

All Eyes On Me

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Date: 17 September 2023

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[0 : 00] The Othniel cycle is paradigmatic in the sense that it provides us with a general framework that guides our understanding of all the other cycles.

Very little detail is given us here. This is the shortest of all of the judge narratives here. There's little detail given about the people and the circumstances involved. And that's because the purpose here is to show us a pattern that structures every story.

And it's the pattern that we find already mentioned in chapter 2. So one author describes it this way. That the Othniel cycle gives historical flesh to the theological bones of chapter 2.

So when we're thinking, what is the, actually the, why it says so little about what is happening here. So what's really the purpose in including it? Well, the author has a particular purpose. He's told us in chapter 2 his theological interpretation of Israel's unfaithfulness.

He's given us this cycle of sin and judgment and salvation that just returns back to sin and judgment and salvation again. And now he takes a real life example from Israel's history at the beginning of this time period.

[1 : 16] And he says, it's a lot like this into the Othniel cycle. And he just gives us kind of the bare bones of this structure. So we come to it and we may think, relative to all the other stories and judges, this one is boring.

There's not much here. It's very bland. But before you dismiss it, there's something else we need to consider about its purpose. This opening cycle is intentionally vague because it's not ultimately about Israel.

It's not about Kushan Rishathame. It's not even about Othniel. It's about God's divine action through, for, and against these people.

In this text, Kushan Rishathame is not the judge of Israel. God is. In the same sense, Othniel is not really the true savior in this narrative.

God is the savior here. Israel doesn't sin in the eyes of the world. Israel sins in the eyes of God. And the rest that is awarded to them in verse 11 is not won because of Israel's valiance in war.

[2 : 36] It is given to them as a gift of God's grace. You say, well, what are you saying? I'm saying that we're not meant to be distracted by the people and the circumstances.

Our eyes are meant to be set on the God who is sovereign over all of them. And this is a critical dynamic to this paradigm that the Othniel cycle presents to us.

No matter what narrative we're studying as we work through the book of Judges, it is always about the glory of God. It's never about these men.

It's never really about Israel. Ultimately, it's about telling us who God is and how God acts and how he has provided salvation for his people.

Now, whenever I teach Adventure Club, whenever it's my turn to teach the lesson, I have this habit of repeating a couple of phrases whenever their eyes begin to wonder a little bit.

[3 : 35] This happens on Sunday mornings, but I don't usually say the phrases. Sometimes there's lots happening around. When we were at the acting out studio, it was the worst because we had all those windows, right?

So people could be pulling into the parking lot or walking right behind the windows and staring in, not realizing that there's people staring right back and all those things. Now, take all of our kids in our church. You put them there, and you don't have the backdrop anymore.

A lot of times we did, but sometimes we didn't have the backdrop, and then all this stuff is happening. Their eyes begin to wonder, doesn't it? And when your eyes wonder, your mind wonders, right?

And so I would have these phrases that I say all the time. I'd say, all right, give me your eyes. Give me your eyes, or all eyes on me. Now, when we come to this particular passage, I think that's a helpful way to understand what's happening here.

It's as if God is saying, all right, give me your eyes. There's lots of things here to distract us. We can get into Othniel, and we can get into Cushan, Rishathame, and we can get into Mesopotamia and where that is and what that's all about and what exactly happened in this whole scenario.

[4 : 37] We can get distracted with all those stuff, all those things, but God's saying right from the beginning, as you go through this, keep your eyes on me. Look at me. This is about me, God says.

So that's what I want to lead you to do this morning. As we work through this text, I want to lead you to turn your eyes to the Lord God, okay? So we're going to try our best to take our eyes off of the circumstances and the people, and we're going to look at how God is acting here.

And the first thing that we find that is true about him is his holiness, the holiness of God. Verse 7. The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. They forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asherah.

Now, as always, the cycle opens with a statement of Israel's apostasy. And as we learned in chapter 2, the heart of Israel's evil was an issue of worship.

It's an issue of worship. That's why Baal and the Asherah are mentioned once again here. Now, it's not that Israel had become ignorant of God. Neither is it that they suffered from some type of spiritual amnesia that just caused them to intellectually forget him.

[5 : 49] That's not what this means. The nation as a whole willfully abandoned the Lord to pursue the gods of Canaan. To them, what Baal offered was more attractive.

It was more desirable. So they left Yahweh in their worship of Yahweh to go after the gods of the land. But instead of rehashing that all over again, we did that in chapter 2.

Instead of rehashing that, I want to point out an important word in this verse. Look at it with me again at the very beginning. The people of Israel are said to have done evil in the sight of the Lord. It's important. It's important. Because to Israel, to the Israelites, they saw no problem mixing with the people of the land.

Culturally, maritally, religiously. They just didn't think it was a big deal. That's why over and over and over in the book of Judges, we see this refrain where it says that all the people did what was right in their own eyes.

[6 : 55] But when we come here, we find that the evil that they have done is evil not in their eyes. It's evil in the sight of God. If this generation of Israelites lived today, perhaps they would say something like this.

We're not quite as old-fashioned as our parents were. We believe to be on the right side of history. It's necessary to affirm the culture and beliefs of the people around us.

After all, who are we to say that the way of Yahweh is better than the way of Baal? Well, surely we can find ways to accommodate the deeply held beliefs of the people of the land.

It's not hard to see how many Christians today follow this same path, right? We've got to remember, good and evil are not determined by the ever-changing winds of culture.

There must be objective truth. That doesn't change. And that's what God has revealed for us in His Word. If there's anything that we must stand on as a first order of importance in Christian faith, it must be that God has given His Word that is infallible.

[8 : 18] It's inerrant. It's inspired. And it's authoritative. It is objective truth. And it remains objective truth in every season and in every culture and among every people group.

What matters is what God says. Not what we feel. It doesn't matter that the people of Israel did what they felt was good and right.

Evil is what God says it is. And we need to remember that. He's the Holy One. He alone determines good and evil. All of our beliefs, then, must be subject to His Word.

Now, I'm not denying that we don't live in a complex time and that there aren't issues that arise among our culture and among our churches and among our families that aren't complex.

And we have to grapple with that. It's not usually as black and white as we want it to be. I'm not denying that that's true. But what I mean to say is that all of our convictions, they must first be rooted in God's Word.

[9 : 32] They must be. Our thoughts on gender and sex and race and marriage and worship and our work must all be rooted in what God is, what God has said, and what God has done.

And too often we get that backwards. Where we're presented with a particular issue in our lives or we're presented with an issue that we really need to deal with, whether it's in our family or in our church or maybe it's just with a co-worker or something like that in conversation.

And you can't just ignore it. You have to deal with it in some way. You have to think about it. And so many times we start at the wrong end. We start by kind of examining the thoughts that are out there and the different perspectives.

And then we examine what is my personal experience like versus what is their personal experience like? And can we come to some type of truth? And once we kind of get an idea of where we're going to land on the thought process and on the issue itself, then we kind of go to the Word as Christians and we say, okay, does this fit with what the Bible says?

And see, the danger in that is that we'll always end up making the Bible say what we want it to say. We got to get that the other way around so that no matter what the issue is, we start here and we ask questions.

[10:49] What does the Word say? What does it say about who God is? What does it say about what God does? What does it say about God's character and the way he acts? What are the implications of all of that?

And then once we establish all of that theologically in our hearts and in our minds, then we sit down from there and we start to view all of the issues in our lives and in our culture and in our church through the lens of the Bible.

Because if we don't do that, we'll end up being like Israel. And we'll slip into these cycles of self-destructive sin and we'll get to the end and everything seems okay to us.

We reason it out. It's rational. But then it ends up being evil in the sight of God. Because what we ultimately did was cause his Word to fit what we thought rather than fixing what we think on the foundation of his Word.

Are you with me? There's an issue here with Israel, their worship, their view of the Bible. It's an issue with Christianity today. The biggest issue I think that we're facing as Christians and in churches today is a high view of the Scripture.

[12:00] We're losing a commitment to the faithful exposition of the Bible in many churches. We're losing the conviction of the inerrancy of the Bible, of its authoritative nature and we're starting to give in to all of these other things culturally.

We can't do that. If we do, we're gonna end up in the same boat as Israel, living in a way that's evil in the sight of God. And we don't want to do that.

Because what happens when you do what's right in your eyes? Even if it's evil in God's eyes, what happens? Let's read on and see. Verse eight, we find the wrath of God. The wrath of God.

Therefore, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. He sold them into the hand of Cushan Rishathame, king of Mesopotamia, and the people of Israel served Cushan Rishathame.

Eight years. Now there's always consequences to sin. And in this case, Israel's consequence was to be conquered by this man, Cushan Rishathame, king of Mesopotamia.

[13:10] Now we aren't given any additional information about this king except what is revealed in his name. And I actually think it's interesting. Maybe you will too. His name means double wickedness.

Something I'm sure didn't come from his mother. Can you imagine? You know what? I'm gonna name this kid. Double wickedness. Maybe some of you could go back and you could change the name of your children.

This is probably a later name used to mock him. Probably an Israelite term that's used later on in reflecting back on this time. And it's safe to assume that whatever he was and whatever he was like, he was twice as wicked as the people of Israel were.

Now think about how wicked that is. The people of Israel at this point are involving themselves in public prostitution as a form of worship. Eventually, they're gonna make their way to where they're sacrificing their children to the gods of Canaan, to Moloch and to Bill and to these various gods of the people of the land.

And now they say, this guy that came in and that the Lord sold us into the hand of, he was twice as bad as we were. And it was terrible. Can you imagine what this was like for them?

[14:19] Now, it's also a play on words with his title. Title, King of Mesopotamia is how it is probably recorded in your English translation. Mesopotamia, you don't need to think about that so much as an exact location.

As much as it means double rivers. So basically, Israel was conquered by double wickedness from the double rivers. But the emphasis of this text is not on Cushan, Rishathame's power to conquer Israel.

The emphasis in the text is on God's action in selling them. Notice what it says in verse eight. Look at it with me again.

The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and he sold them. That's what we're meant to see. We're not meant to see this weird guy, the double wicked guy from the double rivers. We're meant to see the God who sold his own people into the hand of this man.

This episode isn't about world powers. This episode is about divine wrath. Wrath, anger, the anger of the Lord. Now, there's no way to get around dealing with the fact of God's anger in the book of Judges.

[15:30] Can't get around it. We don't like to talk about it. It's not the fun part to talk about in the Bible. But we do need to understand it. And one of the things that we need to understand is that there's two dynamics to God's anger.

Barry Webb is helpful in pointing these out. I think this is on the screen if you want to follow along with me. The first thing is retribution. Retribution, which is pure punishment, unmitigated by grace, is for those who are and remain outside of his covenant.

As Paul says to the Ephesians, they have no hope and are without God in the world. Okay, so that's one part of the wrath of God. We talk about, that's usually what we think about when we think about God's wrath.

We think about his wrath being poured out against unregenerate sinners, which ultimately, its final conclusion, is eternal hell, right? That's the wrath and the anger of God set against those that are outside of his covenant.

But there's a second thing here. Within God's covenant with his people, a different kind of judgment takes place. The most appropriate term for it is discipline.

[16:39] Because it is corrective rather than retributive. And it is always tempered by grace. It can be severe, but its aim is always to reclaim rather than destroy.

Do you see the difference here? Just because you're a Christian, just because you're within God's covenant now, doesn't mean that you're absolutely free from God's anger.

God will judge our sin. He doesn't do it with us in the same way that he does it with unbelievers, but he does take us through corrective discipline.

And let me tell you, corrective discipline is hard. It's hard. Nothing Israel faced here was pleasant, but it wasn't God's way of cutting them off either.

He was disciplining his people in order that he might lead them on the path of repentance. And in this sense, the anger of the Lord is a means of hope.

[17:46] It's a means of hope and love. Dale Ralph Davis is helpful here. Serving Kushan Rishathame may not sound like salvation to us, and it isn't.

But if it forces us to lose our grip on Baal, it may be the beginning of salvation. I love that statement so much.

You ever get to a point in your life, you may not even realize how idolatrous you actually are.

Because at the heart of all of our sin is idolatry, right? In some form or fashion, it's idolatry.

We don't even always realize exactly how many idols we have that have gripped us and that we've been holding onto ourselves. And then you get to a point in your life where God is clearly, he is bringing you through a difficult time.

And it's not just that he's testing your faith. There is a measure of judgment happening here. There is corrective discipline happening here. And you come to the Lord and you say, why are you doing this?

[18:44] You ever thought that God's discipline is meant to loosen your grip on the idols that you have allowed to come into your life? I love that phrase so much. It shows that the covenant God who has bound himself to his people will not allow them to be cozy in their infidelity.

Steadfast love pursues them in their iniquity and is not above inflicting misery even in order to awaken them. What is the anger of the Lord meant to do for his people?

To lead them to repentance, to awaken them, to loosen their grip on this world, to loosen their grip on the idols that as I think it was Calvin said, and our heart is a factory of idols.

It is to loosen the grip on all of those things in order that we may turn again and again back to him, back to him. Even God's people face his anger.

Not as punitive action, please hear me correctly here, but as corrective discipline. To be sure, Christ has taken God's eternal wrath against our sins. That's the glory of the gospel.

[19 : 49] Those who belong to him will never, ever have to endure death and hell. But the Bible still tells us that he takes us through discipline as a loving father.

Proverbs chapter three, Hebrews 12. Do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof. For the Lord reproves him whom he loves as a father, the son, in whom he delights. Hebrews 12. What's the purpose of this in our lives? Why does it seem like God's so hard on us sometimes? He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment, all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. It may be much later, like it was for Israel.

But the discipline of the Lord builds us up. So we need not get bitter against him. We should glory in the fact that he loves us enough to correct us. And he always gives us grace to endure.

[21 : 00] Number three, the salvation of God. Salvation of God. We see the holiness of God in verse seven. We see the wrath of God, the anger of God in verse eight. Verses nine and 10, we see his salvation.

But when the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel who saved them. Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, the spirit of the Lord was upon him.

And he judged Israel. He went out to war and the Lord gave Cushanrishathame, king of Mesopotamia, into his hand and his hand prevailed over Cushanrishathame.

I appreciate the author leaving that name in there so many times in this thing. Say that five times fast. Okay, so God's instrument of judgment here is Cushanrishathame.

His instrument of salvation, Othniel, the nephew and son-in-law of Caleb, who was one of the 10 spies. He was the only one along with Joshua who came back with a good report.

[22 : 00] Yes, the Lord will give us the land. You know the stories. We've been introduced to him in parallel passages of Joshua chapter 15, Judges chapter one, but nothing more is said about him here than what we already know.

Why? Again, the reason for that is that our eyes are meant to be set on the Lord who delivers his people. Othniel is merely an instrument in the hands of the almighty God who raised him up and empowered him.

Our eyes aren't to be set on Othniel here. Our eyes are to be set on Yahweh. Now, crucial to this paradigm, remember this is paradigmatic, this paradigm that Othniel cycle is presenting for us as we move forward.

Crucial to this is this fact of God's love being set on his people in salvation. It's crucial.

Yes, he's a holy God who must judge sin, but he's also a loving God who takes pity on us in our suffering. That's what's meant by Israel's cry.

[23 : 08] This isn't a reference to their repentance. This is a reference to their cry for help in distress. This isn't the son who's just suffered the consequences of his sin running to his father and saying, I'll never do it again.

That's not what this is. This is help, please, help. You ever tell your kids, don't touch the stove, it's hot. And then at some point, they walk over and they touch the stove.

The first thing that they say when they touch the stove is not, oh, mom, forgive me of my sin. I repent of touching the stove.

No, they say, ah! And they run. And what are they wanting you to do when they run to you? Do something to take this pain away. That's what Israel's doing.

They're crying out to the Lord, not out of repentance. They're running to the Lord. Lord, do something. Take this away from us. Relieve us. In our distress. In our distress. God displays his loving compassion by raising up a deliverer who would save them from the hand of their enemies.

[24 : 18] What love is this? That's what Davis says again. Who then can plumb the abyss of Yahweh's pity for his people? Even his sinful people who are moved more by their distress than by their depravity.

Yahweh is indeed the one who could bear Israel's suffering no longer. What sheer grace when Yahweh delivers.

What is this meant to teach us here? Not that Othniel was a mighty warrior, even though he might have been that. It's to teach us the love of God set on his people even when they're merely concerned about their pain and not their sin.

Now take a moment to consider God's instrument of judgment and God's instrument of salvation side by side here. God allowed Kushan Rishathame to overcome Israel temporarily.

That's different than what he does with Othniel. He allows man's power to come in and inflict his people. But he empowers Othniel with his spirit.

[25 : 35] That's a different thing. Look again with me. Verse 9. The people cried out to the Lord. The Lord raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel who saved them.

Othniel. Verse 10. The spirit of the Lord was upon him. That's why he saved Israel. Not because he was strong but because the Lord empowered him to do so.

Now we need to consider those two dynamics side by side. Sometimes God's instrument for judgment is to step back and say, let man's power come against you. But whenever God is working on behalf of his people, he doesn't trust our power to fight for ourselves.

He empowers us with his spirit to fight those battles. That's what he's doing here with Othniel. On the one hand, man's power is set against God's people. On the other, God's power is working on behalf of his people.

And God's power crushes every enemy. He always prevails. The salvation of our God is certain for all who belong to him.

[26 : 45] It will never fail. He's always in control. He's in control of the enemy. He's in control of the Savior. And he always empowers his Savior.

And no enemy can defeat him. What is this meant to point us toward? You know the answer. It all points forward to Jesus.

The true and better Othniel. He too was chosen and empowered by God to bring us a greater salvation than Israel ever experienced.

Their enemy was a mere man. Ours is death and hell and eternal damnation. But God's power through Jesus crushes every enemy.

Even death itself. Romans 8. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us who can be against us?

[27 : 46] He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?

It's God's that justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died. More than that. Who was raised? Who is at the right hand of God? Who is interceding for us?

And who shall separate us from this love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

No. In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. for I am sure that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Salvation belongs to God. He has heard our cries for distress and he has raised up a deliverer for our salvation and it's not Othniel it's Jesus Christ his own son.

[29 : 09] That's the salvation of God. But there's a final thing here. Verse 11 we see the gift of God. The gift of God. Look with me at verse 11.

So the land had rest 40 years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

The rest here was applied to the land. Notice it doesn't say Israel had rest it says that the land had rest. Rest was given to the land for 40 years. That means that in the absence of war the land was able to recover and be fruitful for the people.

You gotta imagine in those days a mighty king comes in and he sets up shop for 8 years. He's not leaving fertile farmland for the Israelites to take. He's using that for himself.

They are subjected to him. Now God in the absence of Cushan Rishatham and in the absence of war for 40 years allows the land to recover in order that life in the land of promise may once again flourish for the people of Israel.

[30 : 19] Okay so you understand the gift here. The gift is rest for the land which is ultimately in some sense rest for the people. Now here's how I want you to think about this. God's temporal or temporary dealings with his physical people the nation of Israel give us a glimpse into his eternal dealings with his spiritual people which are all of those who have entered his covenant of grace by faith.

Doesn't matter if it's New Testament or Old Testament if they have entered his covenant of grace by faith just as Abraham did they are a part of the people the covenant people of God. Okay what God does with a physical nation in the Old Testament with Israel points us to what God is ultimately doing through his covenant people his spiritual people and with that in mind I want you to consider a couple of things about this rest.

Number one the rest was a gift it wasn't an achievement it was a gift it came about because God gave Kushan Rishathame into the hand of Atnil and this is fundamental to our understanding of salvation it is not won through our best moral and religious efforts it is a gift of grace from the hand of God we don't earn it we receive it by faith in God's promise the rest for Israel that's what we're meant to see here they didn't praise Atnil for this rest they could have only praised God God's the one that gave them the rest there's a second thing here and that is that the rest was limited was limited they only got 40 years at the end of 40 years their savior died and he didn't come back he stayed dead and what we'll find in the first verse of next week's passage is that Israel just went right back to the same sin that they were guilty of in verse seven so the land its rest was limited and the hard truth here is that rest can never be permanent in a world that is ruled by death can't be we spend so much time in our lives looking for some kind of rest here and you're never gonna get it that's the thing so long as we live here bones will still break hearts will still break families and churches and cultures and governments will fall they'll be divided so long as we are in this life we cannot have this permanent rest that we're longing for as great as Othniel seems to have been he couldn't give Israel what it ultimately was longing for he couldn't give them permanent rest he was still a sinner in a fallen world himself and the temporary rest that Israel received was a wonderful blessing don't get me wrong I'm not trying to rain on their parade here that's not at all what I'm trying to do we are grateful for every moment of physical rest that the Lord is kind to give us but we all long for a kind of rest and renewal that will never end we long for an existence that isn't plagued by anxiety do you ever lay in your bed at night and you just think of the absolute worst possible scenarios for your family ever do that I do that Julie and I talk about it sometimes we've got like these things with the girls that are like our worst nightmares that could ever happen to them and we lay in our beds and we're like have you ever thought if this happened to Ashlyn or if this happened with the new baby or whatever it is and we feel ourselves with anxiety so long as we're in this life we'll never have rest from that anxiety in total we long for something more we long for a night where we can lay in bed and we're free from all anxiety and all worry and all sin and all struggle and we ask is it even possible to experience that which brings us to a final point of gospel application in the end

[34 : 49] Othniel died that's as far as his help could go what we need and what Israel needed was a savior who can conquer death a savior who can break this vicious cycle of self destruction by dealing with our sin once and for all and the good news is you've heard it over and over the good news is Jesus is that savior sent from God he is that one he lived the life that we were meant to live he died the death that we deserve to die but that only matters because he rose from the dead and in rising from the dead he proves that death has no claim on him has no power over him it proves that God accepted his sacrifice on the cross as a sufficient payment and atonement for our sins he lives he lives peace that's what matters here and through this

Jesus God has provided eternal peace and rest as a gracious gift from the hand of God and here's the best part of it he invites all of us he invites us all to enter this rest by faith it's the exact words that Jesus used in Matthew 11 come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest do you labor of course you do do you struggle yes are you looking for meaning and purpose and something good that might actually come out of this pathetic life that we live yes we're looking for all of those things we're striving for all of those things and Jesus has just come to me and I will give it take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and listen to what he says and you will find rest for your what soul

Jesus doesn't offer rest for your land Jesus doesn't offer rest necessarily for your family or for your country or necessarily for your church it's rest for your soul it's a transcendent rest it goes far

deeper and far longer than what we hope for now and he invites us to it he just says if you'll just come to me I will give it to you salvation is a gift of God's grace through Jesus and he is pleased to offer it to you but here's the thing I want to emphasize this morning before we finish and I know you've heard it and I'm not ignorant to the fact that probably every person that's here this morning I know it's just a few of us but probably every person here has made some kind of profession of faith in

Christ I'm not ignorant of that but I want to make the point anyways the good thing about this is that he's pleased to offer it to you now now that's the thing sometimes we get this idea that we have to we have to hear this like voice from heaven that something magical has to happen in our lives to where suddenly we feel like like Christians let me tell you most days I don't feel much like a Christian at least in the way that we romanticize that feeling let me tell you I don't know what you understand about the gospel what you understand about theology there's nothing you have to wait on you don't have to wait on some kind of like supernatural voice that just opens the clouds and says okay now's the time now you're allowed to come to me the call has already been issued it's here Jesus said it sometimes we get confused about how conversion happens conversion we're not waiting for something weird to happen in our lives conversion is come to me and I'll give you rest conversion is if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you'll be saved conversion is believe on the name of the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved God offers this rest and he offers it to all who will come to him and all that's waiting is for you to actually come just receive it the price has been paid it's there he says come all that remains for you to do is to come turn start trusting Jesus as the Lord and Savior what do we learn from the off-mail cycle well we learn about a lot about who God is we learn he's holy and that we're not we learn that he does have anger it's a righteous anger but it's anger and out of that anger comes judgment but out of the same God that comes wrath comes salvation a gift of grace of eternal rest that we can't even imagine now and he offers it to all of us out of his own love so why not take it that's enough for us to rejoice in today isn't it