

Psalm 48:14

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[0 : 0 0] Now as we look at this Psalm 48, I want us to think obviously when it comes to conclusion at verse 14 particularly, This God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

But of course every text has a context and the context of this particular verse is the Psalm which is ostensibly, on the surface of it, it is praising the virtues of Zion.

The holy city of God. But in reality it's not so much about the city as about the God who dwells there or the God who makes his symbolic presence there in the midst of his people.

This is a Psalm which as we say on the surface is written in praise of Zion but it is really not possible to praise up that which is of God without giving due praise to the Lord himself.

Since that's ultimately what Zion is all about. That's the reason Zion is holy. It's the reason Jerusalem is a special place on the earth because of its association with the living God.

[1 : 1 2] The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And that is what makes it special is the God who has visited men and dwelt there albeit symbolically but made his presence especially known there for that period of time.

And so it has these connotations ultimately of the Lord. It's about him really rather than about the city itself. And as we see this Psalm is talked and tailed it begins and ends not so much about the city but about the Lord.

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God. This God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

So it begins and ends with the Lord. Zion is great only because the Lord is in the midst of our God. Great is the Lord greatly to be praised in the city of God.

As we read for example in the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 2 verses 2 and 3. It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow unto it.

[2 : 2 6] And many people shall go and say come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths.

But out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. That is what makes Jerusalem, Zion holy is the fact the Lord dwells. If you were to look at say on a map or if you could visit Jerusalem itself, it is surrounded by hills some of which are considerably higher than Mount Zion itself or even than the Temple Mount.

It's not that it is physically the highest of Mount Everest amongst other lesser hills. But rather what makes it as it were its spiritual height, its spiritual elevation is the fact that the Lord causes his name to dwell there.

Beautiful for situation. And the word translated as situation is literally elevation, the lofty height. The lofty height again is not physical, it is the presence of the Lord that gives it that height or not.

The joy of the whole earth is, man, son, on the sides of the north. Again, north is taken as being, you know, metaphorically the height of the four points of the compass.

[3 : 47] And even in terms of how we think ourselves, you know, you think of the compass, you know, north, south, you know, east, west, or it'd be reversed because you were looking at me, obviously. But still, north is the top.

We think of north as going uphill. We think of south as going downhill. Partly because of what we know about our globe. They didn't know about the globe then except what the Lord revealed to them.

The north is taken as being the pinnacle, as being the height, as it were, the metaphorical height in these terms. On the sides of the north, the city of the great king.

God is known in her palaces for a refuge. And it is because God is known for a refuge. That is the reason why the four, in verse 4, the kings were assembled.

They passed by together. They saw it. They marveled. They were troubled. They hasted away. Why did they haste away? Not because they thought, oh, what a fantastic city. Look at how tall it is. Look at how well built it is.

[4 : 45] It is the sense of the Lord's presence being there. Many times over the course of the Old Testament history, Jerusalem was attacked. Many times it was delivered because of God's intervention.

Only twice in its history was it completely overthrown. Once by the Babylonians. Once by the Romans. But at the end of the day, it resisted many attacks because of the Lord's presence and protection.

One such instance we find in 2 Chronicles. In chapter 20. Where King Jehoshaphat, having been threatened by his enemies, went out to meet them. And found that the Lord had already gone away ahead of him.

And fought the battle for him. And then he returned. This is verse 27 of 2 Chronicles 20. Every man of Judah and Jerusalem and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them. To go again to Jerusalem with joy.

For the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the Lord. And the fear of God was in all the kingdoms of those countries.

[5 : 51] When they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel. They weren't especially afraid of Jerusalem the city. But they are afraid of the Lord who fights their battles for them.

It is not Zion which causes this international dread of attacking Jerusalem. Or a kingdom which was based there. But it is the fear of the Lord which came upon these nations.

God is known in her palaces for a refuge. For though the kings were assembled. They passed by together. They sighed and so they marveled. They were troubled and hissed away.

Fear took hold upon them. There and pain as of a woman in Trevea. Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind. Neither the devil nor his pagan minions here upon earth have any fear of a physical or geographical mountain or city or even temple.

Nor do they fear their fellow kings or armies or military might. But they are afraid of the Lord. 2 Chronicles 20, 29. A fear of God was in all the kingdoms of those countries.

[7 : 04] When they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel. So this psalm ostensibly as we say about Zion. Not only begins and ends with the Lord himself.

But he is also in the very heart of it. In the very midst of it. We see that in the Bibles in front of us. It has 14 verses. But in the original Hebrew of course the title of a psalm. If there was one.

Counted as verse 1. So a song and psalm for the sons of Korah would be verse 1. So that would mean that there would actually be 15 verses in this particular psalm.

And of the 15 of course you have 7 on either side. One in the middle. And the one in the middle is verse 8. As we have heard. So have we seen. In the city of the Lord of hosts.

In the city of our God. God will establish it forever. And it is knitting together both the city itself. And the God who dwells there. But it also links in with the following verses.

[8 : 02] 9 and 10. We have thought of thy loving kindness. O God. In the midst of thy temple. According to thy name. O God. So is thy praise unto the ends of the earth.

Thy right hand is full of righteousness. So here we have. The city. The temple. The ends of the earth. God in and through it all. You see the thing here.

If we were to make this into our modern everyday context. We might say. Well the church. The house of God. The body of Christ. The presence of God. Yes.

Yes. And yes. That's all true. But unless we have this living relationship with the Lord. Unless the glory is God in the midst of her. Then it's all just you know.

Wood and stone and glass and bricks and mortar. And it's all just sort of an institution. Which yes. People belong to. Which maybe the world can't completely ignore. But it is just a dead kind of club.

[8 : 58] Unless the Lord is in the midst of it. Unless the Lord is in the midst of her. And this is what the psalm is praising up. That the presence of God is there.

But also. What this verse 8 of the very heart of the psalm is testifying to. Notice this. As we have heard. So have we seen.

In the city of the Lord hosts. In the city of our God. In other words. There is a divine consistency. It stresses the consistency of what is heard.

With what is actually experienced. I'll say that again. The consistency of what is heard. With what is actually experienced. God is true. True to his word.

And to the report. The witness. The testimony. Of his working. It's not a case of. Oh well we heard this. This and this about the Lord. Oh I can't believe that's true.

[9 : 54] No right enough. It's not true after all. It is true. What we hear of the Lord. We don't hear the half of it. Like you know. Like the Queen of Sheba said about Solomon. When she came to visit him. 1st Kings 10.

At verse 6. She said to the king. It was a true report. That I heard in my own land. Of thy acts. And of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words. Until I came.

And mine eyes had seen it. And behold. The half was not told thee. Thy wisdom and prosperity. Exceeded the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men.

Happy are these thy servants. Which stand continually before thee. And that hear thy wisdom. Not only was it true. But not only was it not exaggerated.

It was in anything. It was understated. It was diminished. Compared to what the reality is. But if any will come and see for themselves.

[10 : 52] Just as you know. When the disciples said to Jesus. At the very outset. You know. Rabbi. What are you saying? They said. Come and see. You know. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Come and see.

If any will come and see. As the Queen of Sheba did for Solomon. And behold. A greater than Solomon is here. Then they will experience for themselves. Not only.

That not. Has the truth been exaggerated. But that the half has not been told. And this is the consistency of the divine witness. As we have heard.

So have we seen. In the city of the Lord of hosts. In the city of our God. God will establish it forever. And we see this. Of course. We think it also. This same.

Consistency of the divine witness. In the New Testament. John 4. For example. With the woman at the well of Samaria. We read. Many of the Samaritans of that city. Believe in him. For the saying of the woman.

[11 : 50] Which testified. He told me all that ever I did. So when they were come unto him. They besought him. That he would tarry with him. And he would hold there two days. And many more believed.

Because of his own word. And said unto the woman. Now we believe. Not because of thy saying. Or rather not merely because of thy saying. For we have heard him ourselves.

And know that this is indeed the Christ. The saving of the world. We have heard him ourselves. First of all. It was the saying of the woman.

Which reported it to her fellow townsmen. And so on. And yes. They believed because of what she said. But then they encountered Christ. For themselves. And they said. Well now. We don't just believe because of what you said.

But we believe. Because we have heard him ourselves. We have experienced ourselves. What he is like. And so likewise. As we read. You know. In Romans 10. Verse 17.

[12 : 47] Faith cometh by hearing. And hearing by the word of God. Notice that with the Samaritans there. In John 4. There wasn't any great big miracles.

Or lightning striking from heaven. There wasn't any earthquakes. And wind and fire. There wasn't any sort of big Damascus road experience. They just encountered Christ.

And they heard his words. And they found that what the woman had testified. Was entirely true. And they found it to be even more foolish. So faith cometh by healing.

And healing by the word of God. If you're waiting for the great big spectacular miracles to happen. You're going to have a long wait. Jesus said himself. You know. Awaken and adulterous generation.

Seek it after a sign. No sign is going to be given it. If you're wanting spectacular spiritual fireworks. You're not going to get them. Because the Lord has made sufficiently clear.

[13 : 44] To all who will receive it. The truth of his word. He has made himself known. And the task. And if you like. The opportunity. The invitation before us.

Is to believe. Or not believe. Put your trust in him. Or don't. As the case may be. You're not going to be entertained. With a sort of spiritual firework display.

The Lord is there. The Lord makes himself known. Faith cometh by healing. And healing by the word of God. And earlier on in that same chapter. Verses 9 and 10. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth.

The Lord Jesus. And shalt believe in thine heart. That God hath raised him from the dead. Thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

And with the mouth confession is made. Unto salvation. It doesn't say. Once you get your bright light from heaven. Once you see the flashing lights. And hear the clanging bells. And the angels singing.

[14 : 42] Like they did to the shepherds. And so on. Then faith enough. You can believe. No. Faith cometh by healing. And hearing by the word of God. There's no account of miracles taking place.

At the well of Samaria. There's just Jesus. Encountering the word. And she tells the others. And they come. And they encounter Christ. And they then believe for themselves.

But first they respond. They respond to the word. And to the statements of one who has already met Christ. And we all know of people who have already met Christ.

Even if we are not testifying believers ourselves. We know those who have. Do we believe what they are saying is true? And probably we're not going to say. Well I think they're lying.

What we'll get out of it by saying. Well we think it's true for them. But you know. That doesn't actually mean it's going to work for me. That doesn't mean it's actually going to be true for me. Come and see.

[15 : 38] It's what Jesus would say. Come to the Lord. Come to the water. O everyone that thirsteth. As Isaiah says 55. Come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money. Come ye buy and eat.

Yea come buy wine and milk. Without money and without price. Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread. And your labor for that which satisfieth not.

Hearken unto me. And ye shall live. Eat ye that which is good. And your soul shall live. Feed on the good food of God's word. On what he teaches.

What he reveals. For with the hope. So faith cometh by healing. And healing by the word of God. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Those spectacular fireworks there at the Wilsom area. And so rarely do we see signs and wonders actually declared or revealed in scriptures.

[16 : 37] We've said many times in the past. We tend to think of the Bible times as sort of you know miracles happening all the time. Right, left and centre. Signs and wonders all the time.

That's what made that age so different from this age when it just doesn't happen. The Bible covers a period of thousands of years. Something like 4,000 years is covered in Bible history alone.

Now from the times of way back in creation. Right through to the times of Christ and the apostles. There are really only three stages.

As we've mentioned often in the past. When we see signs and wonders used on a major scale. And these are the Exodus and the Conquest. In other words, Moses and Joshua.

And then a little later on. A few centuries later on. You've got the prophets Elijah and Elisha. Both of whom were visited with signs and wonders and so on. And used signs and wonders in their ministry.

[17 : 38] And then you've got Christ and the apostles. In all the centuries in between. Where you've got the battles and kings and David and Samuel and Saul. And the judges and so on.

You don't really go much in the way of spectacular miracles. You get great military results. Gideon and so on. Yes, angels making appearances to people.

But these are written down. Who knows what personal private appearances people may get nowadays. Or words from the Lord. But they don't write it down. It doesn't go into scripture and add it.

But the Lord has not left his people. There's only those three periods really. As we say. Moses and Joshua. The Exodus and the Conquest.

And then you've got Elijah and Elisha. Then you've got Christ and the apostles. All the other centuries. Of Bible history. It's just ordinary believers doing their best. Trusting in the Lord.

[18 : 33] And what he has revealed. Putting their faith in God. That's what we are called upon to do. And if we will come and put our trust in the Lord. We will find like the Queen of Sheba. With a lesser than Christ.

Who is a greater than Solomon. The half of it was not told me. So we have this at the very heart of the psalm. As we have heard. So have we seen.

In the city of the Lord of hosts. There is this divine consistency. Of the witness. In the city of our God. For God will establish it. Forever.

We have thought of thy loving kindness. Who have dwelt upon it. In the midst of thy temple. Or in the company of the Lord's people. According to thy name. O God. So is thy praise unto the ends of the earth.

Let man's eye and rejoice. Let the daughters of Judah be glad. Because of thy judgments. Now when it says the daughters of Judah. That could just be a poetic reference to the people. Themselves. As opposed to the priests and the kings.

[19 : 28] And the major rulers. Or it could be a reference to the lesser townships of Judah. Not Jerusalem. The metropolis. But the daughters of Jerusalem. Being the lesser towns of Judah.

Perhaps. We don't know entirely. But if we move on to the conclusion. Of this psalm. Verses 12 to 14. Walk about Zion. And go round about her.

Tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks. Consider her palaces. That ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

And although it's not stated explicitly in these verses. There is in fact a contrast. There is a contrast here. Between verses 12 and 13. Zion itself.

Its bulwarks. Its palaces. Its towers. And God. Since God himself is our God forever and ever. And Zion in its earthly sense is not.

[20 : 25] Zion is temporal. Zion will not last. And we have this clearly. You know. Mark chapter 13. Verses 1 and 2. Where as he went out of the temple. One of his disciples said unto him.

Master. See what manner of stones. And what buildings are here. And Jesus answering said unto him. Seest thou these great buildings. There shall not be left one stone upon another.

That shall not be thrown down. That temple. Herod's temple. Was if anything. Even more spectacular perhaps than Solomon's. We don't know exactly.

The dimensions. Or the furnishings. And so on. But Solomon's temple was fantastic. It was brilliant. Exceeding magnificence. As he himself described it.

But that of course was destroyed. And then in the days of Nehemiah. It was rebuilt. But it was kind of like. Almost like a poor. Poor relation. Compared to Solomon's original temples.

[21 : 20] And that was the second temple. And then that second temple. Was itself rebuilt by Herod. So the ones that wouldn't last. Even in Solomon's day. God will still last.

He will still be the guy. When that temple is destroyed. The temple is rebuilt. Under Nehemiah. The temple is then restored. And rebuilt even more spectacularly. By Herod. And that too is totally destroyed.

But God is never destroyed. Mark ye well her bulwarks. Consider her palaces. Tell it to the generation following. Yes what kind of temple this was. But the temple will not last.

Jerusalem will not last. Even those who may be privileged. To go to physical Jerusalem. To say oh the walls of Jerusalem. The walls of Jerusalem. Are not what were there in Jesus' day.

The walls that you see nowadays. Were built by the Turkish invaders. In the 1500s. The temple mount now has a mosque on it. It is not now honoring to the Lord.

[22 : 20] The way once it may have been. It is not buildings and structures. Which will last. But it is this God. Who is our God forever.

And ever. The contrast in these closing verses. Between temporal Zion. Which will crumble to dust. And the living God.

Who goes on forever and ever. In one sense. It is a very stark contrast. But here we have this concluding verse. Then. Even unto death.

And now. It says even unto death. Because although the even is in italics. That means it's not. It's not in the original. So. He will be our guide unto death.

The word translated unto death. There's various different ways that commentators. Have. Have chosen to understand that. Over. Or you know. Above. Or whatever.

[23 : 13] We'll come to that in just a wee minute. But. Remember if he's our guide. Even unto death. That doesn't just mean. Okay. He's our guide. At the time of death. But the rest of the time. You're on your own. That is not how God.

What. It is not how he works in the life of his patriarchs. Of Abraham. And Isaac. And Jacob. And of the apostles. And of the prophets. Rather. We read of a God. Who is involved in their lives.

Through every stage of them. Where they are serving him. And cooperating with him. Think about an ordinary life. Here in this world now. You know. Through all of life.

We have need of the Lord. We think of its different stages. There was in childhood. You know. When we're old. We look back on our childhood. With sort of rose tinted spectacles.

And we think of it. It was all the life was so much simpler man. And wasn't it nice. Just having all the comfort of your mum. And your dad. And little simple pleasures. And toys. And things. You didn't have all the worries.

[24 : 09] It had grown up. No. But. Childhood. Had its many fears. And uncertainties. There were all sorts of things. That worried us. Or frightened us. And that we were afraid of.

We were afraid of the wrath of our parents. Perhaps. And we did something naughty. Either deliberately. Or not knowingly. Or whatever. We were afraid. Perhaps of the dark. That we're talking with the children.

Afraid of bigger kids at school. That might perhaps be bad to us. Or foolish. We were afraid of tests. Or exams that might come. We were afraid of some grown ups. Who might not be nice.

But there's lots of things. That are wrong. And worrying. In childhood. If you get illnesses. If you get sick. If you're separated from your mum and daddy. You get lost in a big city.

There's all sorts of things. That trouble childhood. It can be quite a frightening time. As well as a time with great. Yes. Innocence.

[25 : 03] And joy too. And then there's youth. And adolescence. So we're not a little child anymore. But we're not quite a man or a woman. That awkward stage.

When you're doing your sort of growing spurt. And maybe you're just becoming conscious of the opposite sex. And that's when you're most geeky. Or when you start getting spots. Or whatever it might be. Most awkward.

And socially difficult. It's not an easy time. That youthful time. Teenage years. And so on. It's awkward. It's difficult. If little children need the Lord.

They need to know that God is there. That Jesus is there with them. That's one reason why. You know. When I was a wee boy growing up in the parish church. Of course. I mean. We had a lot of children's hymns.

Which people used to slate. And say. Go. Little Children's.

[26 : 01] God is always near me. Hearing what I say. Knowing all my thoughts and deeds. All my work and play. Jesus, friend of little children. Be a friend to me. Take my hand and ever keep me close to thee.

The knowledge that Jesus is there. That he loves little children. Jesus loves also youths and adolescents. He is there for them. the fact of having Christ in our lives, the Lord in our lives in childhood and in youth how could we ever get through without him?

so many people do they struggle on and they face all the problems of the world without the Lord and it must be a bleak and barren place without the Lord but then you think of adulthood and then you think of the struggles of work or employment or lack of employment or study and exams or the struggle to earn enough to get by for one thing is certain no matter how well paid your job might be or how high you might rise in your profession whatever you earn, whatever you make it will rarely if ever seem like it's quite enough it'll never seem like it's too much it'll always seem like it's a struggle to get by, use it too, not enough hours in the day, not enough time with your family, not enough time to be able to have quality time with your employees or with the boss or whatever it might be you'd like to do more in your work but you can't because you can't fit it in because you're juggling so many things at once it's a struggle ongoing struggle how much we need the Lord in our adult life in our work life in our domestic life before even you get into the complications of marriage or family or children my goodness you need the Lord every single step of the way and that's before we even think in terms of decay and old age and illness and helplessness and having to have other people look after you and then the ultimate unknown this God is our God forever and ever he will be our guides childhood adolescence adulthood maturity old age work life home life difficulties problems relationships this is a God we need throughout life throughout every stage and this is what he offers to do and this is what he promises to be he will be our guide through it all even even unto death ultimately death too holds no fears for him he has conquered it and you and I we need someone who has done this before who's been there before us who has been through it and gone ahead before if you're going to a strange place let's say you're going to a city or a town you've never been to then and you know you're going to be staying with somebody or going to a particular meeting or whatever what's a very helpful thing a very helpful thing if somebody meets you at the airport or at the station or whatever it happens to be they meet you and then they say right okay we'll go in my car and you just go to where their car is they drive you through all these unfamiliar streets or they take you to where the bus goes or the train or whatever it is they take you through the streets they take you to the house or they take you to the meeting place because they are your guide they are there for you they meet you at your point of need they take you through all the journey they take you to where you need to go they look after you they are your guide and thank goodness they are there because otherwise you would struggle maybe you could get through some of these stages but one thing you can never get through by yourself and that is the last stage and that is death we need someone who's gone before us someone who is familiar with it because they've passed through it someone who has experienced it and come out the other side who has conquered it who has gone ahead who has taken countless millions through this gate and neither to himself for the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death that's what 1 Corinthians tells us in chapter 58 and this last enemy this ultimate unknown it holds no fears for the Lord you know what do we read in Psalm 139 verse 8 if I ascend up into heaven thou art there if I make my bed in hell behold thou art there if I take the wings of the morning

and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me if I say surely the darkness shall cover me even that the night shall be light about me yea the darkness hideth not from thee but the night shineth as the day the darkness and the light are both alike to thee yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me thy rod and thy staff they comfort me now if we have the Lord we don't even need to fear this last enemy now as we mentioned a little while ago this word unto death there are some translators or commentators who take it this word as really meaning not so much unto but over over death he will be our guide even over death and the sense of over is as in over the finished line or over the Jordan into the promised land that's the sense of over death but if you think in terms of the word over can also mean above you know an overseer is somebody who's above watching over what you do superintendents sort of thing or a plane or a drone might fly over a particular area of land because it is above it is above so some people translate it even above death in other words he will set us above the reach of death so it shall not be able to do us any real hurt its power is broken because we are far above it he will set us even over death even above death others translate this word beyond death as a guide he will conduct us safely to our happiness on the other side to a life in which there will be no more death he will guide us even beyond death you see this is why you need to guide someone who has been there before someone who didn't take you through someone who didn't take you through someone who didn't is completely familiar and who holds no fears at all because they've already conquered it the darkness and the light are both aligned to them if we have the Lord we don't even have to fear this last great unknown we don't even have to fear this last enemy he will be our guide even unto death which is the final reckoning for every soul whether they acknowledge the Lord or not even those who spend their life denying him even those who will try to turn or their friends will try to turn their very funeral into a celebration of all that their life was and made out everybody so happy everybody so contented nobody's really feeling lost except a little tear here and there but it's all just a big celebration of all that they were and not a thought of eternity and not a thought of the God whom they will have spent most of their life denying these parties that pass for funerals in some places and especially with celebrities they are the ultimate tragedy death is the thing that we cannot escape at all unless the Lord comes back first and even then we will still have to face him there is no escaping our standing before the judgment seat of

Christ what the Lord offers us is not a way to sort of put it off indefinitely an election of youth of everlasting youth but rather to face the reality God is not a God of sticking your head in the sand and hoping it will go away he's not a God of just putting on a smiley face and pretending everything's alright like it's not going to happen God is not a God of falsehood or of faking it God is a God of reality and the reality of death faces us all but God says you don't have to be afraid of it when it comes I will be with you in it I will guide you through it I will take you over it above it safely to the other side beyond it if we will have this God as our God this God is our God forever and ever Jerusalem may crumble to dust the bulwarks and the towers may be thrown down as Jesus said they would be and they were but God is not thrown down he is never ending he never fails he never changes he is the same yesterday today and forever and just as we must face the last enemy and the last unknown

[35 : 09] God would not have us to face it alone or without him if ever we needed the Lord through all the previous stages of our life in childhood and adolescence and adulthood and we do there is not a single stage in our life where we don't need the Lord how much more do we need him as we pass from this life this is good news he will be our guide even unto death if we will take the Lord for our God he will conduct and convey us safely even unto death even above death even over death through death beyond death down into death and up again to glory this is his promise this is the truth this is good news for this God is our God forever and ever he will be our guide even unto death thanks