

Chosen from the Beginning to Salvation

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Date: 11 May 2023

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[0 : 00] Let us sing to God's praise from Psalm 89. Psalm 89 at verse 13.

Verse 13. Thou hast an arm that's full of power. Thy hand is great in might, and thy right hand exceedingly exalted is in height.

The justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place. Mercy accompanied with truth shall go before thy face. O greatly blessed the people are, the joyful sound that know in brightness of thy face, O Lord, they ever on shall go.

They in thy name shall all the day rejoice exceedingly, and in thy righteousness shall they exalted be on high, because the glory of their strength doth only stand in thee, and in thy favour shall our horn and power exalted be.

For God is our defence, and he to us doth safety bring. The Holy One of Israel is our almighty King. And so on.

[1 : 17] Let's sing these verses. Psalm 89 from verse 13. Thou hast an arm that's full of power. Thy hand is great in might. Thou hast an arm that's full of power.

Thy hand is great in might. And thy right hand exceedingly exalted in height.

Justice and judgment of thy throne O'er the Lord shall go before thy face.

Mercy accompanied with earth shall go near o'er thy face.

O greatly blessed people The joyful sound that know In brightness of thy face, O Lord, they ever not shall go.

[3 : 02] They in thy name shall all the day Rejoice exceedingly And in thy righteousness And in thy righteousness Shall they exalted be on high Because the glory of their strength Thou hast only stand in thee And in thy faith Thou hast only stand in thee And in thy faith Thou hast only stand in thee

For God is our defense For God is our defense And he to us Thou hast safety bring The Holy One of Israel Israel is our almighty King I'd like us to turn for a short while To the passage that we read together The second epistle of Paul To the Thessalonians chapter 2 And we read at verse 13 But we are bound to give thanks All the way to God for you

Brethren, beloved of the Lord Because God hath from the beginning Chosen you to salvation Through sanctification of the Spirit And belief of the truth Whereunto he called you By our gospel To the obtaining of the glory Of our Lord Jesus Christ The chapter in which these words are found Is a passage of the New Testament That is not easily understood Because it is variously interpreted Because it speaks of opposition To God and his word Focused in our passion

Or power Or office That many have disputed And Nevertheless The words of the text That we're looking at Add To be considered in contrast With all that is said About That passion The man of sin The wickedness That is passionified In this passion Some believe To be the equivalent Of What we find in The epistle of John Where the same spirit And malevolence Is centered In one passion As well But

Although the contrast is there and the contrast must be noted nevertheless what is emphasized by the apostle at this point is the true blessed privilege that belongs to the child of God who is in this world kept by the power of God awaiting the great day where God in Christ will reveal his glory and bring his own to experience that glory for themselves I want us just to think for a while of some of the things that we are elected to in the two verses that we have chosen for this evening's service I want us to

[8:11] Begin with what Paul describes as what you would call an obligation we are bound he says to give thanks always to God for you then there is secondly an identification he speaks of them as brethren beloved of the Lord he identifies with them as a brother and he knows that they are the focus of God's love thirdly we find them there speaking about the election that they have experienced but only

by reason of God's doing in eternity before the world was it was their experience because they are the focus of the election of God and yet it is not until they experience the calling of God in the gospel that that experience of election comes to light the election of God we are told is something that God has from the beginning carried out he has chosen you to salvation that election is not described election in these words but it is understood and has to be understood in that sense because God's choice is a choice

that is electing and you can understand that from the consequences of God's choice it is repeatedly throughout the epistles and indeed in the Old Testament also reference is made to God's electing some to everlasting life before the world was but we'll say a word about these two things the electing of God before the world was and the call of God within the world because both are spoken of and thirdly and fourthly and fifthly I suppose there are two things that are spoken of God God has chosen you to salvation through

sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth the means by which this is secured and the purpose for which it is secured to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ sometimes as preachers we need to remind ourselves that just because something is obvious to you it is not necessarily obvious to everybody else and it's always a danger to imagine that you have the same starting point as everybody else even though the truth might be that they may be far in advance of the position

that you are starting off from but what we can say and I suppose it is a simple truth and a simple statement of fact that there is an obligation placed upon every believer not just the apostle who is a believer himself to give thanks to God frequently the apostle speaks of his own thankfulness but he also reminds those to whom he is addressing his epistles of the same requirement to be thankful to God just limiting ourselves to his epistles to the Thessalonians you can see how he begins the first epistle we give thanks to God always for you all making

[13:14] mention of you in our prayers this thanksgiving is stimulated by the experience of encountering believers those who are willing to believe the gospel those who are persuaded to believe the truth that the gospel sets before them in the second chapter again of the first epistle for this cause also thank we God without ceasing because when you received the word of God which he heard of us you received it not as the word of men but as it is in truth the word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe and again just to complete the examples from this epistles to the Thessalonians the beginning of

this second epistle you find him again we are bound to thank God always for you brethren as it is meet because that your faith groweth exceedingly and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure now it's I suppose you could say there's a broad spectrum of reason given for thankfulness or gratitude to God and we do not need to be exceptionally experienced in the ultimate of God's doing in order to

Be Persuaded To Thanksgiving We Often Remind Ourselves Of It At Particular Times In The Calendar When Thanksgiving Is The Order Of The Day But It Is Not Simply An Occurrence That Should Be That Is The Odd Occasion That Stimulates Thanksgiving Within Our Heart The Christian Whoever The Christian Is Should Not Neglect Being Thankful To God And They Should Not Be Remiss In Doing That Very Thing And Finding Reason For It If They Do Not Readily Have It Spring To Mind Because Every Day We Open Our Eyes On Mercy's Ground We Can And Ought To Find Reason For Thankfulness

We Should Readily Be Grateful And It Is Something That We Should Remind Ourselves Of For The Simple Reason That For The Christian Thankfulness Is A Sign Of The Work Of God's Spirit In God's Spirit In Them It Is It Is Something That Speaks To Us Of The Spirit Of God Stimulating That Spirit Within Us Where Our Thanksgiving Is Directed To God In Fact if You're Familiar With Puritan Theology They Would Argue That True Thankfulness Is Not A Natural Virtue It Is A Gift A Fruit Of The

Spirit So That The Christian When They Demonstrate Their Thankfulness Before God By Opening Their Mouth And Praising The Lord For Whatever Reason He Has Given To Them To Do That However Many They May Be And How Ever Different They May Be That Is A Stimulus Given To Them By The Spirit Of God In Them That Helps Them Achieve That End Which Is A Christian Activity When We Look At The Following Description Surely It Follows That We Are Obligated To Do So And Paul Sees Himself When You Would Think You Know When You Read Much Of What Paul Has To Say Sometimes You May Glance At It And Skirt Over

[18:16] It Without Giving It A Second Thought But The Very Fact That He Says Here We Are Bound To Give Thanks All Way To God For You Because He Is Addressing His Epistle To Christian Believers In Thessalonica And He Recognizes Their Existence And He Recognizes The Fact That It Is God That Took Them Into Existence That Brought Them Into Existence As Christians That This Is The Work Of God That They Would Not And Could Not Exist Without God's Intervention In Their Lives Which Adds To His Thankfulness Because He Is Able To Speak Of Them As Brethren Beloved Of The Lord It's A Two Pronged Attack If You Like A Two Pronged Process Of Thankfulness Where

He Is United To Them By The Same Faith That They Possess He Loves Them They Love Him And God's Love In Them Is Something That God Has Brought To Light In Their Experience And I Wonder You Know You Might Think That That Is Something Trivial And Not Worth Really Referring To But Paul Clearly Sees It As Important We Are Bound To Give Thanks Always For You For You Brethren For You Sisters Those That We Have Come To Know In The Lord The Very Presence Within The Circumference Of Our Experiences God's Doing And It Is A Wonderful And A Blessed Experience To Share Our

Experiences Of Christ With Them And Them With Us And It's Not Something We Could Think Of As Something That Is Of No Consequence He Identifies With Them He Knows Them To Be Loved By God As He Himself Is Loved By God There Are Some People In The World And Perhaps You Know Them Or Maybe You Know Them They're Not Happy With Their Lot Whatever Their Lot Is Doesn't Matter What It Is They've Always Got Some Gripe Some Grievance Something That Is That Others Have That They Don't And They Envy And They Think Well They're Not Deserving All These Things Whereas I Am They Spirit Of Thankful This Spirit Is Not Something That

They Possess Whereas When You Recognize And When You Realize That All That You Have Is The Lord's Provision For You Whatever It May Be Whatever Your Circumstances Then You Have Grounds Before God To Offer Praise And Thanksgiving To Him It's All Down To The Way We Think Is It Not It's All Down To The Way We Work Out Our Christian Lives How We Approach What's Happening In Our Life And I Was Reflecting On This I Was Thinking Of How Different Some People Are To Myself And I Mean That In A Positive Sense In That Just For Example I Know Of Someone Who

At The Beginning Of His Christian Journey He Was Struggling To Come To Terms With His Own Miserable Condition He Had Not Come To Faith And He Was Not Content With Where He Was And What He Was And He Was Travelling By Train From Aberdeen To Inverness And There Was Another Person Travelling On The Same Train Who Was A Christian And This Woman Of Many Years Christian Experience Had Prayed To God Before She Left Her Home That Day That God In His Goodness Would Put Somebody Into Her Path That She Would Be Able To Speak To

[23 : 18] And In Her Own Mind She Was Thinking Of Another Christian That She Would Be Able To Discourse With In The Journey From Aberdeen To Inverness But In The Providence Of God These Two People Were Brought Together And Both Confessed At The End Of Their Journey That The Usual Two And A Half Duration Had Passed Like A Flash Because They Were Were Able To Speak And The Woman More Than Anything Was Able To Speak Into This Passion's Desperate Need And Probably She Will Never Know This Side Of Eternity The Good That She Did On That Journey

Make Make Grim Reading The Church Is Under Attack By Those Who Are Maliciously Undermining God's Truth Whether It Is An Individual Or Those Who Follow That Individual Or The Spirit That Is In The World Through Them And At The Heart Of What Is Happening Is The Church Is Under Attack And Satan With All Power And Signs And Lying Wonders With All The Deceivableness Of Unrighteousness Is At Work And Seeking To Destroy Any And All Who Would Come Under The Sway Of His Influence And In The Face Of That Paul Is Seeing The Good He Is Able To Do By Giving Thanks To God For What He Sees And What God Is Doing Even When This Is Going On All Around Them How

Many Of Us Could And Should Reflect On Our Own Relationships With Others And The Opportunities That We Let Slip Because We're Not Of Such A Positive Mindset But He Speaks Of Those That He Recognizes He Sees Christ Love Them And He Loves Them In Return He Loves The People That Christ Loves And That's At The Heart Of What He Has To Say And The Reason That He Is Able To Recognize What God Has Done In Them He Says Because God Has Chosen Them God Has From The Beginning Chosen You To Salvation Through Sanctification Of The Spirit And Belief

Of The Truth The Doctrine Of Election Is Not A Popular Doctrine At The Best Of Time Certainly Not In The Minds Of Those Who Want To Lay Great Stress Upon Their Own Activity In Seeking Out Salvation It's Rather Strange That One Person Can Think It's Alright For Man To Choose God And Yet It's Not Alright For God To Choose Man Seems Strange But That's What Some People Say It's Not Right That God Should Choose Some Whereas It's Perfectly In Order For Some Not To Choose God And To Do Something Quite Contrary

To That From The Beginning He Says Which Which We Can Establish From Elsewhere That This Means From All Eternity From Before The World Was You Remember Paul Writing To The Ephesians The Opening Chapter There He Speaks Of Of How God God Has Chosen Us In Christ Before The Foundation Of The World That We Should Be Holy And Without Blame Before Him In Love Having Predestinated Us To The Adoption Of Children By Jesus Christ To Himself According To The Good Pleasure Of His Will You'll Find Many Many Passages That Speak Of

[28 : 46] The The Appointment If You Want To Call It That The Election Of God In Eternity In Romans Chapter 9 We Read I Will Call Them My People Which Were Not My People And Her Beloved Which Was Not Beloved Shall Come To Pass That In The Place Where It Was Said And To Them You Are Not My People There Shall They Be Called The Children Of The Living God Paul Is There Quoting The Old Testament Prophets Hosea And Isaiah And He Is Referring To The Election Of Grace That God Alone Is Responsible For For The Children Being Not Yet Born Neither Having Done Any Good Or Evil That The Purpose Of God According To Election

Might Stand Not Of Works But Of Him That Calleth And There Are Numerous Passages That Are Along These Lines God God God Has Love For This World Which Many Are Happy To Quote And They Do So Because This Love For The World Is All Embracing They Say But There Is A Distinction Between The Love That God Has For The World That Contains His Creatures And The World That God Loves That Contains His Select People He Has A Love That Is Uniquely There And Finds Expression In The Pre

Existent Action That Is Before The World Was C.H. Spurgeon In The Ways That Only He Can Say Talking About Election As A Preacher He Says I Believe That There Is Such A Thing As Election I Believe It Because I Am Quite Sure That God Had Not Chosen Me If He Had Not Chosen Me I Would Not Have Chosen Him And I Am Sure He Chosed Me Before The World Was Before I Was Born Because If He Had Chosen Me Or If He Had Waited For Me To Be Born He Would Never Have Chosen Me Afterward Well You Know What He Means God God's God's God's Election Is An Election Of Grace

It Doesn't Depend Upon What He Sees In The Believer It Doesn't Depend On What He Sees In The Non Believer It Is What He Himself Does As An Act Of His Grace However Much We Resist That It Is A Love Of A Special Sort Because It Is An Election As He Says To Salvation No Less And For Some That Seems Strange But It Is Elect Even Before There Was A Fall And That Seems Strange If The Election To Salvation Is What God Has Done Then How Can It Be Something That Was Carried Out Before The Fall If It Is Eternal And Yet It Is That Is The Very Thing That It Is Before

The World Was God Elected Son To Everlasting Life Before Adam Sinned Before Adam Was Created From The Dust By The Hand Of A God Who Is Doing All Things Well Yet Still Elected Son To Be Saved Before They Sinned Professor MacLeod Donald MacLeod Says They Are Chosen To Be Beneficiaries Under Christ Of Everything That His Obedience And Sacrifice Deserves They Are Chosen To Be In Christ To Be Covered By The Righteousness By The Intercession By The Pleading By The Status Of Christ In Heaven Not Just Elect To Hear The Gospel Or Be Church Members But Experience Salvation In The Fullest Possible Degree

[33 : 52] For For a Great Many The Burning Question They Ask As They Evangelize Is Find it On The Street Corner Perhaps If You Have Made A Street Preacher They Ask You Face To Face Are You Saved That's The Burning Issue Are You Saved And It's Important For a Person To Be Saved But Often What is Overlooked That it Is Not Just Something That Happens Saved And That's The End Of The Matter And Paul Here Tells Us That They Are Saved Salvation Through Sanctification Of The Spirit And Belief Of The Truth There Is More To It In The Sense That What Is Accomplished By That Experience

Of Salvation Sanctification Of The Spirit And Belief Of The Truth Some People See That As Two Sides To The One Coin Sanctification Being God's Doing Belief Being The Activity Of The Sinner Who Responds To God's Doing Now Whether That is What Paul Means Us To Understand Is Not At All Clear God Sets Apart For His Own Glory And We Can Only Serve God As Is Clearly Made Known To Us Throughout The Scripture We Are Not Able To Serve God In Any Meaningful Way Without The Power Of The Holy Spirit Go Back Again To This First Epistle To The Thessalonians And He Tells Us Our Gospel Came Not

Unto You In Word Only But Also In Power And In The Holy Ghost And In Much Assurance As You Know What Manor Of Men We Wear Among You For Your Sake The Gospel That Is Preached Comes With Power And The Power Means That Not Only Are They Converted Not Only Are They Brought To Life But That Life In Them Produces Activity In Keeping Of The Life That They Now Have Through The Spirit Saved To Serve You Know That I Think It's The Salvation Army Who Have That Motto Saved To Serve And That's Quite True Of Every Believer Whatever Whatever You Think Of The Doctrines Of The Salvation Army They've Got This Right That The Believer Is Saved By The Spirit Of

God In Order To Serve The Living God And That Serving Of The Living God Cannot Be Accomplished Without The Power Of The Holy Spirit At Work In Their Lives Here In This World We Have The Calling Of God In Verse 14 And It's Not Without Reason That Peter The Apostle Calls The Believer To Make Your Calling And Election Sure He Says One Is The Evidence Of The Other They Are Called By Our Gospel Paul Says That Same Gospel We Refer To That Has Come Into Their Experience With Power And This Gospel Does Something That Impacted Their Lives Changing Transforming Equipping Encouraging

Enabling And Everything Else That You Can Think Of Belief In The Gospel Is Not Just A Matter Of Emotions But It Is Essential That Our Emotions Are Stored Are Stimulated I Don't Know What Kind Of Experience Under The Gospel Would Be Without Our Emotions Without Our Intellect Being Exercised Without Our Wills Being Stimulated And Transformed To Do What We Could Not Or Would Not Want To Do Otherwise Favourite Theologian A.W.

[38 : 35] Toaster Probably Wisely Says And He Was Often Very Critical Of His Own Generation He Says For A Long Generation We Have Been Holding The Letter Of Truth While At The Same Time We Have Been Moving Away From It In Spirit Because We Have Been Preoccupied With What We Are Saved From Rather Than What We Are Saved To Now What He Is Saying There Is Clearly What Paul Has In Mind Because Not Just Is Paul Concerned With The Need For Salvation But That Salvation Must Result In Lives That Being Transformed And Have This Ultimate End Which You Find Spoken Of In Verse 14 To The Obtaining Of

The Glory Of Our Lord Jesus Christ The Ultimate End Of Believing The Gospel Now The Emphasis Very Often And Rightly So You Want To Tell People Of Their Danger You Want To Tell Them That They Are Headlong On The Way To A Lost Eternity You Want To Tell People That They Are On The Brink Of Hell If They Continue As They Are They Shall Teeter Over It And Be Lost Without The Opportunity To Change Their Direction Or Their Future People Need To Understand That But That's Not Just The Gospel The Gospel Tells Us That What Christ Is Able To Do In Us Has An Ultimate End And That End Is To Be With Himself You Remember When He Was Speaking To The

Disciples And Probably The Disciples Didn't Really Understand Much Of What Jesus Had To Say When He Spoke To Them About It When He Spoke To Them Of What He Was Doing And Why He Was Doing It But He Was He Was Telling Them That That God Was Going To Be Glorified In What He Was Doing And In His High Priestly Prayer He Describes To Us Even As He Speaks To His Heavenly Father Father I Will That They Also Whom Thou Has Given Me Where Did He Receive Them If Not In The Covenant Of Grace That They May Behold My Glory Which Thou

Has Given Me For Thou Loved Me Before The Foundation Of The World Some Of The Commentators Spend Time Talking About The Glory That This Verse Might Speak About There Are Some Glories That That Christ Cannot Share With His People However Affectionate He Is Towards Them However Loving He Is Towards Them There Is A Glory That Is Uniquely His That Cannot Be Shared With Those Who Are His But There Is A Glory That They Are Able To Participate And To Partake Of That He Has Promised Them And That He Speaks Of To His Father We Are Bound To Give Thanks

Always To God For You Think About What You Are Obligated To Thank God For In Your Own Life In The Life Of The Church Of Which You Are Part In The Life Of The Community Where You Are Being Raised And Where You Are Exposed To The Gospel To Many Grounds You Have For Glory In The Name Of Christ In The Face Of Adversity And In The Face Of Those Who Would Wish To Destroy The Name Of God From The Face Of The Earth May God Bless To Us These Your Thoughts Let Us Pray Lord Our God We Give Thanks That You Have Revealed Yourself To Us In This World And Were It Not For That Fact We

[43 : 36] Would Be Blindly Indifferent To The Glory Or Even Any Participation That Any Others Have In That Glory We Give Thanks For The Grace That You Exercized Towards Sinners And That You Have Sought Them Out By Way Of Christ Remember Before You This Evening All In Need And We Think Especially Of The Tragedy That Took Place Early This Morning The Circumstances Of Which We Know Nothing But It Means For Some That There Is Heartache And Grief And We We Pray Lord That You Would Sanctify That The Eyes Of Men Would Gravitate To God And To Cry Out For Mercy And So We Ought To Do Forgive Sin In Jesus Name Amen Our Closing Psalm Is Psalm 33 We Sing it

In Gaelic The Last Two Verses Of The Psalm Psalm 33 The Last Two Verses reading P
Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[47 : 14] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.