

Thanksgiving

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[0 : 0 0] In Psalm 147 we read in the 20th verse, although we will look at the whole psalm together, but verse 20 particularly applying to our situation and our mission.

He had not dealt so with any mission, and as for his judgments they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord. The context and sense is of privilege, privilege given to those to whom the Lord has revealed and made known himself, not only by works of creation and providence, but through the giving of his written and spoken word.

Those to whom the Lord has revealed himself especially are particularly privileged and particularly blessed. But that of course carries with it also responsibility.

And when we think of those of whom the Lord said, Woe unto thee, Chorazin, woe unto thee, Bethsaida, and thou Capernaum, which was exalted to heaven, shall be cast down to hell.

Because if the mighty works that were done in thee had been done in Tyre and Sidon or Sodom and Gomorrah, who would have repented? There is responsibility that comes with the privilege of either the Lord's earthly ministry having been conducted in a certain place, or the Lord's earthly ministry having been conducted in a certain place, or the Lord's earthly ministry having been conducted in a certain place.

[1 : 2 9] In any country, in any mission, the privileges are great, but the responsibility is likewise great. As we go back to the beginning of this psalm, we see that it opens with praise.

Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing praises unto our God, for it is pleasant, and praise is comely. The act of communicating worship to the Lord.

That is what praise is. The act of communicating worship to the Lord. It sounds initially like we're simply stating the obvious. Well, of course that's what praise is.

We know what praise is. We're stating the obvious. But not if you stop to think about it. Praise, if it is heartfelt and genuine, is a characteristic uniquely confined, to those who love the Lord and are in fellowship with Him.

I'll say that again. Praise, if it is heartfelt and genuine, is a characteristic uniquely confined to those who love the Lord and are in fellowship with Him.

[2 : 3 7] Others, of course, may go through the outward motions. They can open their mouth and sing, or they can open their mouth perhaps in prayer, or they can be led in prayer, or whatever. They can go through the motions of worship and praise outwardly to an extent.

But to truly praise the Lord from the heart is the alone prerogative of the Lord's people. Those who love Him, who have been brought into relationship with Him.

James chapter 2 verse 19, of course, tells us that, okay, you believe as one God. That's great. The devils also believe and tremble. The devils then believe in the one true God.

But they tremble. They dread. They have terror before Him. They do not praise. They do not sing. You never read of a devil singing praise to God.

You never read of the devils loving the Lord or rejoicing in Him or praising in Him. They do not sing. They do not love. They hate. They loathe and fear the Lord.

[3 : 41] With a dread and terror suitable only to those who know that in the living God they have met their nemesis. They do not praise. And others too, yes, perhaps, or not, the Lord may pray.

You know, it is said that during the First World War, the phrase went around, there are no atheists in the foxhole. You know, if you're in a great big shell crater and the bullets and the bombs are whizzing over your heads, those cowering in the shell hole in the foxhole there, they may be sending up prayers for the Almighty.

They may be praying very firmly in the extremity. No atheists in a foxhole. And of course, there are no atheists in eternity. Because whatever our final destination is, we will know the truth.

Well and truly by then, there will be none then. But many a godless individual may cry out to the God of heaven in the midst of their own extremity. And the prayer will be heartfelt.

It's not pretend. It's not genuine. They don't mean it. In that extremity, it will be heartfelt and garnished about, no doubt, with all manner of extravagant promises of good behavior and of turning to the Lord and of a changed life.

[4 : 53] If only he will get them out of that particular tight corner. If he will get them out of that particular extremity. They make all manner of lavish promises. But as soon as God answers their plea and they are delivered out of their extremity, the deliverer is soon forgotten.

They are full of petitions when they are in need. But they are devoid and empty of praise. Because you do not find the person in their extremity, the godless individual in their extremity.

While they're saying, oh please God get me out of here. Please God deliver me. Please don't let this bad thing happen to me. And then they are in need. Oh, that was lucky, they say. They do not praise the Lord God of heaven who has given them life and breath and looked after them until now.

They do not give thanks to him. They do not acknowledge him. They are full of pleadings for themselves. But they are devoid and empty of praise. Praise, when it is genuine, is the communicating of our love and adoration to the Lord.

Just because of who he is and what he has done. It is an act of fellowship with the Lord, if you think about it. When we are communicating our love to him, our adoration of him.

[6 : 15] It is like, you know, if you get a mooning young couple, they can just stare into each other's eyes. Maybe they do not say anything for ages, but they are full of love for each other. Or whatever things they murmur to each other, sweeten their things or whatever.

It does not really matter because they are so wrapped up with each other. They are busy telling each other how much they love them. And if you are a prize on a prize, why do you love this person? What does he do that's any good? What does she do that's any good?

Tell me some of the characteristics. Oh, it does not matter. They just love them because they love them. Now, the world knows this at the human level. Why do we find it so hard to know it at the divine level?

Praise, when it is genuine, is the communicating of our love and adoration of the Lord. Just because of who he is, just because of what he has done.

It is an act of fellowship with the Lord. And it is good because this is part of our purpose and design. Praise ye the Lord, for it is good to sing praise unto our God.

[7 : 16] For it is pleasant and praise is comely. It is good because this is what we were intended for. To love God, to serve God, to enjoy him forever.

To know the Lord and to enjoy him forever. To glorify him and to praise him. And that's our desire for all eternity if we are his.

But it won't be our desire if we are not his. We might want a wee bit of God to help us get through the worst parts of this life. We might want God as a good luck charm. But we don't want to be with him, praising him for all eternity unless we love him.

For the believer, it is to be in fellowship and love with the Lord. For the believer, praise feels good because it is right.

This is part of why we were made and why we were chosen to be his. It is said of the Christian athlete Eric Riddle. That when he was, whether in training or whether he was in a proper race.

[8 : 21] Because the Lord had given him this strength and this athletic ability. He said that when he went fast, he could feel the Lord's pleasure. Because he was delighting in what the Lord had given him grace to do.

And that of course is perfectly biblical. It's like Psalm 19 tells us in verse 5. You know, there's a bridegroom coming forth out of his chamber. And as a strong man delighteth to run a race.

One who has the athletic ability. One who has the strength. Loves to exercise it. Whether it's the sportsman or the athlete who's been gifted. And when they do the thing the Lord has given them the grace.

They feel that sense of God's blessing. Of the rush of his pleasure as it were. Or when they're gifted perhaps with painting or music. Or some composition or some great work of art.

They can sense God's delight in what they are giving back to him. Because the worship of God is what we are designed to do.

[9 : 22] When we do the thing for which we are designed. It's like sticking the round peg in the round hole. Finally finding the right screwdriver. Finally finding the right piece that fits in a machine.

Or putting something together. It's the bit that's been missing all this time. And you find it and it fits. And boy does it feel good. Because it is the completion.

And the fulfilment. Of what is being designed. And intended. And this is why for the one who loves the Lord. The praise of God.

Feels so good. Because it is part of what we are designed. And intended for. We feel the purpose of our design. And we love the doing of it.

This is part of our thanksgiving. Because a thankful heart. Is a joyful heart. For it is pleasant. And praise is coming. In verses 2 and 3.

[10 : 19] We see the Lord that build up Jerusalem. It doesn't mean the physical city. The Lord itself. Jerusalem is poetic language for his kingdom. His people there. He gathers together the outcasts of Israel.

He healeth the broken in heart. And bindeth up their wounds. This tells us something of the nature of those. Whom the Lord gathers to himself. The nature of those to whom the Lord's coming.

And kingdom is good news. What does the New Testament tell us? We read in chapter 4. In verses 17 and 19. When Jesus comes to Nazareth of course.

There was delivered unto him. The book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book. He found the place where it was written. The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Because he had anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He has sent me to heal the broken hearted. To preach deliverance to the captives. And recovering of sight to the blind. To set at liberty them that are bruised.

- [11 : 22] To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. The acceptable year of the Lord. When that which is wronged is put right. When those who are cast down are lifted up.
- When those who are poor are made rich in the Lord. Those who are blind are their eyes open. It is those who recognize their need. It is those for whom the coming of the Lord and his kingdom is good news.
- Remember of course also what Paul wrote to the Corinthians. You see your calling brethren. Chapter 1 verse 26. For you see your calling brethren.
- How that not many wise after the flesh. Not many mighty. Not many noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. And God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.
- And base things of the world. And things which are despised hath God chosen. Yea and things which are not. To bring to naught things that are. That no flesh should glory in his presence.
- [12 : 26] But of him are ye in Christ Jesus. Who of God hath made unto us wisdom. And righteousness. And sanctification. And redemption. That according as it is written. He that glorieth. Let him glory in the Lord.
- It doesn't matter that we are weak. And insignificant. And powerless. In fact. That's better. Because it means that we cannot fool ourselves. Oh it's because I'm so great. It's because I'm so rich.
- Or powerful. Or because I have such ability. Because I have such gifts. This is why God chose you. No it isn't. This is not why God chose me or you or anybody else. He says to Israel.
- I didn't choose you because you're the mightiest and the best nation in the world. You were the least. You were the most insignificant in a band of runaway slaves. God is glorified in the doing of the impossible.
- God is glorified in taking that which is weak and pathetic and poor. And blind and naked. God is glorified in taking the things which are not. God is glorified in the Lord. To bring to naught the things that are.
- [13 : 23] To show that he alone is able to deliver. He alone is able to be glorified. And there is a sufficiency in him. And in him alone.
- Of him are ye in Christ Jesus. Who of God is made unto us. Wisdom and righteousness. And sanctification and redemption. And all the things you want. You'll find them in Christ.
- You won't find them in yourself. All the qualities you need to get to heaven. You won't find them in yourself. You'll find them in Christ. All the goodness you desire to have.
- To build up. You will never do it in yourself. You will find it in Christ. He is to us wisdom and sanctification. And power. And all the things that we need and desire.
- It's in him. But this is who the Lord is. The outcasts of Israel. He builds up Jerusalem. He heals the broken in heart. He binds up their wounds. This is not just empty words or platitudes.
- [14 : 21] The Lord knows the corrosive. And destructive effect. That sin has upon the human heart. And soul. He knows how it destroys.
- He knows how it harms. And endangers. And because we are all. All riddled with it. We are all damaged by it. And ironically.
- Those who are damaged the most. And those who know it the least. Those who think. Oh I'm fine. I can exercise my powers. My gifts. I can build up my little empires here.
- I am strong. I don't need God. I have everything I need. And these are those upon whom it has worked so. Such corrosion. That they do not even know they are dying.

But such is the effect of sin upon the human life. Upon the human soul and spirit and heart. That all who finally are enabled to turn to Christ.

[15 : 17] Are brought to recognize. That they are so sick. And heart broken. He healeth the broken in heart. And bindeth up their wounds.

Because God is a God of mercy. And of compassion. He telleth the number of the stars. He calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord.

And of great power. His understanding is infinite. Now notice in verse 5. The Lord is not in capitals there. It's not the divine name for the Lord Jehovah. The Father in that sense we might say.

But the Lord with the smaller letters. Is almost always a reference. In advance as it were to the Messiah. It is to the Lord who is to come. Great is our Lord. And of great power.

His understanding is infinite. His power is such that it is way beyond all the heavens and the earth. When we think of power in earthly terms. We think in terms of like power stations.

[16 : 17] And huge generators that can power massive cities like London or New York or whatever it may be. We think of the extent of electricity and heat and power that can be generated.

And we think how great is man. Or we think of his destructive power that he can create nuclear weapons that can destroy entire countries or cities. We think wow how great is man.

But if you were to look from space at the effects of this lighting up of cities or this destroying cities. It would be like a little pool of destruction or a little pool of light on the surface of this tiny planet.

Our planet compared to say for example the sun is tiny in its insignificance. And the sun is tiny in its insignificance compared to some of the huge stars and planets that are out there.

Now if we think of the fact that the sun is a huge burning ball of gas. Think of that heat. The power that is generated that could, if it could be harnessed. How much power there would be in that.

[17 : 19] And think that it is like a pinprick. A minuscule pinprick compared to some of the stars that are out there. Huge massive burning balls of gas and power and heat.

And they all scatter throughout the vastness of the universe. Billions of them. And every single one of them known and created and named by the Lord.

He telleth the number of the stars. He calleth them all by their names. Oh how can they all have names? Well think of all the people that have ever lived in this world. Think of the billions that are in the world just now.

And think of all the generations that have gone before. Every single one of them had a name. Every single one of them was a person with a living soul. They had a name of human beings in all their millions and billions down through history.

And have names right at the stars. We're told that they are named by God. They are known each one. God can do this but man cannot. In Genesis 15 remember he says to Abraham.

[18 : 18] He brought him forth abroad and said look now toward heaven. And tell the stars. If thou be able to number them. And he said unto them so shall they see thee. In other words Abraham couldn't number the stars.

No. Human being can number the stars. But God can. So shall they see thee. And he that is Abraham believed in the Lord. And he counted it to him for righteousness.

Abraham believed God. Now remember the context of that. Abraham was like 99 at this point. Or at least in his 90s. And at this stage God is promising him.

This will be your posterity. These will be your descendants. And Abraham was thinking well look at him. I didn't just know. You know maybe there's Ishmael. I can't honestly remember Ishmael. I was allowed at this point. But at any rate.

He doesn't have any seed. Any posterity. Any children. From whom all these multitudes are going to be descended. How is this going to happen? I'm old. And Sarah's old.

[19 : 14] She's getting on for being past the age of childbearing. What are we going to do? How are we going to ever have this? But still. God has said it. And Abraham believed God.

Against all the odds. He believed in God's power. Great is our Lord. And of great power. His understanding is infinite. And the Lord counted it to him.

For righteousness. Now we mentioned at the beginning. The nation that is blessed by the Lord. Now a nation is distinct from a state. A state is a political geographical entity.

It is within certain borders and boundaries. And it encompasses all the citizens within it. Regardless of whatever their ethnicity or their national background may be.

Once they have citizenship. They belong to that state. Regardless of whatever their origins may have been derived. But a nation is different. A nation is people.

[20 : 12] That's why in the United States for example you can talk about the Sioux nation. Or the Seminole nation. These American Indians nations. They are nations. But they're not states. There's not a Sioux land.

Or a Seminole land. But there's the nations. Because it is the people. Now people then constitute a nation. What is the nation that is so blessed that the Lord has revealed himself to them?

In Galatians 3 we read from verse 7. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God will justify the heathen through faith.

Preached before the gospel the good news unto Abraham saying. Indeed shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Abraham this is the people the Lord calls to himself.

[21 : 11] This is the nation that he calls to himself. It is a nation of people who have their trust, their faith in the Lord. Now remember of course that every nation will have a head.

It will have a king. Remember what Pilate said to Jesus. John 18 verse 36. Are thou a king then? Jesus answered thou sayest that I am a king. But previously Jesus had said my kingdom is not of this world.

If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews. But now is my kingdom not from hence. In other words I am king.

But my kingdom is not of this world. It doesn't say it's not in this world. Because his people, those of whom he is the king in every, are in this world.

But they are not of this world. These are they who are blessed with faithful Abraham. Those who have put their trust in the Lord against all the odds. And against all that their eyes are able to see.

[22 : 12] Because remember. Although it may sometimes seem difficult to remember. Because we think we know him and have known him for years. But we have put our trust and faith in a God whom we have never seen.

We have never set eyes on Jesus in the flesh. We have never beheld the Lord with these eyes of flesh. We may have beheld him with the eye of faith. We may have read it when we may have put our trust and our heart into his hand.

But we have never yet seen him. Jesus said blessed are those who believe and yet have never seen. Jesus also said when he was demanding of the Pharisees.

When the kingdom of God should come. He answered them and said the kingdom of God cometh not of observation. Neither shall they say lo here or lo there. For behold the kingdom of God is within you.

Now he doesn't just mean that's a wee sort of spiritual something going on in your heart. There is that too of course. But what he meant is the kingdom of God is amongst you. Now he meant by that not only that he himself was present in their midst.

[23 : 12] And where the king was the kingdom was. But also he meant that those who are whose. Those who have faith who are blessed with faithful Abraham. They are his kingdom and they are there amongst them.

The kingdom of God is amongst you. The kingdom of God is within you. You can't look for it and say oh look here it is. There it is. There's the barrow. There's the state. There's the country. No. But there's the people who are the Lord's.

He telleth the number of the stars. He calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord and a great power. His understanding is infinite. The Lord lifteth up the meek.

He casteth the wicked down to the ground. This is part of his greatness. That he lifts up those who are cast down. He has a special care for those who are broken in their heart.

Wounded in their mind. Those who have been battered and bruised by the sin sick world in which we dwell. He continues to care for us. In the previous Psalm 146 here in verse 7.

[24 : 12] He executeth judgment for the oppressed. He geth food to the hungry. The Lord loosed the prisoners. The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind. The Lord raiseth up them that are bowed down.

The Lord loveth the righteous. As the Lord preserveth the strangers. He relieveth the fatherless and widow. But the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. Again it's exactly in line with what Jesus was reading in Nazareth in the synagogue there.

It's exactly in line with how the Lord lifts up those who are cast down. And he turns the power of the wicked upside down. The values of God and the power of God are at the opposite end of the spectrum to the worldly powers of this earth.

Men cannot do what God does. Men cannot comprehend the love that the Lord adds. For those who know the world has spat back and again.

He lifts up the meek. So sing verse 7 unto the Lord with thanksgiving. Sing praise upon the heart unto God. Now the heart of course it's an instrument of great beauty.

[25 : 18] Have you ever seen or listened to it being played? It's a gentle kind of haunting music. It is amongst the most delicate. The most beautiful sound music can produce.

And I would suggest to you that the sense of this here is that God is to be given the best. The best that man can give. Whether it be with musical instrument or whether it be simply with a human voice.

It is with the heart because that is that which is the most delicate. The most beautiful. That which senses and sums up as it were the spirit of God. Remember when Saul was troubled with the evil spirit.

David played upon the harp. And it soothed the evil spirit away. It soothed Saul's mind. And what we read here is sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving.

Now the word that we have translated as sing is in the original literally answer the Lord. It says sing unto the Lord. It's answer the Lord with thanksgiving. It is a response to him.

[26 : 17] All of our praise. All of our thanksgiving is a response to what God has given to us. Has set before us. You know. If you're accustomed.

Which I hope you are. Of bowing to give thanks or grace before your meal stops at the end. Then you bow over and give thanks for that which is sent before you.

That which God has already given you. You wouldn't if you're driving home for your tea at the end of work. You wouldn't really sit your grace there. Or sit your prayer in the car. Thank you. And then just sit right to and at the table.

Although there would be nothing wrong with praying beforehand as well. But you pause before you eat. Because you're giving thanks for what has been given to you. And our thanksgiving, our worship is always ever a response.

Just as we read in 1 John 4 verse 19. We love him because he first loved us. Our thanksgiving is a response to the Lord.

[27 : 17] Previously in verse 10. He did his love. Not that we loved God. But that he loved us. And sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. In verse 8. He that loveth not knoweth not God.

For God is love. Now that doesn't just mean. Well if you love anything. Then that's okay. People have taken it that way. They've arranged it out of its sacred context. And said whoever loves is of God.

For God is love. So it can mean if you love, for example, another person in the same way as you ought to love only your husband or wife. If you love somebody of the same gender. If you love your cats and dogs.

Or if you love a mince pie or whatever it might be. As long as you love something, that's okay. Anybody who loves is of God. That's not what it means. That's not the context here. That's an abuse of scripture.

What do we have here? He that loveth not knoweth not God. It is the sense of God here. For God is love. He that loveth not knoweth not God.

[28 : 17] It doesn't mean love in general. It means who loves not the Lord. Does not know the Lord. Because to know him is to love him. You cannot know the Lord but not love him unless you're the devil.

Of whom James, of course, spoke. We said earlier. But he that loveth not knoweth not God. For God is love. 1 John 4.8.

That's the context here. And if we want to get a sense of that. You go back to what Jesus said about the woman who was the sinner in Luke 7. Remember? Where she had wept over his feet.

And she had anointed them with her perfume and so on. And we read there. He said. Whosoever. Beg your pardon. Turn the page. And we have. Wherefore I say unto thee. Her sins which are many are forgiven.

For she loved much. It doesn't mean. Because she loved enough. Therefore, okay. God will forgive her sins. But rather the fact that she loves so much is the evidence that her sins are forgiven.

[29 : 18] Because our love to God is only ever a response. We loved him because he first loved us. She loved much. So we can confidently say her sins are forgiven.

Wherefore I say unto thee. Her sins which are many are forgiven. For she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven. The same love of little. And if we're not forgiven much.

If we're forgiven little. It's not because we haven't got plenty that needs forgiven. Because we don't think or realize how sinful we are. So we don't feel the need to ask forgiveness. So we don't receive forgiveness.

But she loved much. And our love is only ever a response to God's love. So if she loved so much. It's only because she's been forgiven much. So she recognizes her need.

And she recognizes that she is forgiven. So the love just pours out of her. And the tears of joy and repentance are shed upon the Lord's feet. And the perfume is poured out.

[30 : 15] And where do we read a perfume being so blessed and such a joy? Well it's there in the song of Solomon in the Old Testament. Because of the savour of thy good ointments. Thy name is as ointment poured forth.

Therefore do the virgins love thee. Our love for the Lord is only ever a response. Our thanksgiving is only ever a response. And so we read then verses 8 to 18.

We read of how the Lord provides for man and for beast. And all that he does. He sends the rain. He gives the food. The beast is with young ravens which cry.

He isn't impressed with horses. Or the agility or speed or fighting skills or fighting men. He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them and fear him.

In those that hope in his mercy. If we were to modernize that illustration. We would say he's not interested in fighter jets. Or the latest tanks. Or surface to air missiles or whatever.

[31 : 14] Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that we shouldn't defend our country. Of course we should. And that's part of the responsibility of the civil magistrate. But if we expect that God is impressed by these things.

Then we are more stupid than he could possibly conceive. Our country is not made great by its military prowess. Our country will not be saved or redeemed. By how many men it can put in the field.

How many horses. How many tanks. How many fighter jets. It will be defended or redeemed or not. Dependent on the extent to which it humbles itself before the Lord.

Right now that's not looking very good. There was a day in the last big war of course. In World War II. There were several days when the nation was called to prayer.

Across the nation. And from the king all the way down to the boss. People gathered in their churches. And they prayed for the Lord's deliverance. And he did deliver.

[32 : 10] Now of course it's the General Assembly of our own branch of the church. Which is now calling for a national day of prayer. As it has the previous two years tomorrow. The last day of November.

We're not holding special events for that. We're combining it in here with this Thanksgiving tonight. To recognize our need. To pray as a nation. And our need to pray for the nation.

Because what the Lord has provided. What he has given. How he has fed us. How he has clothed us. As we read in these verses. Eight to eighteen. He is merciful. And this is part and parcel.

Of his word as well. Verse fifteen. He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth. His word runneth very swiftly. All that needs us in creation.

In the rain. The ice. The snow. And the melting of them again. The turning of the seasons. The changing of the year. All that he does. Is because of God. When countries have laws.

[33 : 06] That in some cases at least. Prevent the taking of innocent life. That where this is illegal to murder people. It's because originally God said it. And we follow where God leads.

When there are laws against the worst extremities of evil. It's because God originally said it. Most of those laws of course we have now abandoned. And we make up laws of our own. We criminalize innocent behavior.

And we declare to be innocent. That which is criminal. In God's eyes. But. God sends out his word. He melts. Not only the ice.

And the elements. He causeth his wind to blow. And the waters flow. If the Lord would cause the wind of his spirit to blow. The wind bloweth when it was still. Now he is to sound there.

But can't stop there. When it cometh or whether it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the spirit. He will cause his wind to blow. And the waters of repentance. And a baptism to flow.

[34 : 01] How blessed our nation would be. But what we find here. With all that God has done. Then again his children know.

His gracious provision is to everyone. As we mentioned earlier. He calls it the sun to rise. And the evil and the good. He sends it the rain on the just and the unjust. He feeds the birds. He feeds the animals.

He feeds everyone. His gracious provision is to all. But only his people see it. We don't see God. But we see what he has done. We see the evidence of his provision.

We see the hand of his blessing. But only his people see it. Only his children know it. Only those who love him. Ever thank him. Because there are many of course.

As we've said in praying. Supposedly in times of extremity. But when they are delivered. They don't thank the Lord. And these verses 19 and 20. We see.

[34 : 56] He showed his word unto Jacob. His statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt soul with any nation. And as for his judgments. They have not known them.

Praise ye the Lord. Creation and providence of course. In itself. Are of witness and testimony. But it is in the revealing of his own word. His spoken word. His written word.

His holy word that is given to us. His law. His testimonies and commandments. Which is the greatest privilege of all. You know Psalm 19 tells us about that. There's a heaven. It's declared the glory of God.

And the firmament showed his handiwork. Day of the day of his speech. Night unto night showed knowledge. Creation is great. But then it goes on to speak of God's written word. The law of the Lord is perfect.

Converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure. Making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right. Rejoice in the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure.

[35 : 53] Enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean. Enduring forever. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired than a gold.

Yea, the much fine gold. Sweeter also in honey. And the honeycomb. The giving of his word. Is the special privilege. Of those nations that have received it.

And it is the revealing of that word. His law, testimonies, commandments. Which is the greatest privilege of all this. As a nation. As a country. As an earthly kingdom we have had.

And we have turned our back upon it. We want our country to be blessed. Obviously we want Scotland to know the blessing of God.

And the smile of heaven. But for that to happen. We must return to the God of our fathers. Who is precious. To us. Not because he was their God.

[36 : 52] All the God of our fathers. And for the sake of the fathers. We go back to our God. No. It's not that we define ourselves. According to our patriotic predecessors. But rather.

We return to the Lord. Because in loving. And serving. And covenanting with him. It's not that he was their God. But they were his. They were his people.

And we define ourselves. Not by our patriotic predecessors. But by our relationship. To this living God. That is the ultimate identity.

Of every Scottish Christian. Or Irish Christian. Or English Christian. Or African Christian. Or American Christian. It is Christ. Who is their identity. And because of loving.

And serving. And covenanting with him. We know ourselves to be his. His mission. His people. Who are blessed. But faithful. They are blessed. This is the greatest need.

[37 : 51] For Scotland. It is the greatest need. For our national day of prayer. Tomorrow. Some people of course. Tomorrow will call it. St. Andrew's Day. Well.

Let them. If they want to do that. Let it be special. The remembrance. Is not of one. Who had any physical connection. With Scotland. For he had none. He never set foot here at all. But let it be special.

In remembrance of one. Who from the very first. From the beginning. Of the gospel accounts. We read. He began to bring people to Jesus. Now that is worth remembering.

That is worth honoring. That is a saint of the Lord. One who seeks to bring people to Jesus. Let's not miss that whole event.

Let's not get caught up nearly. With waving salt pliers. Or whatever. It's great to love our country. But if we really love our country. Then we will want what is greatest. And best of us.

[38 : 48] That will be. The blessing. Of our land. That is a subject worthy. Of a national day of prayer. He had not dealt so. In any nation.

And as for his judgments. They have not known them. Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord. For it is good to sing praises to our God. It is pleasant. And praise. Is comely.

That. Is a reason. Above all. To give thanks. Let us pray. Okay. Thank you. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you.