

You're in Bacca by yourself. When you walk through Bacca, no one can truly identify with that. You feel utterly alone.

No one can fully understand what I'm going through. But as you come out of that, we're two together. We're going to help you.

We're going to encourage you. We understand. And so they reach their destiny.

It says every one of them in Zion appear before God. Here we are in companies helping each other on this journey. But when you get there to Zion, to Jerusalem, to the house of God, to the tabernacles, to the courts of your God, to the altar of your God, when you get there, it says one of them in Zion appear before God.

Saints of God, we come through the other end. And do you know what? We're to be in the company of believers, in God's house. But when you really stand before God in that place, it's you and God.

He deals with you in his house. Oh yeah, everyone is there, but he deals with you. You appear before God.

You stand before God as an individual. It's no longer a whole group of believers. It's you appearing in Zion.

When you get to Zion, God deals with you. This is what I love about the church being the church. When God speaks in a message, he's speaking to you.

He's not speaking to everyone. He's speaking to you tonight. I know the voice of God.

You know, I go home after preaching and I'm in bed and this roll, it can roll for days. God's just speaking. This isn't a message to preach.

This is reality. Tonight, I'll wake in the middle of the night thinking about this, thinking about the things of God. I want to appear in Zion.

Sometimes in the valley of Baku you go, will I ever get through? Am I going to meet, reach Mount Zion and appear before God? Yes. The final destination of those who have been in the valley of weeping, you're coming through. You're going to your destination.

You're going to make it. The devil will tell you you're not going to make it. In the valley of Baku, you'll go, I'll never get out of this.

I want to tell you, you're going to appear before God. And it says in Hebrews 10, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaken the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another and so much more as the day approaches of Christ's coming.

If you really believe Jesus is coming, then you must not neglect fellowshiping together. I want to exhort you as a church. You see, we're coming out.

We're going from company to company. Don't you dare neglect God's people. Don't you neglect.

I don't care about people on the seat. I could care less about that, but I understand what this is about. It's so vital to be in God's house.

It's so, do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together. You think you're okay as an individual, then you're ignorant of the character of God and of the ways of God. I need you more than I ever needed you as the body of Christ.

And finally it says, oh Lord God of hosts in verse eight, hear my prayer. Give ear, oh God of Jacob. Stop, go back over these three verses, break them down, consider them, think on them, understand them.

And so we see the blessed man who walks in the Valley of Weeping, the man who walks through the Valley of Weeping, the purpose accomplished by the Valley of Weeping, and finally the destination of those who have been in the Valley of Weeping. Please stand with me. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, we love you.

Let's just love him here tonight. Let's just lift our hands. Let's just love him.

Let's open up our hearts tonight. There is a divine purpose and all we find ourselves in. If you should find yourself in this Valley of Bacchae, you're not alone.

There's a divine purpose. It's a certain kind of person that goes there. You're passing through.

You're not going to stay there. And when you come out, there's a divine plan and purpose in God. Father, I pray, oh God, bring us through this Valley of Bacchae, even as a church, even myself as a preacher in this Valley of Bacchae.

Lord God, we want to leave a spring behind that many are going to get refreshed at. Lord God, I pray that you sovereignly will raise up a spring out of this Valley, oh God. As a church, you would enable us to raise up a spring.

That is our responsibility, that here, right in this Valley of Weeping, we are going to raise up a testimony. We're going to raise up an oasis. We're going to have a place where travelers on this journey can be refreshed and strengthened and encouraged to pursue after the living God, even if it's in the midst of losing their life's partner, the love of their life, to pursue God with all of your heart.

And my God, what's more than that? We're waiting for that former rain. We're asking that you bless us, oh God, that you pour out, that you'd fill all the ponds, Lord God, with this former rain, this Pentecostal rain, oh God. Lord God, as we have pursued and walked with you through this barren wilderness, we are asking, will you send the rain that's going to fill every single watering hole in this route? My God, that those that come behind us are going to be refreshed with Pentecostal blessing.

And Lord God, we ask it all that we might stand before you in Zion, glorifying your name, bringing praise to you, bringing adoration.

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