

The Name of the Lord is a Strong Tower

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[0 : 00] Very well and welcome to our service this morning as we come together to worship God. We pray that he above all else would be our portion today under the sound of his word.

We can begin our service singing from Psalm 91. Psalm 91 and we're singing from the beginning of the psalm down to verse 6.

Psalm 91. He that does in the secret place of the Most High reside, under the shade of him that is the Almighty shall abide.

I of the Lord my God will say, he is my refuge still. He is my fortress and my God and in him trust I will.

Assuredly he shall thee save and give deliverance from subtle foul or snare and from the noisome pestilence. His feathers shall thee hide, thy trust under his wings shall be.

[1 : 12] His faithfulness shall be a shield and buckler unto thee. Thou shalt not need to be afraid for terrors of the night, nor for the arrow that doth fly by day while it is light, nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness secretly, nor for destruction that doth waste at noonday openly.

And so on. Let us sing these verses. Psalm 91 from the beginning. He that doth in the secret place of the Most High reside.

He that doth in the secret place of the Most High reside, And there a shade of the Most High reside, And there a shade of the Most High reside, What is the Almighty shall abide?

I of the Lord my God will save.

He is my refuge still. He is my fortress and my hope, And in Him trust my will.

[3 : 08] Asher in me, He shall be saved, And give you deliverance, From satyr ful, Sner and frown, The noise of heaven still ends, Whose feather shall be high, I trust, And there His wings shall be, His faithfulness shall be a shield,

And bad gladness to Thee. Thou shalt not need to be afraid, For day I shall the night, Nor for the idol that doth fly, By day I live this night, Nor for the pestilence of the Lord,

In darkness secretly, Nor for the destruction, Nor for the destruction, At a place at noonday openly.

Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. Have a blessed God as we come before you, At this morning hour we give thanks that Our heads are bowed in the presence of our God, Who is the Almighty God, The only living and true God.

The one who inhabits eternity, The one who is sovereign in all the affairs of men. We give thanks for the experience of the psalmist, Who was under your own direction, Able to compose the sentiments that we have been singing, That speak of the divine protection that is afforded the people of God.

[6 : 51] Whether it is as a result of war, Or any of the griefs that often times are saved, As we say in the children of men, Sometimes ravaged by diseases, Some which can be openly discernible, Others that, as we were singing, Come in the night and are incapable of being prevented.

And so we have discovered even in our own experience as a nation, And even as nations, That there are things that may be understood to a degree, That there are diseases that are able to be identified, How they work, And in a manner what they result in producing in us.

And yet, we are recognized by reason of the devastation wrought, In different ways that there are things that lie beyond our power, And our ability to execute it in the face of many things that lie beyond the compass of our ability to overcome it.

We live in a world that is so often subject to change, And just as the world changes, And the experience of those in it change accordingly, So there are new things that arise in many situations that were previously unheard of.

But the God who is God over all is the same. You are without change. And even though the seasons have been ordained by your own wisdom, That we would move from spring into summer into autumn into winter, The tides and the rising and setting of the sun, All of these things have been ordained by God.

[9 : 18] And man foolishly believes that he is in control of these things, And clearly we are not. And we acknowledge that even more importantly, You have ordained the end of our time here in this world.

Death came into the experience of man following on from sin, And as a result of that, The bounds that you have set will not be passed.

And every one of us will encounter the last enemy, death. And each will then, according to your own decree, Give an answer to God for how we have lived our life in the flesh, Whether it is doing good or doing bad.

Following on death there is judgment, you see, And an encounter with the one who is the judge of the quick and the dead. We pray for wisdom to avail ourselves of the provision made for us in the gospel, That would allow us to prepare for it and be ready when the Son of Man will come.

We pray, Lord, your blessing on the gospel to that end, That we would be persuaded by it, to avail ourselves of the day of opportunity. We think that that is set out before us.

[10 : 53] Within the campus of our own sight, we can see what our future is. And we determine our days as if that was so.

And yet, whatever our plans are for today, let alone the weeks and the months and the years that we have thoughtlessly believed that they would be lived out by us.

That who knows what day or hour will bring. And it is wisdom to be ready. Always ready for that moment when we will close our eyes at the last.

You speak to us through the lives and the deaths of those who have gone before us. Reminding us that not only do those who live to old age, That they will pass from time into eternity.

That we accept and that we are ready to be reconciled to. And yet so often we hear of youngsters and even infants leave this world barely having experienced it in their lives.

[12 : 09] And we pray for all who today have sore hearts. Because they have death in their cup. And we pray for the sorrowing wherever they are found. We know that they are there, whether we may know them or not.

We pray for those who are struggling to live. Those who are even now at death's door. For your people the day of their death is better than the day of their birth.

We remember them to you and pray Lord that you would encourage them and sustain them. Even against the machinations of the enemy of our soul.

For even at the eleventh hour he tirelessly seeks to undermine confidence in the finished work of Christ. Drive him away and his emissaries.

That may all who know him who is life eternal will be consoled by his presence and comforted with the knowledge that to be with him is better by far.

[13 : 18] We remember also those who have been in an unprepared state. But even nervous others who lived out their life Christless came to know that Christ at the last.

But how few did only eternity will tell. Because the day will come when an answer will be given to questions concerning to what it profits a man to lose their own soul.

Even were they to have all the possessions and the riches of this world. We pray for your blessing upon the proclamation of the truth. Here in this place today and in every other location where the gospel is proclaimed.

And Christ lifted up and men and women young and old encouraged to put their trust in him. How foolish we are when we delude ourselves into thinking that there is something more precious than Christ.

And more lasting than the blessings that he has to confer upon us. May he remind us afresh of his own willingness to save even all who would come to him.

[14 : 43] So may the proclamation of that truth the world over see sinners turn from their sin to Christ. So that the world would be profitably sown.

A seed even on ground that seems so inhospitable. But yet in the mysterious goodness of God you have prepared the soil to receive that seed.

So that in your time there would be a rich harvest. Hear our prayers to that end. Remembering all we entrust to your care and keeping today. Within the congregation here all who fall apart offered to us.

Inable to be present and be blessed upon them. Those who are unwell may they know your own near presence and your words speaking loudly to them.

Whether in hospital or at home or in the care of others whatever that may be. We remember the grieving and the sorrowful. And we pray for your sanctification of that voice to one and all.

[15 : 59] Remember Lord those of our number who may be seriously ill at the present. And we commend them to you and seek for your own goodness to be known to them.

So that they would not fear whatever it is that assails them at the present. Remember the nation that we belong to. Those who govern us and those who are responsible for rule over man.

Accountable as they are to you they forget that. And yet the day will come when their accountability will be before their eyes. So we pray that you would break into the darkness with the marvelous light of your countenance.

Lift it up before us that we might experience salvation. Be merciful to our world that lies in the darkness of sin.

We pray for the nations that are at war. Those who know the outcome of civil war. We know for a fact that many, many without number have been embroiled in such horrible circumstances.

[17 : 16] And the ramifications of it are beyond question. Infants and elderly left in an impoverished state and barely sustaining life.

And we see it so often tugging at our heart and so little that we can't do. And yet the abuse of the privileges and the blessings that abound to the sin sick world are before us.

When they are centered in the lives of those who are themselves corrupt. And who are desirous of satisfying their own sinful inclinations to the exclusion of others.

That too will be brought to their account. So watch over us in mercy. Pour out your spirit upon the sin sick world as we said. That the day will come when there will be not just a local revival but an international revival of religion.

Where men and women young and old alike will cry out to God. What must I do to be saved? Hear our petitions. Grant mercy for our sins in Jesus name.

[18 : 28] Amen. I'm going to sing now to God's praise from Psalm 9. Psalm 9 at verse 7.

The sixth stanza is down to verse 13. God shall endure for a he does for judgment set his throne.

In righteousness to judge the world. Justice to give each one. God also will a refuge be for those that are oppressed.

A refuge will he be in times of trouble to distress. And they that know thy name in thee their confidence will place. For thou hast not forsaken them that truly seek thy face.

O sing ye praises to the Lord that dwells in Zion Hill. And all the nations among whose deeds record ye still. When he inquires after blood he then remembereth them.

[19 : 32] The humble folk he not forgets that call upon his name. Lord pity me. Behold the grief which I from foes sustain.

Even thou who from the gates of death. Thou hast raise me up again. Let us sing these verses. Psalm 9 from verse 7 to 13.

God shall endure for a he does for judgment set his throne. O challenge for a he does for judgment set his throne.

God shall endure for a he does for judgment set his throne. God shall endure for a he does for judgment set his throne. And righteousness to judge the world. Justice to give each one.

God also will a refuge be for those that are not made by the Lord.

[20 : 48] For a box I do. And who ans the dark of grace. A refuge where he been in times of traffic Jest! Is the kingdom called of the Seolus.

O marvel. Purely która he will of God is toada And they that know thy name in thee, their confusions will win.

For thou hast not forsaken them that truly seek thy face.

O sing ye praises to the Lord that dwells inside your hill.

And to all the nations among its deeds record ye still.

[22 : 23] When he inquireth after blood, he then remembereth them.

The humble folk he not forgets that call upon his name.

Lord, pity me, behold the grief which I compose the sting.

If thou who from the gates of death doth raise me up again.

Amen. I'm going to read from the scriptures of the Old Testament and from the book of Proverbs.

[23 : 48] The book of Proverbs and chapter 18. Proverbs 18.

Through desire, a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.

A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself. When the wicked cometh, then cometh also content, and with ignominy reproach.

The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook. It is not good to accept the passion of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes. A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

[25 : 04] The words of a tail-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly. He also that is slothful, in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is safe. The rich man's wealth is a strong city, and as an high wall is, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

Before destruction the heart of man is hoity, and before honour is humility. He that answereth a man amartyreth before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear. The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men. He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour is cometh and searcheth him.

[26 : 26] The lot causes contentions to cease, and part us between the mighty. A brother offended is harder to be one than a strong city, and their contentions are like the barge of a castle.

A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth, and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the town, and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord. The poor useth entreaties, but the rich answereth roughly.

A man that hath friends must show himself friendly, and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to this reading of his word, and to his name be the praise.

Let us now sing verses that we find in Psalm 49. Psalm 49, and we'll read at verse 6.

[27 : 49] Psalm 49 at verse 6. Swear they be that in their wealth Their confidence do pitch, And boast themselves, Because they are become exceeding rich.

Yet none of these his brother can redeem by any way, Nor can he unto God, For him sufficient ransom pay. Their soul's redemption precious is, And it can never be, That still he should forever live, And not corruption see.

For why? He seeth that wise men die, And brutish fools also, Do perish, And their wealth, While dead to others they let go.

Their inwards of death, That their house and dwelling places shall, Stand through all ages, They their lands, By their own names do call.

But yet in honour, Shall not man abide continually, But passing hence may be compared, And to the beasts that die.

[28 : 59] Let us sing these verses. Psalm 49, Singing from verse 6. Whore'er they be, That in their wealth, Their confidence, Do pitch.

And boast themselves, Because they are become exceeding rich, Yet none of these, His brother, Neither can redeem, Redeemed by any way, Nor can he unto God,

For him sufficient ransom pay, Their soul's redemption precious is, And it can never be, That still he should, For ever live, And not God of heaven see, For why he seeth that wise men die, And brutish souls of soul,

To perish, And their wealth, When dead, To others, They let go, Their inward thought is that, Their house, And dwelling places shall, Stand through all ages, And their hands, By their own names, By their own names, To come, But yet in honour,

Honour shall not man, Abide continually, But passing hence, May be compared, And there, And there be the day.

[32 : 54] So we turn to the passage, That we were reading together, In the Old Testament scriptures, And in the book of Proverbs, Chapter 18, And we'll read together, At verse 10, The name of the Lord is a strong tower, The righteous runneth into it, And is safe, The rich man's wealth is his strong city, And as an high wall in his own conceit.

I'm sure you're all aware, At least of the book of Proverbs, And some of you may be familiar with, Some of the content of it.

It's not an easy book to read through, Because it's not, It's not meant to be read, In the sense that you would read a, A parable, Or, The New Testament account that we have, Of, Of Christ's life, And his ministry.

It's full of, Of, Of, Wise, Sayings, That can stand alone, And are, Meant to be considered, In that sense.

The wisdom, That is contained, May be, Repeated, Replicated, In different forms, Throughout the book.

[34 : 47] It's not, The case that once, A statement has been made, That's the end of the matter, The, There are a collection, Of authors, And, They sometimes, Agree, In, The wisdom, That they wish to communicate, To others.

But it is, As someone put it, A book, Of wise things, Which in many respects, Is an understatement. One of the commentaries, Has a subtitle, Or, I think it's probably the name, Of the commentary, A book of timeless, Advice.

A book of timeless advice. A book of timeless advice. Again, I think even that title, It limits, What the book actually contains.

But, If we were to, Summarise in brief, What the book is meant to, Convey to the reader.

I think you could safely, Suggest, That, Before you, You will find, How the wise are to live, Before God.

[36 : 07] How the wise are to live, Before God. And the consequences, For lacking wisdom, In that regard.

Because, There are consequences. If, If you are not wise, In the way that you live your life, Before God. In the sense that you acknowledge God, And live as God would have you live.

Then, The, The sayings that you find, In this book, Will remind you that, You can't do that, Without, Suffering, Consequences.

Either in this life, Or in the life to come. One of my own favourite passages, You find in this book, Is, A passage that teaches us something, Along these, Along these lines.

Trust in the Lord, With all your heart, Leading off to your own understanding. On all your ways, Acknowledge him. And he shall direct your paths.

[37 : 19] It's a, A verse that's full of, Pith and, Matter. But the fact of the matter is, That the scripture as a whole, Not just this book, Sets before us, Two paths.

The path of, Self-reliance, Independence, Which ultimately, Leads to, Destruction. And, The path, Which, Depends upon God, Relies upon God, Is a path, Which leads to, Fullness.

Fullness in this life, And, In the life to come. Now the two verses, That we're, That we're looking at today, Come together, I think.

They're, The contrasting, Verses. And, They highlight before us, These truths, That we've sought to, Suggest, At, At the heart of what this book, Conveys to us.

The wisdom, Of, Of trusting in God, And the foolishness, Of living your life, Without doing that. But, It, Highlights to us, What the fullness, Of what that entails, But at least, Part of what that entails.

[38 : 43] For the believer in God, The name of God, The Severity, He, He, Is someone, That they can, Go to, Whatever their circumstances are.

They can rely on him. Is what it says. But those who rely on themselves, Are going to find that their self-reliance, Is inadequate, To meet, The demands that would be placed upon it.

You might think that as you look at the book, That, Or at these versions, That, That the emphasis is upon, The person who's poor, And the person who's rich, And the person who's rich, And the person who's poor, God blesses, And the person who's rich, God doesn't bless.

That's not. That's an oversimplification, And quite contrary, To what the verses, Verses are saying to us. But let's look at what, Each verse is saying in turn.

Try and understand, What the verses are, Teaching to us. Because they're not complicated, In many respects. It might appear on the surface, That there's more to it, Than meets the eye.

[40 : 05] But I think it conveys to us, A simple truth. That, The God of heaven, Is someone, That his people, Know to go to, In all, The situations, The situations, That life brings, Their way.

And, While the, The designation here, The name of the Lord, Is a strong tower, Might appear to us, To be rather, A strange, Why not just say, The Lord.

The Lord, The Lord is a strong tower. But, It, It expands, The picture, Before your mind's eye. It tells you, That the Lord, Is someone, Who is, Great, Above, All knowledge.

He is someone, Who is, Incapable, Of being, Described, In one, One sentence, In one word.

There is much more, That can be known, About this God, That is conveyed, By his name, And whose name, Is multifaceted. There are many names, Given to God, We've perhaps, Over the years, Covered that fact.

[41 : 29] And that is something, That, That we discover, In a reading of the scriptures, That, The God of heaven, Possesses many, Names, That are descriptive, Of his, Of his person.

But, There's a danger, I suppose, When we read this, That, What is suggested to us, Is that, It's, The name of the Lord, As if it possesses, Some mystical property.

Like a, Lucky charm. All the people, Of God, Have to do is just, Recite, Or proclaim, The name of the Lord.

And that becomes, In itself, A means of, Of, Protection. And, Unfortunately, Unfortunately, There are many people, Who declare, An interest in God, And their interest, In him, In him, As God, Seems to be satisfied, By, By some kind of superstition, Or, A superstitious, Or, A superstitious, Lip service, To him.

And, It goes, No further, Than that. Now that's not, What is suggested, Here. You know, You, When you look at, Modern football, Football, And the many, Foreign football players, That are now playing, In the, United Kingdom.

[43 : 14] A lot of them, Come from, From, From, South America, Some come from, The continent, And many of them, Come from a Roman Catholic, Background.

And, It's not restricted, To them obviously, But, It's so obvious, From their background, That they have some kind, Of, Of, Knowledge, Of God, So, They will, Whatever it means, I have no idea, They will, Touch the ground, And they will, Cross themselves, Or they'll touch a badge, Or whatever it is, And it has got some religious significance, To them.

Now, How, Spiritual these people are, In their private lives, I have no way of knowing. But they are, Very public, About, Some kind of, Acknowledgement, Of God, And, In that situation, It appears, They derive some kind, Of, Comfort, From it.

But, You can't believe, That that is, What, The writer of, These words, Means us to understand. When, When he says, That the name of the Lord, Is a strong tower, He means us, To understand, That by reason, Of our knowledge of God, As communicated to us, By the names that he possess, And our knowledge, Of what these names say to us, To us, We are encouraged, To put our trust, In him.

You know, We, We often, We often, Well, This week, We had a, A funeral service, And one of the psalms there, It's a psalm, We often sing at funerals, Psalm 46, God is a refuge, And our strength, In straits, A present date.

[45 : 24] Therefore, Although the earth remove, We will not be afraid. I believe, That there's a big difference, In what these words mean, To the believer, To what these words mean, To somebody, Who does not know God, As their refuge, And their strength.

There is the biggest difference, Between an understanding, Of what God, As a refuge is, And simply, A very light, A light, Or limited understanding, Of what it could possibly mean.

There are, There are depths, To the meaning, Of the name of God, There is a depth to it, That is conveyed only, To those, Who have explored, For themselves, Or encountered, For themselves, What God means to them, When, When, When, It is not enough, For them, Simply, To have a vague, Notion, Of who God is.

You know, This week, In the prayer meeting, We were looking at, We were looking at, Some aspects, To the glory of God. And, The name of God, Was one of these things, That, That we read about, In one of the passages, That we, That we read, In chapter 34, Of, Of Exodus, And, When the Lord, Was dealing, With, With Moses, And, We read there, The Lord descended, In the cloud, And stood with, Moses there, And proclaimed, The name of the Lord.

He proclaimed, The name of the Lord. The Lord, The Lord, Proclaimed, The name of the Lord. And that would seem, Strange, Until you read on. The Lord, Passed by, Before him, And proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, Merciful, And gracious, Longsuffering, And abundant, In goodness, And truth, Keeping mercy, For thousands, Forgiving, Iniquity, And transgression, And sin, And that will, By no means, Clear, The guilty, Visiting the iniquity, Of the fathers, Upon the children, And upon the children's children, To the third, And to the fourth generation, And Moses, Made haste, And bowed his head, Towards the earth, And worshiped.

[48 : 06] Now, What that means, To us, Is simply this, That the Lord, Conveyed, His name, To the people, And to Moses, And he, He described, To Moses, Some of the things, That were true of him.

That he was a God of mercy, That he was a God of grace, That he was a God of patience, That he was a God of patience, That he is a God of goodness, That he is a God who is a judge, And who will hold all accountable to him.

And all of these elements are true, About the nature of God. And when he tells the person, That this is the God that I am, That encourages you to come to me, Where you will find a safe haven, Where you will be sheltered, Because in all the things, That you meet with in life, Where you need to be reminded of, Of my mercy.

For example. Every one of us here today, Is a sinner. Every one of us is needing a saviour.

Where do you go, For the salvation, That your sin has left you in need of? Who do you go to?

[49 : 38] Well you go to the God of mercy surely, Because mercy is the only thing, That you can confront your sin with, And hope that that need is addressed.

So in the declaration of his name, The sinner is assured, That there is provision found, In the name of God. All aspects of the character of God, Speak to us of who he is, And what he can do.

And the people of God appreciate that. Charles Bridges, One of the commentators, Says this, Every received manifestation, Brings a sunbeam of light, And blessing.

And every person, And he is speaking here to, To the person who is running to him. And the only person that runs to him, Is the person who is described here, As righteous.

The righteous runs to God, And is safe. And the various experiences, That the child of God, The believer in God, The one who trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ, Brings more and more evidence, To bear on their understanding, Of how much wisdom belongs, To actually going to God, At all times.

[51 : 31] It convinces us of the need to trust, In him. And to know, When to go to him. You know, we began with the words of Psalm 91.

And it tells us there, How the psalmist appreciates, Who the Lord is, And what the Lord is able to do for them. That he will shelter, Us under the cover, Of his wings.

That he will protect, When enemies come, When evil thoughts, Assail our hearts. When fears arise.

When feelings, When feelings that are contradictory, To our knowledge of God, Exposes to the danger, Of being weakened by the, Where do we go?

Well, the righteous, We are told, He goes, To the strong tower. That is the name of the Lord.

[52 : 34] The upright. You know, Earlier on, In this book of Proverbs, We have, A series of sayings, Which come together, In chapter 11.

And you have, The contrast again, Made between, The righteous, The upright, And those, Who are sinners. The integrity, The integrity, Of the upright, Shall guide them, But the perverseness, Of transgressors, Shall destroy them, Riches profit not, In the day of wrath, But righteousness, Delivereth from death, The righteousness, Of the perfect, Shall direct his way, But the wicked, Shall fall, By his own wickedness, The righteousness, Of the upright, Shall deliver them, And the transgressors, Shall be taken, In their own naughtiness, The righteous, Is delivered, Out of trouble, And the wicked, Cometh, In his stead, And so on.

Contrast, The life of the righteous, With the life of the wicked. Some would say, That we are righteous, Because we come to God.

Then again, Some would say, That it is because, We come to God, That we are righteous. And, The fact of the matter, Is very simple.

That, There is only one way to God, And the scripture, And the scripture, Sets that way, Before us. It is the path, Of the righteous, And those who are in it, Are righteous, But only those, Who by faith, Have embraced, God's provision, In Christ Jesus, Will avail themselves of it.

[54 : 31] If you go to the New Testament, And Paul's, Paul's epistle to the Romans, What does he say to you there? The just shall live by faith. And he tells us, Being justified by faith, We have peace with God, Through the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is, The one God has provided, He is the one God has prepared, By which we gain access with him. And we cannot come to God, Except by way of Christ.

Any other way, Is your way, And your way, Is no way. We cannot avail ourselves of the shelter, That God provides without faith.

I can commend to the mourning, The God who is the refuge, And the strength of the grieving. Will they avail themselves of it?

Will they go to the one, Who has provided shelter, From the pain, And the sorrow of grief? Or will they, Will they, Muddle their way through?

[55 : 48] Will they stoically, Acknowledge death is in, The path, I have to go through it, Without resorting, To the provision that God is, To his people.

Because we have faith, It should be the first resort, Rather than the last resort. And our safety, Is assured.

That's what the, Wise man says here. And that is what he encourages us to do. The way God encourages, Through Paul, Timothy. When Timothy is, Bexed.

When Timothy is stretched. When Timothy is, Is in danger of having, His own, Personal, Weakness, Leave him exposed.

Paul says to him, That all he needs, In all things, Are the promises of God, That promised life, And that, That life is now, And is promised, Held out to him, In that which is to come.

[56 : 57] All he needs, God is. God is. But what about the contrast? What about the difference, That is fair? Well he says, The rich man's wealth, Is a strong city.

And has a high wall, In his own conceit. Now you would think that, By these words, That what is in the mind, Of, Of the wise man, Is the danger, That is seen, In the poor, And the rich, Living their life, In the world, With the poor, Being those who are righteous, And those who are rich, Not righteous.

Now that's a very simple, Understanding of what we have here, Is nothing, Close to the truth. There are wise men, Spiritually, Who are poor.

There are wise men, Spiritually, Who are rich. There are poor men, Spiritually, Who are, Not wise spiritually.

Just as surely, As there are rich men, Who are not wise, Spiritually. The contrast, Is between, The way that, The rich here, Are presented, As relying on something, Other than God.

[58 : 29] And that is, Their riches. But you could, You could, You could, Swap this, For any other thing, If, It takes the place of God.

The temptation, For those who, Who are wealthy, Is to manage, Their affairs, Using the resource of wealth, That they have.

Now, Wealth in itself is not, An evil thing. It's, What you do with wealth, That becomes problematic.

And here, What you read is this, That the wealth of the rich man, Is what is his strong city. And the high wall of his conceit.

In other words, He puts, He puts, Trust, In wealth, That should be put, In God. And, Whatever it is, Here, It is plainly, The mistake, Of putting wealth, Where, God should be.

[59 : 49] God's provision, Is a gracious provision. Nobody is wealthy, That God has not made wealthy. And the day will come, When the provision, That God has made for them, In their wealth, They will have to give account for it.

They will have to answer to God, Because they are wealthy, If they have abused, The wealth that they had. And that they have not used it, In the way, That they should have.

I read a little story about, About, A famous, Famous preacher. Billy Graham.

His name was renowned as a preacher. But, He was telling, A story about, How he was, At the beginning of his, Ministry. And because he was, At the beginning of his, Ministry.

And it just, Finished whatever, Was quite young. And, He was married at the time. And he, He was preaching. But, He didn't have much money, In his wallet.

[61 : 08] And wherever he was preaching. They, They, They, They had, They, They, They put round the collection plate.

And although he was the preacher, Whoever, Whatever church it was, It wasn't his own church. They came up with the plate, To the pulpit. To allow him, To put the collection in the plate.

So, He took out his wallet, And put what was in his wallet, In the plate. And all he had in his wallet, Was eleven dollars. And by mistake, He put ten dollars in the plate.

Leaving him with the one dollar. So when they were going home that day, He was telling his wife, Of this mistake that he had made. Because that was all the money they had.

That he had put the ten dollars in the plate. And his wife said to him, Without any sympathy. She said to him, The worst thing about that is, You only meant to give God the one.

[62 : 19] You gave him ten, But you didn't mean to give him ten. So he got you ten, But not out of a glad heart.

Wealth can make all kinds of differences. If we use it wisely for God's cause, Then we do well. But if wealth for wealth's sake becomes our God.

And we depend upon that wealth, Rather than depending upon God. That becomes something that affects, Not just our relationship with God, But our eternal destiny.

The rich man's wealth is his strong city. A high wall in his own conceit. In other words, He's proud, And conceited.

Because he has wealth. And that's what he trusts in. But we discover, you see, In the context, And in the teachings of the scripture, That, That is not a slave, Safe place.

[63 : 33] We'll go back to, Chapter 11, Again. And, There, In chapter 11, The same truth, Brought to our attention.

Reaches profit not in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivereth from death. And what he is not, He's not saying there, Or in this place, That, That, The, The righteous are going to live, Beyond death in the saints.

That's not what he's teaching. That is something you can understand, From the teaching of the Bible. That death will overtake, All in this world, By one thing taking place.

And that is Christ, Coming again. And that is true for the righteous, As for the rich. Every one of us, Rich or poor, Will one day die.

And after our death, There is the judgment. But what is not awaiting the righteous, Is the wrath of God.

[64 : 48] Death is there, But the sting of death is not. But for the, For the rich. They will not only, Not avoid death, But the wrath of God awaits them in it, As well.

Even though they have made it their strong tower, Even though they have depended upon it, And perhaps, Been put to advantage. And too often you hear of that.

But, Unfortunately, When you, When you so often, Hear of, Of men and women of, Vast human resources, But they encounter, The, The, The desperate situation of a cancer, Or some other illness, For which there is no cure.

Their wealth will not prevent them, From suffering that. They are, They are on an equal footing, With everybody else. And they suffer death as well.

But more than that. Because instead of putting their trust, In the name of God. Their wealth was everything to them. The wrath of God awaits them in it.

[66 : 07] And that's what the New Testament teaches us as well. In Paul's epistle to the Romans, Which had division made between the righteous and the wicked.

The wicked. One of the commentators, Gary Brady says, When death comes, God is not waiting for you to, To read your bank statement.

He's not waiting to read your bank statement. What he wants to discover at the last, But the last is whether you are closed, In the righteousness of Jesus Christ or not.

And only that will save us from the wrath that is to come. And the simplicity of this is there for us.

We make it difficult, Because we want it to be difficult. We make it as if there's complications connected with it. And there are none.

[67 : 11] If the name of the Lord is your strong tower, And you have learnt, And you discover afresh every day, The wisdom of going to the strong tower, With all your needs, With all your wants, With all your desperate, And less desperate situations.

You find ample provision in him. If you are content with your own resources, And they may be many, So be it.

But your resources are not sufficient To meet the claims that will be made on them at the last, That will cause the grief, And the sadness of those who have depended upon them.

May God remind us of the wisdom of, The wisdom of seeking himself. Let us pray. O Lord, O God, Sometimes we make our life out to be so complicated, And so complex, That only answers that have the same form, Will meet what our needs are.

But our needs are often just plainly, The need of yourself to be our God. The need that we have to be as we should, Putting our trust in you, And resting upon the provision made for us, In Christ Jesus.

[68 : 38] Grant to us the wisdom to know to do that. Cleanse from our sins, in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. We will conclude our service singing, Psalm 121.

Psalm 121, and we're going to sing the whole of the psalm. Psalm 121, and we're going to sing. Psalm 121, and we're going to sing the whole of the psalm. Psalm 121, and we're going to sing the whole of the psalm. My safety cometh from the Lord, who heaven and earth hath made.

Thy foot in naughtlets slide, nor will he slumber that he keeps. Behold, he that keeps Israel, he slumbers not nor sleeps. The Lord he keeps, the Lord thy shade, and thy right hand doth stay.

The moon by night he shall not smite, nor yet the sun by day. The Lord shall keep thy soul, he shall preserve thee from all in.

Henceforth thy going out and in God keep. For ever will I to the hills will lift mine eyes. I to the hills will lift mine eyes.

[69 : 55] From whence of the night my safety cometh from the Lord.

My safety cometh from the Lord, who heaven and earth hath made.

Thy foot in naughtlets slide, nor will he slumber that he keeps.

Behold, he that keeps Israel. Behold, he that keeps Israel.

He slumbers not nor sleeps. The Lord he keeps, the Lord thy shade.

[71 : 27] On thy right hand doth stay. The moon by night they shall not smite.

The moon by night they shall not smite.

Nor yet the sun by day. The Lord shall keep thy soul, he shall preserve thee.

Fare thee from all ill. Henceforth I go, coming out and in.

Henceforth I go, coming out and in. God keep forever well.

[72 : 49] May grace, mercy and peace be God the Father and Son of the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all now and always. Amen.