

How often would I have gathered thee but you would not.

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Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[0 : 00] Welcome to your service this morning. We come before God to worship and we sit under his word and we look to bless his word to us. We are going to sing to God's praise from Psalm 132 and we are going to sing the last four verses of the psalm. From verse 13.

For God of Zion hath made choice, there he desires to dwell. This is my rest, here still I'll stay, for I do like it well. Her food I'll greatly bless, her poor with bread will satisfy. Her priests I'll clothe with health, her saints shall shout forth joyfully. And there will I make David's horn to bud forth pleasantly. For him that mine anointed is a lamp ordained have I. As with her garment I will clothe with shame his enemies all, but yet the crown that he doth wear upon him flourish shall. We'll sing these verses, Psalm 132 from verse 13.

For God of Zion hath made choice. For God of Zion hath made choice. For God of Zion hath made choice, then he desired to dwell.

This is my rest, here still I'll stay, for I do like it well.

God of Zion hath made choice, then he desired to dwell.

[2 : 30] God of Zion hath made choice, then he desired to dwell.

The kingdom of Zion hath made choice, then he desired to dwell. Vint inside the dawn, that he desired to dwell. The kingdom of Zion hath made choice, then he desired to dwell. Why Jet to dwell. Right choice, then he But Father Let's join together in prayer.

Let's pray. Lord our God, as we come before you, we give thanks that we can praise your name.

We are raising our voices and seeking to magnify the name that is above every name.

A God who has made great and exceedingly precious promises with regard to the kingdom upon which you have set a king.

[4 : 23] A king that will reign forevermore. This kingdom has been established and it will be without end.

And like the other kingdoms that have existed upon the scene of time, some of which are a distant memory.

And we would not know of them were it not for some fragments of archaeological evidence that speaks of something somewhere at some time.

And even these nations that exist today, whether they are governed by kings or presidents or whatever form of government they use to direct the path upon which these nations are set.

And these things themselves have no certainty for continuance. And we see how in looking back at the history of this world, how nations that were once mighty and no longer heard of.

[5 : 53] The kingdoms that were once powerful have now been amalgamated or assimilated into other nations that were at the point at which they were in power.

And I knew that now the minnows have swallowed the leviathans that occupied the historical context at which they came to providence.

We acknowledge that this is the way of the world. The world.

For special acknowledgement that they came to see. A personal acknowledgement that they came to see. A special acknowledgement that they come. That he is the alone savior of sinners. The messiah, the prince, the anointed of God, the one that you set aside for the work of redemption.

And to him we pray. Not only is he king, he is priest. He is prophet. And he ever occupies these offices.

[7 : 30] and we give thanks for that. We give thanks for his intercession that we can come without weary pleas and cries and solicit his help and seek his involvement in our lives however insignificant we may consider that to be.

When we think of the affairs of our life what is ongoing at the present we might think who would have an interest in that. Why should there be any interest in that?

When we think of the world that we are in when there are nations that are at war when there are calamities of plenty, when there are all manner of woes afflicting this world in which we live why should you of God have an interest in our minor crises but you do.

You have an interest and you show your interest and you reveal yourself to us in the midst of our our dramas and our difficulties.

We commit ourselves to you for that reason and pray that your involvement would be known to us and that we would acknowledge it and trust to it. So pour out your spirit upon us as a people as a community visiting every home and household remembering every soul that we know of and many that we don't knocking upon the doors of their hearts and making known to them that you have a desire for that soul and that you were surely good for them.

[9 : 25] Through the gospel of your grace make known to us the need that there is to be persuaded to embrace Jesus Christ as he is freely offered in the gospel.

May you accompany the preaching of the word with power so that all who hear it proclaim today within our communities and beyond would consider the needs of their soul as a prominent need and a great need that they would seek to seek seek to to deal with in the way that only God can deal with it.

So we pray Lord for your blessing upon the needs of this world remembering our own community here those amongst us who are unwell we pray for them for their recovery for their restoration for those who have illness from which recovery is not possible humanly speaking we pray for grace for them and for those who seek to alleviate their suffering be they at home or in hospital or being cared for elsewhere we remember to you those who are grieving and sorrowful we have been assailed with the voice of death from every corner in recent days amongst us there are the grieving and the sorrowful their hearts are aching because you have taken labrants from them and we pray for them that you would bind their wounds and heal their hurts and in their grief that they would know to turn to the

Lord who is the one who is able to to minister to them beyond the abilities that you have given to mere mortals like ourselves we pray Lord for your blessing upon all who are confronting the harsh reality of death without knowing how to deal with it may they know to look to the Lord who has entered into the experience of death and yet risen again from the grave and sits on the throne of this universal bower and there intercedes and pleads and calls until the great day when he returns and ushers all who have been enfolded in these graves into his presence and the dust will give up the dust and those who are united by faith to him will join him in the glories of eternal rest and those who have no knowledge of him will be dismissed from his presence for all eternity and all that entails we pray

Lord for the sanctification of your truth as it is uttered and proclaimed to that end remember the world as a whole especially the theatres of war we are living in troublous times and not one of us can be assured of greater griefs to follow that that may not be the case because when man enters into a path upon which there is no turning back who knows what may result what we trust that all is done under your hand the wickedness that lies in the heart of man knows no bounds who can know it is what your servant said we pray we pray for your grace and for your mercy to suppress the evil that lies in the bosom of man and to raise up those who would stand fearless upon the foundation of righteousness trusting in the Lord we pray for your blessing upon us now the short time that we're together bless young and old alike we commit to you the teaching of the

[14 : 00] Sunday school and those who are entrusted with delivering it from we pray for those who are in their formative years preserved for much of the sorrows that so many of our children and young people know little of in communities that are alien in many ways in their dealings with God they know nothing of God or his ways and they are brought into a world where that world is a world they can barely survive even in our own country be merciful to us Lord that we may make use of the day of privilege and that we may know the wisdom of encircling our own loved ones in prayer and raising them up in the fear and in the tuition of the

Lord grant mercy for our sins in Jesus name amen or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name that means that we should be honest in all our dealings with our fellow men and women that whenever we're called to speak about them or to them that we be truthful and that we bear testimony in an honest way if you remember when Jesus was in the world one of the things that was done to him was that there were many false witnesses who bore testimony against him they told lies about him and they said that he said what he didn't say and so on so it's important

God teaches us that when we are speaking about anyone that we speak the truth and one of the most obvious ways that we understand the meaning of this is when a person goes to court and they are asked to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth and witnesses in their favour or against them will have to do the same thing to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth and we understand that that is important because their faith depends on it another time we see this commandment come into its own is when for example I'm sure when I was your age I didn't watch the news much

I would watch every programme leading up to the news and then I would go out unless we were told in school to write a diary which took into account the important things that were on the news but if you were watching the news you would know that there are inquiries going on and one of them has to do with the pandemic the COVID pandemic and the questions that are being asked is did the government do the right thing were those who were responsible for caring for our society did they make the right decisions for the right reasons and there being questions and you'll see them at the beginning of their testimony some of them at least will put their hand on the Bible and they will say that they are promising to tell the truth some of them will affirm which is that they're doing the same thing but they're not trusting the word of God because he is not their God or they don't believe in him so they will just say well what I'm going to say is truthful and honest but I was when I was thinking of this I was remembering a famous person very famous or depending on how you know him infamous and he was the the 45th president of the

United States of America and he didn't have enough of that he was hoping to stand again as president but I remember when he was being sworn in as president usually when they take the oath of allegiance to America they would have a Bible or if they didn't most Americans they would do that I'm not sure if they all did but most presidents in the past would swear allegiance to America and the United States and they would promise to govern truthfully and honestly and do everything right but this president you know the name Donald Trump he didn't have one Bible he had two I think one would be enough but he had two one of the Bibles he had was the Bible that once belonged to a former president of

[20 : 16] America man by the name of Abraham Lincoln you may have heard of him and the second Bible he had was a Bible that was given to him by his mother Mary Ann Trump or Mary Ann MacLeod as she was then and she gave him the Bible when he left Sunday school would you believe I don't know if they're having a graduation here maybe Ian MacLeod would imbibe all the Americanisms that we are confronted with so we'll have graduations from Sunday school sometime soon but when Donald Trump finished his time in Sunday school he graduated and when he graduated from Sunday school his mother gave him a Bible her Bible and we're not told what Bible it was but the Americans are quite a unique people and

I suppose for different reasons they had interest some of the men who are conservative Christians amongst them are interested in Donald Trump's Presbyterianism and his background in the church and some of them knew about the Isle of Lewis being a place that Donald Trump came from and some of them knew that in the Isle of Lewis in the 40s and 50s that there was a revival of religion and there is a myth and it wasn't I think some people believe it to be true some people believe it to be wrong but that this bible that Donald Trump's mother gave to him was given to her by two godly sisters that lived on the west side of Lewis who were involved at the start of the revival there were two ladies down in

Shadda or somewhere on the west side down that way who prayed for revival and they were related supposedly to Donald Trump's mother and sent her a bible and that makes a lot of news for conservative Christians because there he is Donald Trump swearing upon this bible that goes all the way back to the Isle of Lewis where revival broke out unfortunately only part of that story is true but it was a bible given to him by his mother and what he was doing was swearing to be honest swearing to be truthful swearing to show allegiance to the country that he was to be president of now you make up your own mind about whether he was faithful to his laws but god is telling us in the words of the commandment that he expects us to be he expects us to be honest and to live our lives with integrity and what we say about ourselves and others it should be true and we should not defame other people's character we shouldn't say something about them that's not true or say something about ourselves that's not true because god will hold us all accountable and that's what we need to remember and i hope that helps you understand something of what the ninth commandment is we're going to sing some words from psalm 94 psalm 94 and we're singing from verse 14 to verse 19 for sure the lord will not cast off those that his people be neither his own inheritance quit and forsake to leave but judgment unto righteousness shall not return again and all shall follow after it that are right-hearted men who will rise up for me against those that do wickedly who will stand up for me against those that work iniquity unless the lord had been my help when i was so oppressed almost my soul had in the house of silence been oppressed when i had uttered this word my foot doth slip away thy mercy held me up o lord thy goodness did me stay amidst the multitude of thoughts which in my heart do fight my soul lest it be overcharged thy comfort do delight these words of psalm 94 for sure the lord will not cast off for those that his people be for sure the lord will not cast off

I A judgment unto my chosen shall yet return again.

And all shall fall O I'll to let the child right-hearted man Who will rise up for me against those not to wake in me.

[27 : 01] Who will stand up for me against those not worthy in equity.

Unless the Lord hath been by him when I was sore, O press, or was my soul hide in the heart, O silence be the praise.

When I uttered this word, my foot was sent away.

Thy parents be held me up, O Lord. Thy goodness my goodness let me stay.

Ameth the Lord with the Lord which in my heart will fight.

[28 : 51] My soul has made me over charge. thy comfort to be light.

my heart I'm going to hear the word of God the word of God as we have it in the Gospel of Matthew and we're reading chapter 23.

We're going to read the whole chapter. The Gospel of Matthew chapter 23. Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then Then

Then Then Then Then Then

Then Then Then Then Then Then Then ye are matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith.

[32 : 49] These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at an act and swallow a camel, or to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye may claim the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. O unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are likened to whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within, full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness.

Even so, ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

O unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers, ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

[34 : 34] Wherefore behold I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barakias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, and thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and he would not.

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing in this reading of his word. In his name be the praise. Let us again sing to God's praise from Psalm 103.

Psalm 103. And from verse 5. Verse 5 down to verse 12. Who with abundance of good things doth satisfy thy mouth, so that even as the eagle's age reneweth thy youth, God righteous judgment executes for all oppressed ones.

[36 : 27] His ways to Moses, he his acts made known to Israel's sons. The Lord our God is merciful, and he is gracious, long-suffering, and slow to wrath, and mercy plenteous.

He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still. With us he dealt, not as we sinned, nor did requite our ill. And so on to verse 12.

Psalm 103 from verse 5. Who with abundance of good things, God stuff this way, thy mouth. Who with abundance of good things, I make me fall.

Of abundance of good things, precious good things, music times, God Christ does, The judgment executive are chastomsts.

His termin propagate and balance The Lord and God is merciful, and He is faithful.

[38 : 24] From suffering and soul to run in mercy when He comes.

He will not shine on tingly, nor keep His armless sin.

With us even no doubt we sin, nor victory fight the end.

For us, the heaven in His sight, the earth so bright divine.

So great you, Lord, that you may fear His tender mercy's arm.

[39 : 55] As far as Jesus is risen from the west of the sea.

From our strength in His land, all our iniquity.

I'd like us to turn to the chapter that we read in the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew chapter 23. And read again at verse 37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee.

How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.

[41 : 19] Almost all of the commentators, those who interpret the scripture, describe the words of our text as a lament.

They say these words are a lament. And usually when we think of a lament, we think of a song, or perhaps a poem.

And the topic of that song, or poem, is very mournful and doleful.

And while we might not think that the words of this verse comply with that description, what you would, without hesitation, say about these words, is that they are certainly words that are running through, from beginning to end, with heartfelt sorrow on the part of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And William Hendrickson, one of the commentators, describes it as words that have unfathomable pathos.

[42 : 50] I'm not going to try that again. Deep pathos. And you can recognize that in these words.

The Lord is deeply moved by the sight that conference is spiritualized.

Suppose you could imagine for yourself that the Lord Jesus is standing as if he were on a hill looking down on this city and moved by it.

You know, you have something of that image in the experience of the Apostle Paul when he preaches the Gospel in various locations. And he sees some of the places that he is visiting with the Gospel.

And they are so given over to idolatry. But you have to remind yourself that the city that Jesus is thinking of is the holy city.

[44 : 00] This is the city of God. This is the city where God was pleased to have his name at the center of its worship and all its activities.

But I want us to think about this verse. And there's five things that very briefly I can bring to your attention.

Just as we look through this verse, we can't ignore the context in which the words are found. I read the whole chapter. Usually if the chapter is this length, we might abbreviate it so that we don't spend as much time reading perhaps words that are not so relevant for the sermon or for the talk that we're given.

But this whole chapter really has to do with the words of the Lord.

It helps us understand the thinking of the Lord. It helps us understand the emotion that is in the heart of the Lord concerning this city.

[45 : 23] The second thing we have to understand is that the description that he gives us of Jerusalem is a description that flies in the face of that initial description that I gave to you.

The city of God. The city of God. The city of God. The city of God's people. The city of God's worship. And yet he describes it in a very particular way.

Thirdly, what we have is the understanding from what Jesus says that the people who reside in this city are in extreme peril.

they are in danger and their very souls are in jeopardy. And because of that the fourth thing that we notice is that we are presented with something that describes to us the kind of person God is, the kind of person the Lord Jesus is.

if we understand something about the nature of the city and all that is true about it and those who live in it what we would expect is contrary to what we are presented with.

[46 : 49] We are confronted with a picture of grace and measure. And the fifth thing and that is the saddest thing of all even though we are confronted with God's grace and mercy these people to whom Christ is speaking of whom he is speaking they are those who despite the mercy and the grace of God they stubbornly stubbornly resisted.

they live on as if they don't need it. That's the thing. I think that's the saddest thing about this. But first of all what does this context say to you?

What does this verse say to you? What does this whole chapter say to you? As you read through it I don't think you could have read this chapter without detecting the anger that was coming from the passion of the Lord Jesus.

The fury that filled his heart. And that is so alien to the picture that we have in our mind about the Lord Jesus.

I think I've often said it to you we're all perfectly happy to think about the words that have an image to an image of the infant Jesus gentle Jesus meek and mild from the cradle to the grave you would say this is the image that personifies and that follows him through.

[48 : 51] He is so benign a character he is so loving a character he is so kind and so so ready to show kindness and and grace to all who encounter him.

But that's not an accurate picture. It's certainly not the picture that the scripture tells us. all we have to do is just go back a couple of chapters in Matthew's gospel and we find in this chapter 21 Jesus coming to the temple and dealing with those who are money changers.

do you remember the story? I'm sure you know it. Jesus went into the temple of God and cast out all of them that sold and bought in the temple and overthrew the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves.

What kind of picture is that? It's somebody who is angry. He comes in and he drives them out. In fact if you go to John's gospel and the picture that John gives to us of this same event he says he made a scourge he made a whip of cords and he drove out the animals and he drove out the beasts that were being sold and he drove out those who sold them out of the precepts of the temple and he said that they weren't to make his father's house a marketplace that's if not the only time we discover that Jesus is moved to anger but you have to correct any impression that you have that it is an uncontrollable extreme outburst of emotion but it is the reaction of a holy righteous passion to the to the effort that is given to God the temple he calls his father's house abused for the purpose of commerce and here in this chapter what we have is seven woes seven denunciations as they're called denunciations that are directed towards those who profess to serve God and are not not just professing to serve

God but are not serving him the way they should but also in their behavior they are responsible for depriving genuine believers of any peace of mind a description of moral decadence on the part of those who should demonstrate godliness just go back to verse 13 oh and to you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men for you neither go in yourselves neither suffer ye them that are entering into going you know their actions for which they are responsible may deprive themselves of access to heaven but worse than that Jesus says you are responsible for keeping others from entering heaven into heaven your theology your doctrines your teachings are wrong and because you believe in them and because you practice them you will go to hell but because you're enslaving others in these same doctrines you are taking others into hell with you how he describes them is not really open to any debate because it is clearly understood by anyone that reads this passage that

[53 : 40] Jesus is infuriated by what he sees he is burdened by it he is made vexed and cross and angry by what he sees and there's no measure to it look at how he describes Jerusalem well he describes Jerusalem not as we said the way you would expect it to be described you know the psalm that came to mind when I was looking at this as psalm 122 words that we're familiar with a psalm that describes to us what Jerusalem is like I enjoyed when to the house of God go up they said to me Jerusalem within thy gates our feet shall standing be Jerusalem as a city is compactly built together and to that place the tribes go up the tribes of

God go thither many psalms tell us what Jerusalem is associated with many psalms tell us that it is God's place God's holy place the place that he ring fenced for his glory to be revealed where the worshipping people of God would gather periodically and offer sacrifices of praise and honour to his name but what does Jesus say about Jerusalem Jerusalem Jerusalem thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee but it's not the city not the bricks and the mortar that is doing that clearly he's referring to the inhabitants clearly he's referring to the same people that he has been condemning for their false religiosity and what they are responsible for is killing the prophets of

God stoning those that were sent with the message of salvation putting them to death verse 34 wherefore behold I sent unto you prophets and wise men and scribes and some of them you shall kill and crucify some of them shall you scourge in your synagogues and persecute them from city to city that's what's happening in the here and now he's saying I'm not talking about what happened in the past although it did happen in the past in the history of this world this has been the way the world has dealt with God's ambassadors the very same people that God sent into the world with the message of salvation you have killed you have stoned to death you have crucified and slain and it is a solemn charge that if

God's ministers are treated like that the very people that he has sent with the message of salvation that they are rejected and not only rejected but mistreated to the extremes where their lives are forfeit that's not a history lesson for you in our nation today in our country today there are people who are not allowed to stand on the street and testify to the grace of God in Christ Jesus they will stand on the street and preach Christ and yet they run the risk of arrest and it happens all too often and the laws of our land allow that to take place there's flexibility to forbid them from speaking the word of God even though it's spoken in love and worse than that may still come but there are countries not far from us which our governments bend over backwards to act in friendship to are responsible for the death of countless saints countless witnesses to the truth of God and they remain silent and they say nothing because it's not in their interest that's today not yesterday but today these are things that are going on as you sit in here but

Jesus knows that it's not a new thing to him you read his words and he'll tell you because of the very frequency that he has to speak of these things that that is how the world treats God's servants that is the way the world treats the message of salvation that is the way how those who are strangers to the goodness of God treat the message that they need to hear more than any other message trample it under their feet let's go back again to that chapter we refer to chapter 21 there's a parable told by the Lord there strange that he has to tell this again and again because it is there before our very eyes

[60 : 04] John came unto you in the way of righteousness and you believed him not but the publicans and the harlots believed him and you when you had seen it repented not afterward that you might believe him hear another parable there was a certain householder which planted a vineyard and hedged it round about and digged a winepress in it and built a tower and let it out to husband and went into a far country do you know the parable it concludes last of all he sent them his son saying they will reverence my son but when the husbandmen saw the son they said among themselves this is the heir come let us kill him let us seize on his inheritance what is he saying what is he using there the illustration for to demonstrate the wickedness that is in the heart of man and the the anger that is there fixed against God and his his own way of salvation

Jesus says somewhere else this is the great condemnation that light came into the world but men loved darkness rather than the light men loved darkness rather than the light it just doesn't stop there why do they love the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil because when God shines a light into your heart what you see there in God's light you don't like when he shines a light into my heart just like your heart very often what he shows to me in the light that he shines is not something that will mollify me that will make me feel confident or pleased with myself rather more the opposite and what Jesus is doing is saying look this is the way it is for you if you continue as you are if you remain as you are if you disregard the fact that

God has seen fit to send the message of salvation to you surely it tells you that salvation is something you need surely it tells you that if the gospel is the gospel then you need to hear it and respond to it in the only way that the gospel should be responded to in faith even without saying it he is telling you why would Jesus come into the world why would God send his servants into the world why would God see fit to send ambassadors and prophets and servants who would declare the gospel if there was no need for a gospel it's a simple question maybe he just decided well poor Colin McDonough needs to make a living somehow we'll just give him something to do can't do anything else give him give him the gospel to preach give him a story to tell give him something to do that will entertain him and others for a while on a Sunday well isn't

God good giving employment to all kinds of preachers for so many generations going back to Noah Noah had nothing better to do than to be a preacher of righteousness and yet God saw fit throughout all these generations to call those who would preach a message of salvation through Christ Jesus every generation throughout the world have seen ambassadors sent by God with the same message of truth the same urgency to believe in this message of truth to understand that without salvation there is only the prospect of being lost for all eternity and Jesus understands that and Jesus looks wistfully on the city where the sacrifices were poured out in their gallons of blood of the beasts that were slain that spoke of the need for blood to be shed to save sinners and they were blind to it they were indifferent to it they said what is this saying to me it's got nothing to do with me and yet they would come and do what these you know you read there you pay tithes and mint and anise and cumin and omitted the weightier matters of the law judgment mercy and faith they are so religious and yet the religion was devoid of genuine meaning and Jesus saw that and what does he do well he shows to us what kind of God

God is the kind of God you need to come to know the kind of God you need to come face to face with and make his acquaintance not as some far distant deity who has nothing or little to say to you or do with you how can I say that well look at what Jesus says how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chicken under her wings he uses an illustration and remember you have to fix this in the context in which it is found he is speaking to all kinds of people who have filled their hearts with malice against

[67 : 02] God and done their worst as far as God is concerned and yet Jesus is saying to them to Jerusalem to those who have killed the saints those who have stoned their witnesses to the truth how often would I have gathered you you know that's what he is saying and we often get it so wrong we think Jesus came into the world to save the saints is that what he says Jesus came in to save the righteous Jesus came in to save those who were good those who were nice and those who had done no wrong those who were good neighbors and good friends and good husbands and good wives Jesus came in to save them that's not what the Bible says he came in to save sinners he came in to save the very people that he here describes as being responsible for killing the prophets and stoning the servants of God because his mercy did not did not cut them off from the prospect of salvation and that's the thing that when he is speaking he is speaking into this context he is speaking into this kind of situation where the very people that were so antagonistic toward God so apathetic with regard to God's invitation to the gospel that he did not exclude them because of it he states his willingness to offer protection despite repeated provocation when I was growing up we were always used to have hens and I was used enough to seeing a broody hen who would secretly hide away her eggs and out of the blue she would emerge with a brood of chickens and what was true about the hen with the small chicks if you went towards her she wouldn't attack you but if she saw you coming she would speak to the chicks and they would run towards her and they would hide themselves under her wings

I saw that for myself and Jesus uses the illustrations that he was familiar with and he says this is what I would want to do to you this is what I would do for you I would call you to myself and you would take shelter under my wings but is that not what he is doing is that not what he is doing in the gospel he is like this mother hen calling her chickens come to me and I will shelter you I will cover you from the wrath to come I will hide you away from the injury that you are doing yourself he came to seek and to save the lost and how often he does it and how much he does it and there is no evidence here that we have a theologian saviour who is sitting aloof from the words that he is speaking these words are generated from the heart of a person who is moved by what he is saying who is so wounded by the thought that the gospel is being rejected because that is what is being said how often how often but you would not you understand what he is saying if you are here today and you are unconverted and even once before you were here and you remain unconverted it means that you have defiantly said to yourself the gospel has said to me that

I need salvation but I am saying to the gospel I don't believe I don't believe the gospel I don't believe the one whose gospel it is I don't believe the Christ who is saying that he is willing to save me I don't believe the Christ who is saying come I don't believe well maybe there are many things you don't believe God has sent out many ambassadors many messengers Bishop Ryle says that you know you might think this is the messenger he's standing before you shouting at you and he's pointing the finger at you well that's just one that's just one every day you live on mercy's ground you hear God speaking to you in providence God saying to you even in this world that is lying on the brink of extinction because of its own wickedness is

God saying anything to you there is God saying anything to you when you hear of a friend that's cut down and headlong into eternity before you knew it is he saying anything to you there is he saying to you that could have been you is he saying to you are you ready if this happens where will you go where will you open your eyes in the eternity that comes is he speaking to you well I believe he is to every one of us even those who are out there today whatever they're doing entertaining themselves God has spoken to them this week already God has uttered his message and have they heard or have they chosen to ignore it there is a voice according to in everyone but what

Jesus is saying they would not I will I want them to come I am treating them to come I am inviting them to come I am calling them to come but they would not they would not well just one thing reject Christ if you will reject Christ if you dare Jesus probably made several prophecies and amongst these prophecies they concern the future that is yet to be realized but some you can investigate for yourself concerning Jerusalem the city of

[75 : 09] Jerusalem and he forewarned them what awaited that city he clearly pointed out that in a short space of time that most marvelous city that most awesome city of God that most precious place in the heart of so many Jewish believers that it would soon be raised to the ground that stones would mingle with the dust and they didn't believe that either but you find out for yourself by reading the scriptures whether his word was true or not and that word is but a word that you may think is not relevant but what is relevant is this what you do with God's word to you today today this minute what you do with it what you do with

Christ who is saying just like this hen I would gather you I would bring you in I would hide you I would cover you I would ensure that no harm would come to you if only if only you come may God make that a burning issue in your heart before God so that you know the wisdom of coming before it is too late let us pray oh Lord our God how foolish we are by nature our sin dark mind resists the truth even when it is so applicable to ourselves and so relevant and so so clear and yet we are so determined to go our own way even when that way is the way of destruction hear our prayers on behalf of those who do not pray for themselves and forgive sin in Jesus name

Amen we are closing Psalm 86 Psalm 86 and we are going to sing from verse 12 to 15 the Lord my God with all my heart to thee I will give praise and I the glory will ascribe unto thy name always because thy mercy toward me in greatness doth excel and thou delivered hast my soul out from the lowest hell O God the proud against me rise and violent men have met that for my soul have sought and thee before them have not said but thou art full of pity Lord a God most gracious long suffering and in thy wrath and mercy plenteous these verses from verse 12 of Psalm 86 O Lord my God with all my heart to thee

I will give praise O Lord my God with all my heart from To thee I heard the praise, And by the glory will the sky, Up to thy name always.

Because my mercy to me, In the greatest love except, And I will never touch my soul, And from the lowest hell.

[79 : 33] O God, the earth against me lies, And my land let my bread, And for my soul of sword and me, Before they come no sin.

Of thou art born of this divine, And from whose nations From suffering and with thy good, And mercy bring me in.

Amen. The holy grace, The holy grace, And the holy spirit, And the holy spirit rest and abide With you all now and always. Amen. Thank you.