

On the Jericho Governorate on the eastern West Bank situated in the Jordan Valley, located adjacent to the archaeological site of Tell es-Sultan 1 kilometer north-west of Jericho lies a spring called 'Ain as-Sultan (The Sultan's Spring).

The arid area is notorious for water scarcity, especially during the summer. But this spring flows an abundant supply of fresh cool water.

It is a sign, and continual reminder of God's power to bless and restore his people.

The origin of its purity dates back to the time of Elijah and Elisha.

Elijah and the prophets of Baal

The Cult of Baal ran rampant throughout the land. People preferred to worship false, man made idols over the God of their ancestors.

Elijah showed God's power. Some people were convinced at the miracle at the alter.

But we are a stubborn people.

Many refused to acknowledge God as the source of life.

When Elijah comes to the end of his time, he passes his responsibility over to Elisha.

And this is where The Sultan's Spring comes into the picture.

2 Kings 2:19 The people of the city said to Elisha, “Look, our lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive.” **20** “Bring me a new bowl,” he said, “and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him. **21** Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, “This is what the Lord says: ‘I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.’ ” **22** And the water has remained pure to this day, according to the word Elisha had spoken.

Elisha’s first miracle demonstrates the power of prophetic blessing to those who affirm God.

God will bless you if you set your eyes and heart on him.

But Elisha’s second miracle takes a terrible turn and reveals a terrible reality.

It reveals what happens when a people deny God.

Today, our world denies God.

We blatantly disrespect and disregard our creator and source of life.

If you aren’t convinced, reminisce with me.

There was a day when people could leave the doors of their home open.

They didn't need to lock their cars.

The Ten Commandments were a prominent part of our society.

People knew right and wrong and knew the consequences of turning from God.

Walk down the street in Chicago and see that all of the cars have bars on the steering wheel.

Lawlessness and no personal morality.

The line until recently was drawn with two things:

1. Never harm a child. Protect children at all cost, even at the risk of your own life. SCHOOL SHOOTINGS
2. Respect the church because it is God's house.
 - a. This morning our neighbor came to our door holding a sign from our parking lot. Someone had ripped it up from the ground and threw it at the traffic light.
 - b. I have served churches that were broken into.
 - c. Police officer at worship because of church shootings.
 - d. We setup a prayer chapel that someone vandalized by ripping out pages of the Bible and defecating on them.

Lawlessness and lack personal morality has become the way of our land.

2 Kings 2:23 From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of here, baldy!”

God’s people ridiculed, regarded as unenlightened, and ignorant.

Our world says we don’t need God. We place our faith in other things. Things we can create with our own hands.

24 He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the Lord. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys.

After the young hoodlums ridicule Elisha – their punishment is swift and certain. Don’t mess with God’s people.

Coincidentally enough, there is no mention of Elisha ever being ridiculed again.

The Atheist and the Bear

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods. 'What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!', he said to himself.

As he continued walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes. Turning to look, he saw a 7 foot grizzly charging towards him....

He ran as fast as he could up the path. Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him. His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster.

He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him.

At that instant the atheist cried out: 'Oh my God!...'

Time stopped.

The bear froze.

The forest was silent.

It was then that a bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying:

'You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to a cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?'

The atheist looked directly into the light.

'It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps, could you make the BEAR a Christian?'

'Very well,' said the voice. The light went out, and the sounds of the forest resumed.

And then the bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke: 'Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive and for which I am truly thankful, Amen.'

The bears in these stories get it.

Just like Jonah's Whale and Moses' quail.

They get it.

But for some reason, it is so hard for humans to get it.

God is not to be reckoned with!

On the corner of Main and East Cambridge in Greenwood, South Carolina. Two hours north of the Capitol City of Columbia, flows a well of fresh, life giving water that God placed here many years ago.

This well, still believes.

This well, still gushes forth blessings and healing.

This people revere the power of God and follow Jesus Christ.

The land around us may be parched and arid in spirit

but God dwells here!

Come to the well.

2 Kings 2:15–24 (NIV) — **15** The company of the prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha.” And they went to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. **16** “Look,” they said, “we your servants have fifty able men. Let them go and look for your master. Perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has picked him up and set him down on some mountain or in some valley.” “No,” Elisha replied, “do not send them.” **17** But they persisted until he was too embarrassed to refuse. So he said, “Send them.” And they sent fifty men, who searched for three days but did not find him. **18** When they returned to Elisha, who was staying in Jericho, he said to them, “Didn’t I tell you not to go?” **19** The people of the city said to Elisha, “Look, our lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive.” **20** “Bring me a new bowl,” he said, “and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him. **21** Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, “This is what the Lord says: ‘I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.’ ” **22** And the water has remained pure to this day, according to the word Elisha had spoken. **23** From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of here, baldy!” **24** He turned around, looked at them and called down a curse on them in the name of the Lord. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys.