

# The Breaker is Come

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning and a warm welcome to our service today. As we come together to worship God, we look to him to be our source of light and to be the one who would bless his word to us, which we need above all.

So we can begin our service this morning singing some words from Psalm 107. Psalm 107 and we're singing from verse 15 to verse 22.

Psalm 107.

Psalm 107.

And let them sacrifice to him offerings of thankfulness. And let them show abroad his works in songs of joyfulness. Let us sing these verses to God's praise.

[ 1 : 54 ] Psalm 107 from verse 15 to 22. O that men to the Lord would give praise for his goodness then. O that men to the Lord would give praise for his goodness then.

And for his worth of wisdom and to the sins of men.

Because the mighty king so proud and peace that he did share.

By him in son's name also. The bars of thy own wear.

Fools for their sin and their offense.

[ 3 : 25 ] His own affliction bear. All kind of me there.

And so on the Lord would give praise for his goodness. The Lord would give praise for his goodness. The Lord would give praise for his goodness.

Chao. He gave praise for his unforf Feel. View gave praise for his goodness.

Then from their miseries, He sends their word, Then heals and then from their kills, Then from their house of trees.

O that men to the Lord would give Praise for His goodness then, And for His words of wonder, And to the sons of men, And let them sacrifice to Him, Of His love and fullness, And let them show abroad

[ 5 : 32 ] His words and songs of joyfulness.

Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord our God, As we gather in Your name on this Lord's day, Help us to be aware in the first place That we are gathered in Your presence, In order to worship Your great and Your holy name.

And we do so fearful that we are not as we ought to be, Even in our most holy things, There is a selfishness that marks us out, A consequence of our fallenness, Where our desires, our expressions of need or want, Are for the most part, Are for the most part self-centered.

Rather than our eye being on the God, Who is the recipient of our praises, Who is the one to whom we should come with expressions of, Of what we are as Your creatures, And what You are as our creator.

Reminding ourselves of our dependence upon You, That it is in You that we live and move and have our being.

[ 7 : 21 ] You gave us breath in the first instance, You gave us the breath of life. However, You have decreed the natural world functions, And man within that world.

How You have created man in many different ways, With aspects to our creaturehood that are unique, And that are entirely of Your orderly.

And yet in an exceptional way, You created us in Your own image. And You have bestowed upon our first parents, The distinctives that marked them out as, Those who were able to come as we do today to worship, With the desire to elevate the name of our God, And to give to You, The expressions of thankfulness that ought to be ours, For all that we enjoy from Your hand.

We seek forgiveness for our neglect, For our forgetfulness, For our, As we have already acknowledged, Our selfishness, Where we are at the centre of our universe, And God is displaced from the place that you ought to possess.

Help us to overcome that innate desire for greatness. Even as we see it demonstrated within the pages of scripture, As we see our first parents, Led by the enemy of their soul, To seek that place that belonged only to God, And to make believe that what they were doing was theirs of right.

[ 9 : 31 ] And how often do we do that? How often do we even deny Those who would come to be our guide In the things that belong to you, In order to direct others to you, That the very same who would receive good from our hand, By that reason, That they cast us aside, And say that they have the right, And they have the proper authority Over the affairs of the soul.

Lord, help us to overcome such foolish notions, And to realise that our impotence is manifest. It is so plain to us, That we cannot save ourselves.

It is even more plainer, That we do need to be saved. That we will never attain to the greatness of this potential in all, Through Christ, Without Christ.

Direct us to his footsteps, Surrendering our very being to him. Remember, Lord, All who worship you today, In spirit and in truth, The world over.

We give thanks that even though, Our number may be few, That there are many places, Where there are many. And yet, It is not the numbers that, That are of import.

[ 11 : 11 ] But the very thing that is unifying, That we come in the name, And for the sake, Of one Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Be a lone Saviour of sinners. In his name we gather, And it is his name we plead, In order that blessing would be secured.

So remember us each one today, According to the needs that we have. Personal needs, Private needs, Family needs, Community needs, Whatever they are, They are not hidden from you.

We acknowledge that we find ourselves, Under a cloud. When we, When we think of those, Who have been visited by death, This time, And we acknowledge, The grief that we feel, And the sorrow that we share, In part with those, That have been touched.

It would be, Unseemly, For us, Not to be touched, In whatever way, With the griefs of others, Be they mothers, Or grandparents, Or brothers, Or sisters, Or whatever, The ties may be, We, We do Lord, Seek your grace, For all affected, At this time, And even for our community here.

[ 12 : 45 ] In the scene, Of time, We are not strangers, To visitations, That are, So, So sad, And so difficult, To bear, But they speak to us, Of this world's woes, A world that lies in sin, And, As a consequence of that, There are so many, Sad, Experiences, That each one of us, May have to encounter, Grant to us grace, That we may know, To look to the God, Of all grace, To be amongst those, Who would bear the burdens, Of those who, Are so enfeebled, By circumstance, That they know not, To lift their eye, To the heavens, We pray, Lord, That you would, Encourage us, To look to the heavens, I to the hills, Will lift mine eyes, From whence doth come my need, My safety cometh,

From the Lord, Who heaven and earth, Has made, You are our God, To whom else can we go, You alone have the words, Of eternal life, We pray, Lord, Your blessing, Upon the sick, The injured, Be the injured, In body or mind, Those who are enfeebled, By the ravages of time, Those housebound, Hospitalised, Requiring the care of others, Be with them, We pray, And enable those, Whose task it is, To deliver such care, To know to look to the Lord, When they themselves, Are at their parents, We cannot look beyond you, And we certainly should not look, Anywhere before you, And yet, We confess that we do, It is at the end of our resources, That we tend to cry out to God,

It is when we have, Failed that we, Look for strength, That is greater than our own, Rather than looking to the God, Who is, A God who is God over all, Forgive us these transgressions, Bless your word to us today, And all who go out with it, To the far corners of the earth, We give thanks, That you are able to speak, Peace in the, In the midst of war, That you are able to, Bring nourishment, When there is, Starvation, That you are able to bring shelter, When, They are suffering, From the ravages of, The elements, There are so many things, There are so many things, There are so many things, There are so many things, That demands our attention, In prayer, Think of, Ukraine, And, The places in the world,

Where there is, Ongoing warfare, We think also, The places in the world, Where there is, Natural calamities, Where there is flood, And famine, Where those who, Are in such dire, Need that, They have, They have been driven, To such despair, That the, The young, And the older, Are despised, In order, For they themselves, To survive, Lord, We give thanks, That there is a word, That teaches us, To look unto Jesus, And to do so, In order to be enriched, To be fed, To be clothed, To be led, In the path of life, We live in a world, That is rich, In many of its resources, And yet, These resources, Are abused, Forgive us, For that abuse, Hear our prayers,

Then, Bless your word, To us today, As we reflect on, Your word, Help us to engage, With it, And it to, To speak to us, Grant, Mercy, For our many sins, In Jesus name, Amen.

[ 17 : 02 ] Amen. We're going to read, In the Old Testament, Scriptures, And the book, Of the prophet, Micah, The book, Of the prophet, Micah, And we're reading, Chapter 2, Micah, Chapter 2, Micah, Micah, Micah comes after Jonah, And before, The prophecy of Nahum, Woe to them, That devise iniquity, And work evil, Upon their beds, When the morning is light, They practice it, Because it is in the power, Of their hand, And the covered fields, And take them by violence, And houses, And take them away, So they oppress a man,

And his house, Even a man, And his heritage, Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, Against this family do I devise an evil, From which ye shall not remove your necks, Neither shall ye go haughtily, For this time is evil, In that day shall one take up, A parable against you, And lament with a doleful lamentation, And say we be utterly spoiled, He hath changed the portion of my people, How hath he removed it from me, Turning away he hath divided our fields, Therefore thou shalt have none, That shall cast a chord by lot, In the congregation of the Lord, Prophecy ye not, Say to them that prophesy, They shall not prophesy to them, That they shall not take shame,

O thou that art named the house of Jacob, Is the spirit of the Lord straightened, Are these his doings, Do not my words do good to him That walketh uprightly, Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy, Ye pull off the robe with the garment, From them that pass by securely, As men averse from war, The women of my people have ye cast out, From their pleasant houses, From their children have ye taken away, My glory forever, Arise ye and depart, For this is not your rest, Because it is polluted, It shall destroy you, Even with a soul of destruction, If a man walking in the spirit, And falsehood, Do lie, Saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine, And of strong drink, He shall even be the prophet of this people,

I will surely assemble, O Jacob, All of thee, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel, I will put them together as the sheep of Bosra, As the flock in the midst of their fold, They shall make great noise, By reason of the multitude of men, The breaker is come up before them, They have broken up, And have passed through the gate, And are gone out by it, And their king shall pass before them, And the Lord on the head of them, Amen, And may the Lord add his blessing, To a reading of his word, To his name be the praise, Now boys and girls, We were looking that Sunday, At the great physician, The Lord Jesus, A great healer, We are told, He is also, Somebody who comes,

Not only to heal, Physically, But to heal, Spiritually, And, There were many, Who lived in the days, Of the Lord Jesus, Who sought him out, Because of his willingness, And his ability, To heal the physical, Deficiencies, His physical, Illnesses, That many suffered from, But sometimes, Their illnesses, Were greater, Than the illnesses, That other people had, They had, Spiritual illnesses, Some of them, We are told, In the New Testament, That they had, Devils, They had, Evil spirits, Taking over their lives, And, That might, Be strange to us, We can't see, Spirits, They're, They're hidden, From our eyes, But that doesn't mean,

[ 22 : 09 ] That they're not there, That they don't operate, In the world, The Bible tells us, That they are there, That there are, All kinds of, Spirits, That work in the world, And it is, That the Lord, Was in, In the world, As, As someone, Who met, With all kinds, Of need, He met, Many people, And they had, They had, They had, An encounter with them, You'll know the story, Of the gathering, Demonic, Somebody, Who had been, Many years, In chains, Because of, The effects, Of evil spirits, Now, Those who saw Jesus, Were perfectly happy, For him, To say to them, That they were, Physically, Healed, And that it was, Right and proper, For him to do that, If he could, But there are occasions, When Jesus,

Healed, The sick, And he said, To them, Go now, Your sins, Are forgiven you, Your sins, Are forgiven you, And many, Of the people, Who saw Jesus, Heal the sick, Were happy for him, To heal them, Physically, But not, To take, The, The power, That was his, And to, Express it in this way, Of forgiving sins, And, They were very much, Against him, Because of that, And what I was thinking, Was I was thinking, Well, Even today, If a Christian, Speaks to a person, And, Speaks to them, About the needs, Of their soul, And tells them, That, They know somebody, Who can help them, Because of their,

Spiritual need, Very often, Very often, You'll find them, Say, Oh, That's not really, An area, I want you to, Intrude into, My spiritual life, Is my spiritual life, I don't want you, To talk to me about it, I don't want you, To intrude into it, My, My religious life, Is my own, And, In many respects, That kind of thinking, Goes right back, To the, The strange, Behavior, Of some, Who, Despised Jesus, Because, He expressed, His power, Over, Over the, Sickness of the body, As well as, The sickness of the soul, Openly, And they, They were annoyed with it, And annoyed with him, Because of it, So I think you've got to remember, But I would like you to remember this anyway, That when we think of Jesus the healer, We like to think of him as somebody,

Who did good in the world, And to touch the lives of so many people, In a positive way, But the greatest, Healing, That he is able to do, And that he still does, Is the healing, Of the soul, The healing of the man, And the woman, And the boy, And the girl, Whose soul, Is affected by sin, And only Jesus, Can heal that, And he has told us clearly, That he has, Come into the world, To do that thing, That's what the gospel is about, That's what you learn in Sunday school, That's what you hear, So often, From Christian friends, Jesus, Jesus, Is the great, Physician, Of, Souls, And I hope you learn that, For yourself, And go to him, As someone, Who needs to, Learn what that means, Well may,

God bless these few thoughts, To us, I'm going to sing, As we go out now, From Psalm 44, Psalm 44, We're singing from the beginning, To verse 8, O God, We with our ears have heard, Our fathers have us told, What works thou in their days hadst done, Even in the days of old, Thy hand did drive the heathen out, And plant them in their place, Thou didst afflict the nations, But then thou didst increase, For neither got their sword the land, Nor did their arm them save, But thy right hand, Aram, Countenance, For thou them favour gave, Thou art my king, For Jacob, Lord, Deliverance's command, Through thee we shall push down our foes, That do against us stand, We through thy name shall tread down those,

[ 27 : 17 ] That rosen against us have, For in thy bow I shall not trust, For in my bow I shall not trust, Nor shall my sword me save, But from our foes thou hast us saved, Our haters put to shame, In God we all the day do boast, And ever praise thy name, We can sing from the beginning of the psalm, To verse 8, Psalm 44, O God, We with our ears have heard, O God, We with our ears have heard, Our fathers have a stone, What worth thou in their case of stone, In the days of old,

Thy hand to thrive beneath the light, And plant them in their place, Thou didst afflict the nations, But then thou didst increase, For neither goeth their sword, Nor didst it arm them save, But thy right hand and arm,

And for thy name we forgive, Thou art my King, For Jacob, Lord, Deliverance and command, Through thee we shall push, Turn our foes, Thou do not stand, We through thy name Shall threaten those

Thou praise against us, For in thy bow I shall not trust, Nor shall thy sword be saved, But from her foes, Thou hast us saved, Our haters, Through to shame, In God we all have to do, And ever praise thy name

Can we turn now to the book of the prophet Micah, And we can read again at verse 12, The book of the prophet Micah, Chapter 2, And at verse 12, I will surely assemble, O Jacob, All of thee, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel, I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, As the flock in the midst of their foe, They shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men, The breakers come up before them, They have broken up and have passed through the gate and are gone out by it, Their king shall pass before them, And the Lord on the head of them.

[ 32 : 35 ] Sure, on the face of it these words are mysterious unless we take on board the context in which these words are found.

In chapter 6 the prophet says, The Lord has a controversy with his people. And what that means is that God is going to deal with his people in the light of the way that they are behaving before him.

He is not happy. He is not happy with his own people, Israel. His own people who bear his name.

They are not behaving in the way they should, Bearing in mind the nature of the relationship that should be enjoyed by them.

Now it may be that you think that these words, The Lord has a controversy with his people. That's really words to the church.

[ 33 : 58 ] God has got a problem with the church. And if you are not a member of the church, if you don't belong to that number, The controversy that God has with his people, the church, It's not really got much to do with you.

It's their business but not yours. Whatever it means, however it will work itself out, it won't affect you.

But that's not right. God has business with this world. God has business with this world. God has business with this world. God has business with this world.

God has business with this world. And much of what is done by him in the world has to do with their eternal wellbeing. God has business with this world.

And his purpose in dealing graciously with them is in order to establish them in a fully odd relationship with himself while they live in the world with the prospect of an eternal fullness God has yet to be enjoyed by them.

[ 35 : 20 ] Now that has implications for those who are not his people. Because whether they like it or not, if God is displeased with his people, His displeasure will impact upon those who are other than his people.

His, you know, there is clear teaching in God's word that there is saving grace expressed by God directly towards his people.

That means grace that God bestows on a sinner that will result in the salvation of their soul.

But then there is common grace. That is grace that God bestows upon the world in general, on people within the world, out of the goodness of his own heart.

And for the benefit of his people, no doubt, because he doesn't wish his people to suffer unnecessarily. So he bestows gifts and graces upon the generality of the world that makes our life in general easier.

[ 36 : 41 ] He gives gifts and graces that impact upon our life in science, in medicine, in education, and so on. And people are enabled to exercise their gifts, intellectually, physically, in whatever way these gifts are God given.

Now they, many of those who are possessed, who are given these gifts, may not ever acknowledge God in this world. May live their life to the exclusion of God, excluding God from their life and from their interest.

And yet God is able to use them. All you have to do is read through the Old Testament and you'll find men that are raised up by God to be his judges.

They're not his people. And yet God uses them to chastise the enemies of his people. God uses them to defeat the enemies of his people.

They themselves are not numbered amongst them. So if God is spoken of by the prophet, and he does say that in chapter 6.

[ 37 : 58 ] Hear ye, O mountains, the Lord's controversy, and ye strong foundations of the earth. For the Lord hath had controversy with his people, and he will plead with Israel.

And what he is saying is, I am speaking to you as a judge. And the courtroom, these are to be my witnesses.

My own creation, the world in which you live, that I created, will speak against you. The mountains, the heavens, all that you survey as your own and as kings lord over them.

These will speak against you. And my servant, the prophet, I will send him into the courtroom, and he will address you on these issues, because I have a controversy with you.

So if you read through this short prophecy, you'll find that it is laden with the dark foreboding of God's judgment that is imminent.

[ 39 : 08 ] And the prophet is sent to proclaim what God is going to do. And he will use the surrounding nations to suppress the willful desires of those who obey his name and who have gone out of the way in order to bring them back into that way.

So that's the background to the words of our text today. You might think that, oh well, that's all very interesting, minister.

This is something that happened so many years ago. The prophet Micah lived 800 years before the birth of Christ. And here we are 202,000 years after the death of Christ.

And you're quoting from a prophet who was all that time ago. What does he have to say to us today? And you'd be surprised to find when you read carefully through the prophecy that there are so many things that God is condemning, that God is identifying as stirring up his hostility.

They are the very things that are current in our day and generation. They are the very behaviours that we see round about us day in, day out, both within and without the church of God.

[ 40 : 38 ] Now the interesting thing about the prophet Micah is, he's not the best known of all the prophets. And I suppose if you were asked a question as a Christian, if you were asked a question, which one of the prophets do you think speaks most about the person of the Lord Jesus, of all the Old Testament prophets?

You might go to Isaiah, I certainly would. Probably go to Isaiah first of all and say, There's much that Isaiah has to say about the coming Messiah and what was going to happen when he came and what was going to happen in his lifetime and how his life was going to end.

And the prophecy of Isaiah would probably spring to mind. But strangely, of all the prophets, the prophet Micah has more to say about the Messiah, about Jesus Christ, than any one of them.

He's got as much to say as Isaiah, if not more. And he points us in his direction and he tells us what he is going to do.

And he tells us what kind of relationship he will have with his people when he is in the world, that he will have with his people after he leaves the world, and what will happen when he returns to the world to bring his own to be with himself.

[ 42 : 06 ] Perhaps the best known prophecy that we find in the book of Micah is found in chapter 5. And we read in chapter 5, And so on.

And going on down in that chapter, it's an interesting chapter. There are clear references and they're clear because the New Testament themselves bears testimony to the prophecy as being fulfilled in the experience of our Lord at certain times.

So that's what lies at the heart of this. We have a prophet, a prophet speaking to a people who God has a controversy with.

A prophet who sets before them imminent judgment and also ongoing judgment because of persistent misbehavior. But in the midst of all that, there is a hope presented to us concerning the provision that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to be to them as the people of God.

The people of God are often described as a remnant. And maybe you believe that.

[ 44 : 01 ] And you should because that's the way the Bible describes the people of God. A remnant. There was a company. I don't know if it's still around at the rate of the appearance and disappearance of various companies.

There was a company, a carpet company called Remnant Kings. I don't know if it still exists or not. But it sold bits of carpet that were the, I think they were the end of rolls of carpet that would be useful.

It's not too small to be used anywhere else. But Remnant speaks about a small number. The people of God are small in number.

The people of God are despised because of their number. Because they are few in number. They are a world that knows so many different expressions of interest in certain things that are the talk of the town.

And thousands upon thousands, if not millions, pursue them with relentless glee. And because of the numeric number there is there of delight in these things, it is accepted that this must be right.

[ 45 : 23 ] This must be the thing. This must be the thing that matters. Because there are so many people pursuing these interests. And in comparison, God's people are tiny.

The church is declining in the Western world as far as we see it. Surely that must mean that God's kingdom on earth is on the way.

And surely that must mean that this old belief that was so prevalent in the lives of many in these islands is at long last on the way out.

And it doesn't matter. And it's about time people realise that. But that is not the way it is.

God always stood on the ground that was certain that he would have a number that would bear his name.

[ 46 : 30 ] God always said, I will have my own people in this world.

God always said, forever. As long as there is a world, I will have a witness. They will bear testimony to me. Perhaps in this village. Perhaps in the next village.

Wherever. I will always have one person. I will always have two people. The rest may be all against me. But I will have my witnesses. And that's the way it is.

And that's the way it was for Micah. But he still had a world for them. He still had a world for the small number. A world that would sustain them.

In a world that was hostile and meaningless. And that's what this world that we're looking at today.

[ 47 : 34 ] Three times we find reference to future, the future activity of God with regard to that remnant.

In chapter 5 and 6 I think. In chapter 7 or 4 and 5 in chapter 7. There are more clearly defined elements of that hope.

And here we have a very sketchy description of what God is going to do in the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. But we need to understand that however much what he is saying here is but an inkling of what he is going to do.

It is still a voice that we need to understand as to what it says. God has many voices.

I'm not sure if I'm right in speaking of it like this. But I'll give it a go anyway. God has many voices by which he speaks to this world.

[ 48 : 42 ] Sometimes he thunders through providences that are difficult to bear. And his voice is heard in that grim providence.

Sometimes his voice is heard in his benevolence. In his goodness and in his charity. When those who are recipients of it do not.

They appreciate that what they are receiving from God's hand they are undeserving of. God's voice can be heard there. Can you hear a voice that's not heard?

Does that make sense? God says, I think that the worst thing that God can do to a generation is be silent.

Not say anything. Not say anything. All he does is just say, I'll leave you.



[ 49 : 55 ] Go on the way you are. I will not speak to you. You will not hear my voice. You will not know that I'm there.

All there will be is silence. And I think that's the worst experience of all. And people who don't know God will conclude wrongfully.

That because he is not speaking. And because his voice is not there. That he has nothing to say.

But that's not right. What he is saying is, I have spoken and you have not listened. I have been kind to you.

And your kindness has done nothing. I have commanded your respect by thundering from the heavens. And you have hardened your heart against me. Now I'll just leave you.

[ 51 : 05 ] To go on as you are. Until the day comes when I will speak. And you will know that I am speaking. So it's a grace, a wonderful grace that these people are enjoying.

When a prophet is sent by God to speak to them. Telling them, God has a controversy with you. And when he is speaking to them in that light.

It is a wonder, is it not? That even though the controversy is clear. Even though the judgment is imminent.

That he is still holding a word of grace out to them. Look at the activity that is demonstrated here. I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee.

I will surely gather the remnant of Israel. I will put them together as the sheep of Bosra. As the flock in the midst of the fold. They shall make great noise by reason, not the multitude of men.

[ 52 : 14 ] I think what you need to take with you there. I want to hurry through it. Simply it's this. That God is telling us there. This is what I am doing. This is what I am doing.

They are shouting. They are making a noise. But I will assemble. I will gather. I will put together as the sheep of Bosra.

So what he is looking for there. What he is telling them to look for. To anticipate. Is a blessing that he has promised. That will accompany the coming of the gospel.

Of the gospel to which he is going to come. Which he is going to speak of. I was thinking of this. Looking at this passage. I was reminded of this. And please forgive me for reminiscing.

And it comes out of my own fondness for sheep. My first experiences of going to the moor. And in our village there was a.

[ 53 : 17 ] Well we called it a mountain. And it was there. And those who went out to gather. Some had to go up to by raga. Some of the sheep would be up there. Some went round the back.

And came round the front. From both ends. So if you were standing from afar. What you saw was. These streams of sheep. Coming from all directions.

And they were being driven by dogs. And they were being driven by dogs. And their shepherds. But they were coming together. And was a.

I thought it was a lovely image. But that's me. I thought it was a nice. A wonderful picture. Of sheep being gathered. And it stayed with me.

And that's the image we have here. This is what the Lord is going to do. He's speaking to a people. That because of his judgment. And because of his withdrawal.

[ 54 : 17 ] Of his grace. They've been scattered by their enemies. They've been allowed. To go this way and that. They've gone their own way. But God is going to come.

And bring them back to himself. He is going to. Bring them back. So that they're gathered. Under his supervision once again.

Under his care. Under his nourishment once again. And well. Is it not a mystery. Is it not a mystery. In the life of a believer.

That they would actually go away. From the care of God. And wander away from him. Do their own thing. Is it not a wonder. That they would go and.

Satisfy themselves. With the husks. That the. Prodigal. Had to go and satisfy himself with. Left. His father's house.

[ 55 : 16 ] And. He went. Find himself. Starving. And that's the way. The Lord's people are at times.

They go away from. Spiritual sustenance. Because they. They get. Itchy feet. They get. Tired of.

What they shouldn't tire of. For whatever reason. But it's there in the Bible. And you can't deny. What the Bible is saying. That's the way. The Lord's people are. From time to time. They do the wrong thing.

But God. In his mercy. Brings him. Back to himself. And that's the wonder. He speaks of. The shepherd. And Micah.

Speaks often. Of the shepherd. The shepherd of Israel. And. It is no wonder. That he looks forward. To the. Good shepherd. The Lord.

[ 56 : 11 ] His shepherd. It's no wonder. That he thinks. Of someone. Who demonstrates. A love. For his. Sheep. Like no other. But let's look.

At verse 13. Briefly. The time is going. But we can't. Look at it. Without remembering. That it is. Speaking. Preeminently.

For Jesus Christ. The breaker. Has come up. Before them. They have broken up. And have passed through the gates. And have gone out by it. And their king shall pass over them.

And the Lord. On the head of them. There are three pictures there. Three names. Given to us. Of the one person. The breaker. And the king. And the Lord.

Who is on the head of them. They are the same person. But they are describing. What this person is doing. The shepherds. In eastern.

[ 57 : 07 ] The experience. Of shepherding. Not driving the sheep. But leading them. He is at the head of them. In the wilderness. He goes before them.

The Lord's people. Who understand the teaching. Of the Old Testament. Saints. Which goes back to. Moses. And the wilderness. The wilderness.

That's how the Lord's people. Look to God. To lead them through the wilderness. That was an image. Their king. Was before them. Their king was. Was someone that they.

They looked for. You know. In Psalm 77. Thou ledest thy people. Like a flock. By the hand of Moses. And Aaron. In Deuteronomy chapter 8.

Thou shalt remember. All the way. Which the Lord. Thy God. Led thee. These 40 years. In the wilderness. To humble thee. To prove thee. To know not. What was in thy heart.

[ 58 : 03 ] To know. What was in the heart. Whether. You would keep. His commandments. Or not. But he was before them. He was leading them.

He was taking them. A way. Where they would. Learn. Of his care. For them. And. Of his provision. For them. And that's what.

The prophet. Is looking towards. Here. The breaker. Has come up. Before them. And he's anticipating. The coming.

Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. The coming. Of the Messiah. And the role. That he is to fulfill. On his coming. Into the world. Many Old Testament.

passages. Describe. The Messiah. In this way. But it's so. So. Obvious. That. Many. Misunderstood.

[ 59 : 00 ] What that meant. Because. The Jews. Who were. Contemporary. With Christ. Expected. Somebody. Who would. Be.

A Roman. General. Or. The likes. Of it. Not necessarily. A Roman. Who had. The powers. And the skills. Of the battlefield.

Someone. Who would. Be a champion. Of the people. Someone. Who would. Have himself. And be able. To overthrow. The enemies. That had.

Invaded. Their land. That's the image. Of the Messiah. That's what he was going to do. But it was a misapplied image. A mighty man of war.

Dealing against his enemies. And that's what he was going to do. But not in the way they. Anticipated. He is to give light to those sitting in darkness.

[ 59 : 58 ] And in the shadow of death. Guiding. Our feet in the way of peace. That's what the Bible says Jesus was going to do. New Testament. The New Testament.

Passage. In Hebrews. For as much then. As the children are partakers. Of flesh and blood. He also himself likewise. Took part of the same. That through death.

He might destroy him. That at the power of death. That is the devil. And deliver them. Who through fear of death. Were all their lifetime. Subject to bondage. You know.

What he was going to do. Was going to. Redeem his people. To save his people. To be. The deliverer of his people. But through death.

Through his own death. Through the crucifixion. It didn't make sense. That's not how they. Read scripture. That's not how they understood it. Death was something that.

[ 60 : 53 ] That was the experience of the. Vanquished. Rather than the victor. That's not how they understood. But that's what Christ. Was going to do. Where.

Is Christ going to lead. Who is he going to lead. Do we not encounter. In his word. Many. Many. Occasions.

Where he says. To those who listen to him. Follow me. Follow me. Come after me. I will make you fishers of men. He said to the disciples. I will lead you.

Into a new. And a living way. I will. Open. The road. For you. Which is a narrow way. And a. A gate. That leads to life.

But that's. What he was going to do. And that's what this speaks of. Of. Those who are his. They have. Broken up.

[ 61 : 55 ] Have passed through the gate. And have gone out by. Their king. Will. Pass before them. The Lord. Shall be at their head. Is that not what he did.

God. And. Sometimes. I think. We need to. Realize. That. It's not just.

Interpreting. Scripture. That's. Difficult to interpret. That we have. Difficulty. With. You know. Sometimes. It takes a bit of work. To.

Appreciate. What the word of God. Is saying. but if we are familiar enough with it we should manage to come to light at some point. But the biggest problem the believer has is trying to unravel their own particular providences when they do not conform to their expectations.

When things occur in their experience that they were unprepared for and they are not designed as it were to understand or to deal with.

[ 63 : 15 ] In the same epistle Hebrews he says having therefore brother and boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which was consecrated for us through the veil that is to save his flesh.

Now with hindsight we can look back and say this is speaking about what Christ did how he did it what it meant you know by way of conclusion.

but if you were to ask a person who lived with Christ how are you going to open this new way for me that I am expected to follow.

You want me to follow you and you follow me you want me to follow you into this new way and yet it's through the veil it's through the cross it's through the death the sacrificial death the sacrificial death of the cross.

How can I follow you in that? How can I understand why it is necessary for you to experience that? Why is God allowing you? Why is God insisting that you follow this path?

[ 64 : 23 ] Why is God the truth and the life so many of the names that he chooses so many of the names that are chosen for him by his people speak about the nature of what he is doing what he has done and what he is yet to do as we said and the Christian life is often fraught with difficulties that make us wonder am I in the right way?

Should this be in the way that I am in? Is this pain necessary? Is this pain the pain of God's people? Is this way that I'm following Jesus surely if I am following he would not allow me to suffer?

He would not allow me to have to encounter the temptations that come my way? He shouldn't allow me to encounter the sorrows and the sadnesses that come in the difficulties that family life brings in this world that work life brings in this world whatever it is.

I was reading recently one of the Puritan sons he was saying that the Christian has sometimes to encounter the experience of sin and we're used enough to sin in the sense that we recognise it when you're presented with sin and you know that it is sin you know if I do this I sin if I do this it is wrong as far as the word of God says and yet this man was saying many times we find ourselves engaging with sin but it comes in disguise it comes not as sin with the blatant flag waving that we would appreciate it to be what it is and because it doesn't come in the way we expect and it comes in disguise we welcome it and this is how he described it like Judas it kisses us and kills like Joab of old it salutes and then slays the hidden disguised way that sin works and the Christian will argue why did God allow me to encounter such covert experience of sin surely he should have alerted me to this danger surely he should have forewarned me surely he should have protected me so that

I wouldn't have fallen and embarrassed myself under cause of Christ by succumbing to it and it is always the same the Christian still has Christ as the breaker up of the way Christ had to wrestle with the devil he had to encounter sin in all its forms without sinning he had to meet with people who were in the grip of sin who were intent on his destruction he didn't avoid it he didn't deny himself the experience because he is to be his people's friend his people's advocate sometimes God works mysteriously and the time has gone I'm just going to finish with a story it's just something I've heard this week and I can't with certainty remember it in all accuracy but forgive me for that and don't misquote me when we were away this week some of us were away at an in-service training conference based in

[ 68 : 46 ] Edinburgh we stayed in a nice hotel about the top of Leith Walk and I used to stay in Leith on Leith Walk when I was a student but it's nearly 30 years since then and a lot has happened to Leith Walk since then because the Scottish government are intending for a tram line to run right down to the bottom of Leith Leith Docks so the roads have been ripped up and buildings have been knocked down and we were privileged to meet for our conference in a church that didn't exist when I was there it's a Grace church in Leith it didn't even exist when I was there and I believe I'm not sure for certain I believe they originated in the church of Scotland but they separated from it some members and they they said about finding a suitable building to to meet and there was this section of

Leith Walk that had been demolished I think and a new building had been erected and the new building that was erected was purpose built for Freemasons and believe me everybody who was there was envious of this church building that was now Grace Church Leith so how did they come about getting it well when the building was made the council set a fee which for rates that was beyond the ability of those who had purchased the building or who had wanted the building made so it's a new building and it's got all kinds of facilities and they said about putting money together so they could buy it once it came on the market initially the building was denied them because somebody outbid them and they were terribly disappointed it was just under a million pounds looking at that building today you wouldn't build it for two million but it was put on the market for 750,000 pounds they were able to afford that but they were outbid but fortunately for them the people who had been for it couldn't come up with the resources so they were given a second opportunity which they got and then having signed the lease or whatever covid came so there they had a building which they couldn't use which they had a debt for 800,000 pounds for and

I don't think well that's an interesting part of the story because if you expect God to be working in the life of a person surely everything is straightforward surely he's in control he knows how to do things and he'll take all the tweaks and the bends out of the road it's just a straight matter of God is in control and he is but he doesn't at times allow us to go through life without having to experience challenges and the minister of that congressman said believe me that was a challenge the money came from America by the way a lot of it that's how they were able to raise that money but he said the interesting and this was the interesting part for me he said he said this he said just a few yards along from where that church building was never a church building it was a building for

Freemasons which they intended to use as their club just a few yards away from that there is the site of the execution of covenanters during the 17th century I think about when the covenanters were on the scene about 18,000 of them were executed for their faith in Jesus Christ 18,000 over the period of the covenanting regime and close by the site of that church was the site where the covenanters were executed many of them and the story of one of them was that as he was being put to death he clutched a Bible and I don't know if it was taken out of his hands death or that he threw it himself into the crowd and he refused to deny his

Lord and the person in the crowd laid hold of the Bible and she clutched it to her breast and she too was brought to the front and she was asked to deny the Lord which she refused to do and she was sent in a ship as a result of that moment she was sent away on a ship to America or Australia and she died on the journey there but the thing is this here you have God as it were looking down on this world and seeing things that are hidden from our side nobody would believe that such a thing is possible nobody would believe that such a thing is credible but Micah was seen 800 years before the birth of Christ what Christ was going to do he was going to be the breaker up of the way for his people he was going to secure a new and a living way to everlasting life and he was going to fulfill all necessary righteousness for the salvation of sinners and

[ 75 : 38 ] Micah was given an insight into that and so what he saw you can believe it's not yet come to pass but it will the Lord's people will have the fullness of what he has promised experienced by them you will know I think this has to be understood what you've heard today maybe by the time you go through that gate you'll have forgotten it maybe you will but I think in the wisdom of God that there is nothing that you hear that you will not benefit from at some point in your life here in this world or in life to come or it will be something that will add to your eternal war you will be reminded of it it will be brought to your attention and you will be told

I knew because God told me that this is who Christ was what Christ did well I hope you understand that the prophet is there as God's servant sent in mercy to a people who don't deserve it we don't I don't not one of us do and yet he encourages us you know looking at the Isaiah he tells us there what Christ was going to do I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sand the bars of iron prophet Ezekiel a new heart I will give you a new spirit will I put within you I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh I will give you a heart of flesh

I will God will and that's what we believe may he do that for you even today let us pray Lord hear our prayer bless your word to us we give thanks that it is around your word that we have met that we are not gathered around the foolish notions and tales of this world that have so much of a presence and have so much interest in them but those who tell the tales and whose role it is to invent them or speak of them will go the way of all flesh whereas your word will live forever as the Christ who proclaimed it to his ears and pardons in his name amen our closing psalm is psalm 27 the beginning of the psalm the Lord's my light and saving health who shall make me dismay my life then is the

Lord of whom then shall I be afraid we'll sing to verse 4 the Lord's my light and saving health the Lord's my light and saving health who shall make me dismay my life strength is the Lord of whom then shall I be afraid when does my enemy stand forth most wicked passion fall to lead thy flesh against me rose this chamber and yet fall melodies and conferences cheered■■■

Gal and Beth on past thème pel We'll be confident in this.

[ 80 : 43 ] One thing I ought that Lord desire.

And will seek to obtain. That all days of my life I may.

Within God has remained. So may grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all, never and always. Amen.

Amen.