

Giving Back

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 0 0] I would just like to look for a wee while at this chapter in Deuteronomy, and we'll take the chapter as a whole, which covers quite a bit of different materials, but there's one theme throughout it, really, and that is the centrality of God's provision and our response to that.

And we see that in the course of this chapter that the Lord, having given to his people, that they are required, really, two things in response. One is to give back a portion to him, as is required here, and we see in the opening verses here, but also to give out to those who are in need themselves.

And when that is done, we see that there is blessing and that there is rejoicing through it. We see at the beginning of this chapter then, it shall be when thou art coming unto the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance and possesses it, and well as today, and thou shalt take of the first of the fruit of the earth.

First of all, we see it says, when, this is being given by Moses, once the children of Israel are still in the wilderness. They haven't inherited the promised land yet, they're not there over the Jordan, they're still in the desert.

And yet this is given as a surety, as a certainty, as a statement. It shall be when thou art coming unto the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

[1 : 2 3] It's not if, it's not, well maybe, you know, if you manage really well, and if things go well for you, if you get in there, and this is what you ought to do. It's when, not if. God's promises are certain and sure.

As he spoke creation into being, he spoke and it was so. Let there be light and there was light. God saw the light and it was good. He spoke all the things that were brought into being, all the creatures in the field, all the stars and sons of space.

He spoke them into being. God speaks and it is so. Just by the word of his mouth. If he says something, it happens.

And so we have, when thou art coming to the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee. He's giving it now. It is as though it was already given, it just hasn't been entered into yet.

And this is like the promise the Lord gives us of eternity and of blessing. It is given. He has given it, present tense, but it is yet to be entered into.

[2 : 2 4] That is our state just now. And if God says something, it happens. The Lord thy God giveth thee. He gives, he provides it for you. The Lord thy God giveth thee.

This is the one who loves us. He gives it freely. It's not we ourselves who take it. And notice it also, for an inheritance. Now if something is inherited, then you haven't paid for it, you haven't earned it, you haven't merited it, you have just entered into it because it is an inheritance.

But for you to gain an inheritance, you gain it because you are still alive and somebody else has died. That's how you gain an inheritance. Because they leave it to you.

They give it to you. They bequeath it to you. You inherit it because you live and somebody else has died. And this is like the inheritance the Lord provides for us.

This is pointing forward to it because we live if we are in him. We have life in all its fullness in the Lord because he has died and paid the price for us.

[3 : 30] And it is for an inheritance. And if we stop to think about it, inheritance requires two things. It requires the one inheriting to be alive and the one bequeathing it to have died.

This is why it is the testament, new and old, of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth.

That which the Lord is entitled to is the first and the best of all that we have. Before we do anything else, bring it to the Lord. Before we take anything else for ourselves, take it to the Lord.

We might think, oh no, I can't work with that. We have to have what I need first and then, yeah, if there's any left over, God can get that. God is not asking for our leftovers. He is asking for the first and the best.

That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth which thou shalt bring of the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee and put it in a basket. Thou shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to put his name there.

[4 : 32] That which is first, you bring it and you go to where the Lord will require of you. That is part of being faithful to him. If he requires a particular place for us to serve him, he requires us to be in a particular form of employment or requires us to give him some particular part of our lives, whatever he requires, it's all at his disposal.

And whatever he requires, he says, bring in and go to this place. They don't know yet where that place is going to be. But what's required of them is to say, yes, Lord, whatever you want to place your name, whether it's Shiloh, whether it's Jerusalem, whether it's Gilgal, whatever it should be, you say it, we'll go there.

We'll bring whatever it is, the first, the fruits of the land to you. First, bring, go to whatever the Lord will require of you. Go to where he will choose.

Thou shalt take the first of all the fruit of the earth which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, shall put in a basket, go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there.

And thou shalt go unto the priest that shall be in those days and saith that I profess this day unto the Lord thy God that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware to our fathers to give us.

[5 : 51] in other words, the very fact that the Israelite is there able to save us is proof of God's faithfulness. The fact that we are here in a position to render to the Lord that which he has first given to us to give him the first and the best of our offering of ourselves, our lives, our resources, whatever it may be is proof of his faithfulness hitherto that the Lord helped us.

The very fact that I am here, the very fact the Israelite is living proof of the Lord's goodness to me and faithfulness to his word. This is how the Israelite should see it, that the Lord has kept his word, he has brought him into the land, he has done everything that he said he would and even if we may look back in our lives and think, oh well, there was lots of it that wasn't there, I didn't like that and that suffering that I passed through and I didn't like that difficulty or that problem or those days that were difficult or dark, I remember them with bitterness.

Yes, maybe you do, we all do have such times but through them all the Lord has brought us and here we are this day in his house before him rendering to him not only the sacrifice of praise but the offering of that which he has first given to us.

The very fact that we are here is indicative of the Lord's goodness to us and of his faithfulness to his word. the priest shall take the basket out of thy hand and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God.

The Israelite himself is there, his offering is there, the point is that as it is set before the altar of the Lord it is dedication to the Lord and that is what he asks of us.

[7 : 37] You know, we're going to say, well, how much of my life should I give to the Lord? Well, I'll give him this wee bit, I'll give him that wee bit, well, I'll tide off a bit and give him that. How do you tide off a portion of your life? You can tide off a portion of your income or your resources how do you tide off a portion of your life?

You don't know how long that life is going to be. You don't know what the best of that life is going to be. Well, I can tell you the best of your life will be that portion which is lit in the Lord. The worst days of your life will be those days that are laid out with the Lord, not given to him, not committed to him.

The best will be that in which he is the most involved because the more of the Lord there is, the better your life will be. And so it's not in his interest so much, it's in our interests that the whole of our life be infused with the presence of the Lord and be given over to him.

In verse 5 we see, Thou shalt speak and say before the Lord, I've got a city and ready to perish with my father. He went down into Egypt and it's a reference to Jacob and sojourned there with a few and they came there a nation great and mighty and populous and the Egyptians even entreated us and afflicted us and laid upon us hard bondage.

Our fewness and weakness as a nation the Israelites will acknowledge show the increase to be of God. Jacob went down into Egypt with what, 70 persons plus all the servants and wives and so on and with all his beasts and all his cattle and so on but you know 70 people is not a huge amount.

[9 : 12] It's not something from which you can build a huge nation. The increase was of the Lord. The Lord made them so populous the Lord made them so prosperous and increased them so much that the Egyptians were afraid of them and when they were afraid of them they sought to crush them but the Lord caused them to increase more and more.

It is the very fact of their vulnerability their fewness their weakness their famine stricken helplessness when they went down into Egypt that demonstrates the increase and the blessing to be of the Lord.

Why does the Lord sometimes bring us low? Why does he sometimes crush us down? Why does he sometimes put us through extreme difficulties? It is not so that he can rejoice and dance over our sufferings.

It is so that when we are brought low and we have nowhere else to turn sometimes that is the only way in which some people will ever throw themselves on the mercy of the Lord because it will be their absolute last resort their absolute last extremity.

They will do anything and everything rather than turn to the Lord. It will be the absolute last resort and sometimes he brings us down to that and brought the Israelites perhaps down to that so that at last they might turn to the Lord.

[10 : 36] When, verse 7, we cried unto the Lord one of our fathers the Lord heard our voice. We were few we were weak but he increased us and then when we cried to the Lord in the midst of our suffering then he heard our voice.

Now, we should not assume in verses 7 and 8 there that God has been deaf all these times until we cried to him but rather it means heard in the sense of received and acted upon.

He received our pay he acted upon. There's also the sense in which if you look at it it says the Lord heard our voice and looked in our affliction. Now, it's not that they weren't talking before but the implication is that only in their extremity did they sigh and finally cry out to the God of their fathers.

Now, if you're sitting in a restaurant or if you're in a crowded area and then everybody's talking there's a hubbub of conversation you can hear the fact that everybody's talking and you might hear something that causes you perhaps long later eavesdrop in on somebody else's conversation and you hear what they're talking about and then maybe you're going to drift off somebody else but if somebody then speaks directly to you perhaps says your name you turn around and somebody says your name and then they engage you in conversation then you can't really hear the rest of the hubbub because you're focusing on them they are speaking now to you maybe they were speaking before to somebody else maybe they were part of the general hubbub of conversation but now they're calling you by name now they're speaking to you you weren't deaf before but because it is addressed to you you give it your attention you receive it you act upon it and in a not dissimilar way we might say the Lord conscious of all the hubbub and noise and sighing and crying and difficulty of the children of Israel focuses upon them and gives them their peaceful and undivided attention when they talk to him when they cry to him not when they simply have a moan one to another but when they finally turn their attention to him just as you and I would if somebody seeks us out in a crowd and finally talks to us or addresses their conversation to us perhaps by we give them their attention we turn around we talk to them we focus upon them and all the rest of the conversation pales into the background this same suggestion is not dissimilar to how the Israelites cry out to the Lord or when we in our extremity cry out to the Lord when the Lord heard our voice and looked on our affliction when we cry to the Lord and our labor and our oppression and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand with an outstretched arm with great terribleness and with signs and with wonders now what does this tell us it tells us that even deliverance itself can be scary it is a scary thing can you imagine one of the Israelites were afraid when there was the plague of blood and then the plague of flies and then frogs and then darkness and then the hail and fire and let alone the plague on the first born and all the Egyptians dying it would have been terrifying all these things even if they themselves the ones from which they were spared and remember the Israelites were not spared from all of the plagues in Egypt we don't read that some of them we read that they explicitly were spared from but the implication then is for the rest of them they had to lump it with everybody else so it would have been a terrifying time to live through but the Lord was doing all this in order to bring them out in order to prepare them for his great works of deliverance to imagine it wasn't scary walking through the Red Sea there's massive pile up walls of water on both sides and you would see a fish and everything swimming through it on the other side and outside to the water and thinking this could cave in at any minute this is actually terrifying and it would be freezing cold and it would be damp and they would be they've never done anything like it before in their lives now would they ever do it again it would have been frightening it would have been terrifying and yet the Lord did all this to bring them out deliverance itself can be scary when we see the works of the Lord and how he works and how his providence combines together it is frightening but if deliverance is fearful then when we see the contrast of our deliverance over the destruction of the lost if deliverance is fearful how much more will judgment and wrath be fearful if it is a scary thing the way the Lord delivers his children how much worse

do you think it will be to be the equivalent of an Israelite than an Egyptian not to see the walls of water on both sides scary as you walk through and finally come out the other side but as you're going through in your chariot and you see them closing in over you in that frightening terrifying last few moments what do you think judgment is going to be like it will be in a sense scary for the Lord's children who know that they are safe and delivered through Christ what do you think it's going to be like for the lost if deliverance is frightening judgment lostness will be infinitely worse but there is a sense of awe and fear terribleness even in our deliverance this is not a tame pussycat kind of God that we have this is a mighty God this is a powerful and righteous God and now behold he says I have brought the first fruits of the land which thou

[16 : 31] O Lord has given me and thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God worship before the Lord thy God and thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee and unto thine house thou and the Levite and the Stranger who is among you so yes there were these scary times there were battles and difficulties and bloodshed and terrifying things but here we are in the land the Lord has given us and it is something to be thankful for and something for them to rejoice in the purpose of such giving and dedication to the Lord in the first instance and then are giving outwards to the poor the Levite the stranger because we might ask how can the Levite and the stranger who have no inheritance remember the Levite doesn't have any inheritance in the land the stranger there's a foreigners asylum seekers you might say strangers there who don't have any land don't have any inheritance they are basically the poor of the land with no other means of income how can they rejoice with you well they will rejoice with you in these circumstances

Moses is saying because you who the faithful Israelite will provide for them when you come together to the Lord's house when you bring your dedication and your first fruits and so on and your tithes then you'll make your offering to the Lord and you'll distribute to them as well so that they will be able to rejoice with you and they won't be shamed and they won't feel poor if you have guests at a wedding for example let's say you've got a hundred guests at a wedding now when the guests are sitting down and dressing their wedding best and so on and all with the menu in front of them at the table and all the different tables set and so on it doesn't matter whether they come from a home that is fantastically rich millionaire they are or really quite poor and struggling as guests at the wedding they will be treated each one with exactly the same dignity they will be fed exactly the same menu and food and all the drinks and all the lovely stuff that will be there they will all have it there exactly the same the same dignity the same level of feeding the same quality of all that is provided because it's not about how rich or poor or up or down they may be it is about the hospitality of the host who has invited them they are all equal in his sight they are all precious as his guests they are all fed the same they are all provided for it's not about what they could bring to that wedding it's about what the host will give to his guests and therefore the Levite and the stranger and the poor person can rejoice because you the Israelite will feed them they will provide outwardly for them and this is part of the rejoicing now if somebody were to have such a wedding and all the guests they invited nobody came it might save them a whole lot of money perhaps but the shame and the sorrow is going to be intense because you want people to come it's not that you want to be poor it's not that you want to say oh

I'm really fancy making myself completely empty my bank account to have this huge wedding or whatever the case may be but the fact is when you have it you want people to come you want people to be part of it you want people to sit down and eat and drink and rejoice with you with your family at this time and if that means spending the money feeding them and so on you delight to do it it is part of what you rejoice in and this is part of the coming to the Lord's tabernacle there it is part of the dedicating of what you give to him and the giving out to the poor thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee and unto thine house thou and the Levite and the stranger that is among you the purpose of such occasions is to rejoice now well fine I can rejoice at home I don't need to be spending all this and giving all this out if I stay at home and I've got all this I can rejoice at home no you can hoard and you can keep but that's not the same as joy that's not the same as rejoicing

Deuteronomy 14 we read in verse 22 just read the passage in the early thou shalt truly tithe all the increases of thy seed in the field bringing forth year by year and thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God in the place which you shall choose to place his name there the tithe of thy corn of thy wine of thine oil and the first things of thy herds and of thy flocks that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always and if the way be too long for thee so that thou are not able to carry it or if the place be too far from thee which the Lord thy God shall choose to set his name there when the Lord thy God has blessed thee then thou shalt turn it unto money and bind up the money in thine hand and shalt go the place which the Lord thy God shall choose and thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth out for oxen or for sheep or for wine or for strong drink or for whatsoever thy soul desireth and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God and thou shalt rejoice and thine household and the Levite there is within thy gates and thou shalt not forsake him for he hath no part in an inheritance with thee at the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year and shalt lay it up within thy gates and the Levite because he hath no part in an inheritance with thee and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow which are within thy gates shall come and shall eat and be satisfied that the Lord that the Lord might thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest part of the purpose of coming to the Lord with these things of giving out to others is to rejoice because we don't rejoice when we simply see oh well

I need all for myself because I'm really I'm not went off like other people it's all very well for other people and so on but no I need everything I can get because I don't really have enough of this world because we never think we have enough the billionaire doesn't think he has enough he thinks he's worried about keeping up all the shares in his companies and juggling all the different portfolios and so on the purpose of such tithing and giving and dedication to the Lord and distribution to the poor is to increase our rejoicing we do not rejoice in and of ourselves we may delight in some things that we have but joy the source of joy is the Lord when we take it to the Lord and when we give out to those and the Lord commands us to give out to we sense that joy this is part of our living relationship with the Lord Jesus described in John's account of the gospel he described what he had to offer as living water now if you think about fresh water living water it's that which flows running water we might say have you got a barn going gushing down the outside that's running water if you were camping or hiking you want to fill your water bottle you don't do it from the muddy puddle you do it from the gushing tree you do it from flowing water living water if it is running water how has it come to be in that burn it's come to be in that burn because it has oozed out from all the peat on the hillside and how did it get on the hillside well it fell as rain so it came down from heaven either as rain or as mist or whatever and it soaked into the land and from the land it then hit the rock and then gradually flowed underneath until it came out where the rocky bed the lowest point was and it began to gush together that's what it is it's oozing out from the ground having come down first from heaven and then from the high the high hills it is always flowing downwards

[24 : 33] God's blessings are always flowing downwards they don't flow up in a sense from God they come down from God and they're always flowing down so that every part of society not only kings and presidents and rich men should feel the benefit but it should flow down to all levels of society it's always gushing down bringing life and refreshing wherever it comes if you cut off a stream or dam it up high up the hillside or a river far up the street so that what is below dries up then you'll soon see all the benefit that that water was bringing that you didn't realize about as all the earth dries up and everything dies but when it flows again it brings that life again not just to the high points but all the way down that's what God's blessings are intended to bring now if that fresh water living water is in a loch or a pool of some kind how will we know it's fresh it will be fresh because it will have an inflow there will be burns running into that loch and there will be rivers of birds running out to the bottom end and because that water however still it looks and because that water's inflow and outflow it is moving it is living water there's an inflow at the top there's an outflow at the bottom and because it is both flowing in and flowing out it is fresh water it is living water and if not if it hasn't got an inflow it will dry up and if it hasn't got an outflow it will become stagnant

I don't like the Dead Sea in Palestine you know so absolutely saturated in salt because it's so low down its level it's going to the way it can flow out so it just gets more and more deep salty or if it's in our own country it can become just a stagnant pool a ditch water or whatever just a scum covered pond because it can't flow out anywhere so it has to have both inflow and outflow so the Lord gives us in our relationship with him he gives us inflow because he gives his blessings to us but unless we're going to become stagnant unless we're going to become dead water and scum covered and unhealthy there has to be outflow as well and the Lord requires of us the first outflow is to be dedicated to him that is the first and the best of what we have that's what the tithes are about to be given to him but also we are to give out to those who have not those who are poor those who are in need those who are suffering they may be in our own community if we know them or they may be slightly further removed or they may be those who are just eking out in existence on very little and we can help them or they may be in a totally different country and it may be through some charity or aid organisation we can help them but we are required of the Lord not simply to hoard to ourselves but to give out as well because as we have the inflow from the

Lord so we are to have the outflow as well that is how we have living water that is how we maintain that living relationship if we seek to keep everything to ourselves and say well I have this and I have made it myself it's mine and it belongs to me I don't owe God anything in that sense and if we seek to keep to ourselves the truth is it never feels like enough so we have said for the billionaire he doesn't think he's got enough he doesn't think he's rich he always wants to expand his holdings he always wants more it's never enough no matter how rich we may be if on the other hand we recognise it to be from the Lord then that knowledge gives both joy and the readiness to be generous because it's what we've already been given so we've been given so we can give it out it's meant to be given out it's meant to be joyful as we saw in Deuteronomy 14 when we read from it you know

God gave it for joy he intends it to be a joyful thing Proverbs tells us chapter 10 verse 22 the blessing of the Lord it maketh rich and he addeth no sorrow with it what is it to be rich you might think well I'm not rich I don't have much money it's not about what you've got rich is about how blessed you know you are I've got friends of mine I grew up with who have got far more money than I have but their lives are far more unhappy than mine and it's not because I'm such a great guy or good guy in there or not it's just that for the most part they don't have the Lord they don't have the Lord and so all the things they've got in their lives you can see in their lives it doesn't make them happy it doesn't fulfil them it does not give them joy the joy of the Lord it makes rich and he addeth no sorrow with it our giving out in these ways giving back to the

Lord first of all that portion that he requires and to the proving that's three things first of all it honours the Lord because we obey his commands now if God commands something then we ought to be doing if God were to say in his word more often people would stand on their hands and clap their feet in the air then we might think well why would the Lord want us to do that we might think that but at the end of the day if God says it then that's what we should do but the Lord doesn't want to make fools of us he doesn't want us to be stupid or behave like clowns but at the end of the day we have to acknowledge there will be times when we don't understand why the Lord may require something of us we don't understand why he says this so mad to why he commands this particular thing but at the end of the day all that he commands is good and therefore we all look to him and say well at the end of the day God says it God commands it and I trust him and I love him so I'll do what he commands and doing what he commands honours the Lord by obeying his command if it were possible to glorify God more we can't add glory to him but we can say this by rendering our obedience by making ourselves humble enough to obey him by reducing ourselves we make him greater if I can say that reverently you know how does a king or a general or a queen or somebody who's in high authority how are they glorified they're glorified by the fact that all their servants and their forces and so on do what they say and because they give the word of command and everybody does it and people think wow great that must be power that must be wonderful they are glorified by the obedience of their servants but what happens like for example when people stop doing that some of you may be old enough to remember or some of you will be old enough to remember like for example when the when the Shah of

[31 : 42] Iran fell now he had modern armed forces and it seemed to be a really modern democrat well not democratic but forward looking country and so it seemed to be really taking its place in the modern world and you know up to date jets and armed forces everything was great but it seemed to be great and then things began to fall apart and people stopped obeying the law and the forces stopped obeying their commanders and as the servants of this otherwise absolute monarch began no longer to obey not only did he fall from power but also he became diminished by the fact that his servants no longer obeyed him now God of course cannot fall from his great power and throne in heaven he's not like an earthly monarch or a despot or whatever but nevertheless it is true that we honour the Lord in our obedience to him so that's the first thing it honours the

Lord by being his commands secondly it gives us a witness and makes a statement when we do what the Lord commands because he commands it it makes a statement it is itself a witness and thirdly it blesses others and as a side of that of course it increases our joy but it blesses others it honours the Lord it gives out a witness and it blesses others we can just look at that number two for a minute it gives out a witness it makes a statement if you're to think of an institution or a body any institution or body or event which is seen to be visibly well funded well supplied well resourced you know that's given what what messages are you out well it doesn't make you think wow these people must be really rich because look at all the resources they've got you know think of it even if it's a athletics programme let's say if a country is really serious about its athletics programme then it's going to be sponsoring and investing in gyms and running tracks and trainers and all manners of resources and expert coaches and guidance for its young athletes and that all takes money it all takes investment it all takes resources but if a country is really doing that then the message it gives out is they take their athletics programme really seriously means that they they think this is important they think it's they think it's it's important to be competing with the best in the world and when you turn up at the Olympics or the

Commonwealth Games you don't just shuffle in instead of third last you think oh well it's taking part of the tanks no you want to get the gold on a very reach to sell but you want to be up there with the best because this is important to you you know it's not going to happen on a shoe string you invest in it as you invest in it it begins to reap the sort of rewards that people wanted to a country which extends a significant proportion of its gross domestic product on athletics or say the military if a country that is comparatively poor nevertheless has an extremely well resourced military then you know this is what's important to them this is what they've invested in or education or its health service or the roads or the rail network what you find when these things are really well resourced and funded is the funding and resourcing of these and other such elements the levels of investment or lack of it gives everyone the recognition these things are important to this country or to these people whichever country it is now all resources are finite even government's resources are finite every department wishes they had more to extend and invest in this or that or the next program or whatever it may be everyone's resources are finite government departments are having to fight for their budgets against other departments and so on we think well they've got lots of money and compared to us they do but everybody's resources are finite and why are you poor resources into this or that or the next thing it gives out the message this is important to them this is important to these people to these to this particular country so by extension in terms of what is called the establishment principle which the free church subscribes to which is basically the idea that the country ought not to be is not secular and indifferent to the things of the things of the law a country Scotland is actually meant to be and is legally a Christian kingdom with an established church but if that established church is not resourced as it ought to be if the country is not for example you're building the churches and funding the clergy and maintaining the mansions and so on if the country itself is not doing this then what does that give out to this gives up well these things aren't really important to the nation that is probably true for most people it's not important there are those even Christians saying oh the country shouldn't be shouldn't be supporting a particular church it shouldn't be maintaining a particular religion it should just be completely secular and people should just give up their own givings and of their own efforts and their own offerings well there's merit in that of course but there's no such thing as neutral where spiritual things are concerned where God is concerned a country is not neutral if it is secular it has taken the decision to have nothing to do with the

Lord it has taken the decision not to invest any of its gross domestic product in its relationship with the Lord as Phil Dr. Alistair Campbell as many of you probably know many years ago said famously we don't do God now that is true for the country as a whole how's that working out here what state is the country in now what state is the country in now compared to when it did do God what state is the country compared to time when the king used to call for national days of prayer in times of national crisis and during the war what state is the country in compared to when there was what was called Queen Anne's Bounty when in the 18th century they funded missionaries and schools and churches throughout the country what state is the country in today compared to the fact of what used to be called the parliamentary churches the so-called chapels of ease that were built in remote areas of the highlands and islands and other places what was the motivation for doing that the motivation for doing that was an act of national thanksgiving to God for deliverance and victory in the Napoleonic wars that was when the country did God that was when the country recognized and resourced and invested in its relationship with the Lord and what kind of state was

Britain in then what kind of state was Scotland in then what was our status in the world what was our economy like what was that was it increasing was it booming or was it contracting well we're a better state or worse some things are better technology is better our welfare state is better but an awful lot of things are an awful lot worse for a country that does do God what are the things the Lord says will happen verse 16 we read on this day the Lord thy God has commanded me to do these statutes and judgments thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thy heart with all thy soul that was about the Lord this day to be by God and to walk in his ways and to keep his statutes and his commandments and his judgments and to hearken unto his voice and the Lord and the voucher this day to be this peculiar that means special people as he had promised thee and that thou should keep all his commandments and to make thee the nation high above all nations which he had made in praise and in name and in honour and that thou mayest be a holy people unto the Lord thy God as he had spoken that is a nation which does do God now if the country will not do it then we have to hope trust that at least the

[40 : 17] Lord's own people will do it at least the Lord's own people will prioritize him and put him first and this we do by dedicating and devoting all of our life to him it is all of the Lord what we have received it is all due to him it honours him it is a goodness and a stillhood and it is a blessing to others may the Lord bless to us these few thoughts so this holding on to the Lord and that the Lord is the Lord is to do all of misery and that the Lord is telling them the Lord is true to all of these things so to save the Lord for to speak for thou with us so this may be true and if that's not any of you may want to ask where he has come so fazem things so proud of him.

Tell them that circumstance this plan is there about the Lord maybro he has come on and our will get to ask for gemeins■vests to their WHO with their family in ■■■ers and to catch that they give you about worse and we do a lament?

your motherboard is the first