

Moses at the Burning Bush

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Date: 08 January 2023

- [0 : 00] Welcome to our service this morning. As we come together before God in worship, we pray that he would bless his word to us.
- We can begin by singing some verses from Psalm 119. Psalm 119, verse 81.
- Verse 81. My soul for thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe.
- My eyes fail for thy word, I say, when wilt thou comfort give? For like a bottle I am become, but in the sweat is dead.
- I am black and parched with grief, yet I thy statutes not forget. How many are thy servant's days, when wilt thou execute?
- [1 : 00] Just judgment on these wicked men that do me persecute. The proud have digged pits for me, which is against thy laws. Thy words, all faithful are, help me, pursued without a cause.
- They so consumed me, that on earth my life they scourged at leave. Thy precepts yet forsook I not, but close to them did cleave.
- After thy loving kindness, Lord, may it quicken and preserve. The testimony of thy mouth so shall I still observe. We can sing these verses, Psalm 119, the whole of this section.
- Verse 81. My soul for thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe. My soul for thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe.
- My soul for thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe. My soul for thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe.
- [2 : 20] When will thou come forgive? For like a water, I've become.
- Thy kingdom of thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe. My soul for thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe.
- Many of thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe. Many of thy salvation faints, yet I thy word believe. When will thou make me good? When will thou make me good?
- God's judgment on these wicked men, thou do it in heaven?
- O God's holy men, thou do it in heaven? Thouawat, thou do it in heaven heaven? Thou proud of the beast, Jeze, united est there?! Thou prophet, thou know cham'er Ga'er Christ, have she that sa'adia kommer, Peace book imigh the apostles to a man among them, God husbands see thee.
- [3 : 54] What Fed came together and whitteth thou hast seen in heaven? What Shift meet, how gi■ do thou know concerning Jesus earth? Thou dispos■ tes mit lightning about food, Christ have some■ercase to a man men that di-carter lules, Thou ■■ou■ are mayer, Thou throubaán SomeoneJA test whether to psal■■■, O Lord, help me as who will have lost.
- Then so consume me, that honor, my life is gifted here.
- Thy grace has yet for soon I know, but for soon I will give.
- After thy love in thy death, Lord, meek with the hand of his hand.
- Then as the money on thy mark, so shall I still, O Lord.

[5 : 37] Amen. Let us turn together in prayer. O Lord, as we continue before your holy presence in worship, help us to acknowledge the privilege that you have afforded us so to do.

That we are made together in the place that bears your name, in order to hallow that name that is above every name, to elevate it in praise and with thanksgiving, and to come before you offering the praises and prayers that come from our heart.

While we may not utter these openly or publicly or audibly, we know that we do so, and that the ear of God is attuned to us.

There is no mistaking the fact that you are the hearer and answerer of prayer. As your servant of all, as your servant of all mistakenly thought that God was not hearing her fear, and that the heavens above were closed to her, yet you proved in the answering of prayer that you were indeed a God that was able to answer far above our ability to ask.

There is another example set before us in your world of one who was diligently crying out to God, and others gazed upon her face and saw her lips move without hearing anything that was said in her interaction with the heavens above.

[7 : 47] She was condemned by them, but her business was with God, and she was not, as was alleged, under the influence of strong drink, but out of the wrestlings of her soul, she cried out till the God of heaven held her far in excess of her asking by providing for her what she craved above all else, even a son and an ear for the family.

We pray that you would teach us to pray and to wait upon you in the way that you are able to answer, far above our asking, as we said, and sometimes even what we ask for may be given to us in ways that we did not reckon, in ways that we did not understand, that you have made the barren woman a house to keep, and there are so many proofs from your word of the way in which you fill the lives of those who believe themselves to be without what they would desire for themselves and what others possess.

And your wisdom is far exceeding our understanding of it. So in our prayers today, whatever we are praying for, in the cares and concerns that are personal to ourselves, to our homes, to our families, help us to bow the knee and wait upon the provision that you are able to make for us.

We pray that you would remember those who are in need to stay. Some have health issues, some have issues that are troubling their soul to the degree that their whole life seems to be overwrought.

We pray for those who are grieving and sorrowing over the loss of loved ones, and that number is often many.

[10 : 13] They are evidences to each of us that here we have no continuing city. And we pray that you would impress that thought upon us, and view us precious, the time that we are given, and to use it wisely, and to use it effectively, and to use it with the God of heaven before us as one we would wish to serve.

What would you have me to do? That request would be upon our lips. When we see our congregations and our communities shrinking with regard to numbers, and especially the numbers of those who would be desirous of declaring their interest in Christ.

And we acknowledge that you are the giver of life, and especially that must be acknowledged with regard to spiritual life.

And yet there are some perhaps who are guilty of refraining from being obedient to the word that comes to them, and rather going on hiding their lamp and their abushion.

And we acknowledge that while your kingdom will go on apace, and that you will always have witnesses, wherever your cause is in the world.

[11 : 54] Yet we know that, just as it was in the day of the Lord, that there were Nicodemuses, and there were Josephs who chose not to bear testimony to the knowledge that you gave to them of yourself, or of your Son, Jesus Christ, while they were given the opportunity in the eleventh hour of their earthly sojourn to declare that interest.

Nevertheless, we cannot but wonder at why they were so reticent in showing that interest to others.

And that is what you would have us reveal to others, that you are requiring of each one of us who know the Lord to speak of what you have done for our souls.

And any person who knows you as Lord and Savior, why would they want to deny that knowledge, that you are the Savior of lost sinners, and that we acknowledge the need that we have to bring our cares and concerns before you, in order that you may address these needs that we have.

And indeed, you have so done in the passion of your Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross. And when our sins are many, grievous as they may be, we are reminded and we are encouraged to believe that the sin that is ours can be blotted out by the blood that is shed for our sin.

[13 : 38] And we acknowledge that that sacrifice for sin has been offered. There will never again be a requirement for it. He came once to offer that sacrifice, and that sacrifice once offered is never to be required at his hand ever again, or any other for that reason.

We pray then your blessing upon the proclamation of that very truth this day, through the ends of the earth. remember all who go out with it in their own island community, in the congregations that we represent.

And beyond, we give thanks for all who have the message of the Evangel to proclaim that Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save the lost.

We pray for the world that is lying in sin, and for all who have engaged in the missionary activity of the cross, even in hostile environments where there is little understanding or appreciation of that need, because they are so besotted with the idols that give them so little satisfaction.

And yet, they are in fear of their very life if they do not adhere to the requirements that are levied upon them from their infancy.

[15 : 10] So we pray for them that the chains that bind them may be shattered, and that the proclamation of truth may dispel the darkness that overwhelms the land, and even in our own land, where idolatry may be something that people think of us being something of a past generation, and yet, there have never been so many idols in our land as there are today.

Whoever we idolize, whatever we idolize, they are there wherever we turn, and life is given to them, even the forfeiture of our souls, and we pray that you would open the blind eyes that they may see such idolatry as being the very thing that is the heart of our modern society.

Remember us, then, as we seek to present the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Remember all we entrust to your care and keeping this day, those who belong to the congregation, who are unable to come out today because of the inclement weather, because of the failings of the body, of mind, some confined to homes, some hospitals, some care homes, others, even in hospice, and we pray for all such and we remember them to you, whoever they may be, whether we know them or not.

We give thanks for the care that is shown to them by the various agencies appointed to that end. Remember those who are sorrowing, their griefs are there for all to see.

Assuage their sorrow, we pray, and bind up the wounds that you have inflicted them with. Encourage them to go to the physician of souls that they may find balm for their hurt.

[17 : 11] Hear our prayers now and continue to watch over us as a nation, those who govern us and those who rule over us in whatever manner they so do, whether it is in the national parliament or in local council.

We give thanks for those who have presented themselves in such a way so as to serve the communities that they live in. May their diligence be unselfish and may they truly seek to magnify a name that is above every name.

Hear our prayers and pardon for our sins in Jesus. name who would ask all things. Amen. I'm going to read from the Old Testament scriptures.

We're reading from the book of Exodus. Exodus and chapter three. Exodus chapter three. Now Moses kept the law of Jethro.

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law. the priest of Midian and he led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to the mountain of God even to Horeb.

[18 : 32] And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. And he looked and behold the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called him, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses.

And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither, put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land, and to a good land, and a large, and to a land flowing with milk and honey, and to the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

[20 : 19] Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me, and I have also seen the oppression, wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Come now, therefore, I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

And he said, Certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee, when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt.

Ye shall set God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers has sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, What is his name?

What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I am that I am. And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you.

[21 : 36] And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, have sent me unto you.

This is my name forever, this is my memorial unto all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.

And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

And they shall hearken to thy voice, and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto whom the Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us.

And now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand, that I will stretch out my hand and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof.

[23 : 12] And after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, and it shall come to pass that when ye go, ye shall not go empty.

But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor and of her that sojourneth in her house jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment, and ye shall put them on your sons and upon your daughters and ye shall spoil with the praise.

Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to this reading of his word and to his name be the praise. Now boys and girls, before you go out to San Francisco, just a quick word.

We're told in the Bible that one of the names that God has, or the Lord Jesus Christ has is, he's a great physician, he's a healer, he is able to heal the sick, and it was one of the names of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was heralded when he was born into the world, people knew that he was born because the angels sang of his birth, but long before he was born, the prophets spoke of his coming, and one of the signs that was to follow him was that he was going to be a great healer, and these evidences bore witness to who he was.

[25 : 05] He was able to heal the sick, heal those who were lame, those who were blind, those who were deaf, even those who had died.

Sometimes he showed that he could make them come alive again, and many people came to Jesus because of that, because as we all understand, if we're not well, we need to go to the doctor, or if we're lucky, we can see a doctor, maybe a nurse, or something like that, and the reason we want to see them is that they make us get better, and it's important to us, but Jesus, although he tells us that our health, physical health, mental health even, is important, that is not why he came into the world.

He didn't come into the world to simply make people get better physically. His desire was to make people better spiritually, because while we can look at those in the world, and we can tell that a person is unwell at times, we can tell if they're coughing and spluttering, that they've got colds, we can tell that if they're white and pasty, that they've got a sore tummy, and that they need to do something about that, or if they're hopping on one leg, that there's something wrong with their leg, we can tell that there's something wrong with them.

But we're not able, just by looking, to tell that there's something wrong in our heart, or in our soul.

But Jesus knows that, and he tells us that in his word, that that was the important thing that he came to do, that he came to heal our souls.

[27 : 27] He came to make us able to understand who he was, who God is, and what he was in the world to do. And sometimes he is willing to heal us, no doubt, physically, and to do great things for our well-being.

But the greatest thing that he ever did was to make a people healthy spiritually, to make their soul healthy.

And when we pray to Jesus, we need to remember that very truth. I was reading this last week about a little boy or girl and their mummy was expecting a baby.

baby. And the mummy didn't want this little boy or girl to be jealous when the baby was born.

So she would tell this little boy or girl about the new baby that was going to come. And she would speak about this new baby.

[28 : 43] baby. And she would say to her little boy or girl, now this is what you and us do so that when the baby comes he'll be able to recognize you when he comes to the house for the first time.

So I want you to sing to him or her. And she would sing a little hymn or a song about Jesus to the baby that wasn't yet born.

And she would do that every day. And the baby was expected any time. But unfortunately when the time came for the baby to be born, the baby was born and he wasn't at all well.

And the parents were told that when the baby would be born that he wouldn't live for very long. And they had to expect that and they had to be prepared because he was very sick when he was born.

So the mother, after having spent so long telling this older boy or girl of the new baby, she had to try and get this new baby, this child, to understand what had gone wrong and why the baby that was expected was not well.

[30 : 15] Anyway, to cut a long story short, the boy, we call him a boy for brevity, said, I want to see the baby, I want to see the new baby.

baby. And the hospital were determined that nobody was allowed in to see it. But the mother decided to take the boy in to see the baby before the baby died.

And he was there tied up to all kinds of wires and all kinds of tubes and he was very, very sick. but when the little boy went in to see the baby, he said, can I sing to the baby?

Just as I did before he was born. And the mother said, if that's what you want to do, you sing. You sing your song to the baby. And the strangest thing happened, that the baby that was there tied up to wires and the heart just barely fluttering began.

to revive. It began, once he heard the house, the sound of the voice of the older brother, he began to revive.

[31 : 39] There was no medical reason for it, there was no apparent reason for it, but that's what happened. The baby got better and stronger and soon he was able to go home to be with this older brother.

Now, that was very strange, that was bothering on miraculous. Sometimes God can do these things, sometimes these things can happen with no explanation.

He is a great healer, but sometimes the healing doesn't take place in this world, and we need to remember that. But in this case, a wonder of wonders did happen.

God can sometimes, if he wishes, whatever the wisdom that this is, can do these things. And we hope that we are wise enough to trust in him to do things for us, and to trust him when he doesn't do what we want, that he is still doing what is best for us at all times.

It's difficult for us to remember that, but we must think of these things. We're going to sing the rest. Boys and girls go out to Sunday school from Psalm 19.

[33 : 03] Psalm 19, the heavens, the heavens, the heavens, God's glory, do declare, the skies, his hand works, preach, the other speech today, and night tonight, does knowledge teach.

There is no speech nor tongue to which their voice doth not extend. Their line is gone through all the earth, their words to the world's end.

In them he set the sun attend, the bridegroom like forth goes, from his chamber as a strong man does, to run his face rejoice.

We sing to verse 8, the heavens, God's glory, do declare. han nonboying born in the kingdom and the size his hour of his heart and he only let o'er his good o'er by There is no speech, not under which there was another man.

There lies on the earth, There were two different.

[35 : 01] And then He set aside, To brightener like more■■■■, From children Many daughters that long Simone To earn His blessings res post, From heaven and to His glory, Lord, serving to the end again.

And there is nothing for mercy that in heaven the heavens.

God's love is perfect, and all that the sun is in the light.

O, his testimony is full true, and makes the same of wise.

The sky is filled with love, and Lord, God, and He will rejoice the heart.

[37 : 01] The Lord, O Father, in pure and pure, like who He is in the heart.

Can we turn now to the book of Exodus, chapter 3, and we can read at the beginning of the chapter.

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to hold it.

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush. And he looked, and behold, the bush burnt with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight. Why the bush is not burnt? And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush.

[38 : 13] And said, Moses, Moses, and he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither, but off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou stand is this holy ground.

Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

When we read in the Bible of some miraculous event or occurrence, we need to embrace what we read by faith.

Otherwise, we would tend to disregard what is clearly improbable as being unlikely.

[39 : 31] Because of the nature of miracle, it is not ordinary, it is not commonplace, it is not something that happens in everyday life.

The Bible is full of miracles. It is full of things that God does. He works in the world, and his work is a strange work at times.

As we mentioned with regard to the healing work of Jesus, not only is he able to restore health, he was able to restore life. Now, sometimes we can expect life to come to an end, but we do not expect that life that has ended to be able to be restored.

And yet God, through his servants, directly or indirectly, did such a thing. Those who saw it happen, if they did not have faith, would probably find some other reason for what happened to happen.

And, you know, the best example of that is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He died on the cross. There are countless witnesses to the fact that he died, that he gave up the ghost.

[40 : 53] And yet, when people saw him risen, they refused to acknowledge that the Christ they saw was a Christ that had entered into the experience of death.

There was some other explanation for it. He had just fainted, or it wasn't him. It was somebody else. He had just fainted, or it wasn't him.

It was somebody else. It was somebody else. It was somebody else. It was somebody. It was somebody. It was somebody else. Like the person who is spoken of in this account is the person of Moses.

And Moses was somebody, we are told, he lived for 40 years in Egypt. Then he spent 40 years as a shepherd in Midian.

And then, following that, he led his people Israel for 40 years in the wilderness. And at the end of his life, we are told quite clearly that in his death, he was as strong then as he was when he was at the height of his powers, humanly speaking.

[42 : 34] Physically, his strength had not abated. Now, it's very hard for us to believe that a person who lives to 120 years old is as strong the day he died as he was the day when he was in full strength.

But that's what the Bible tells us. This Moses was someone who is described to us in the Bible like that. So, in a sense, it is a ground that's fertile for believing anything other than the truth that is presented to us.

We would prefer to think of it as a myth or a story. It's a Bible story which may have an element of truth in it, but more than likely, it is not really the truth that is portrayed to us.

And I suppose that is inevitable. One thing that is true is in all the Bible stories is that instead of our focus being on the person who is responsible for the miracle, our focus is always distracted or directed elsewhere.

And just like that in this miracle, when we read of Moses' encounter with this strange event or occurrence that took place, the bush bound with fire and the bush was not consumed.

[44 : 16] Our focus would be on the bush or on Moses as he looks at the bush, but not on the God who was responsible for the miracle.

But we are told that our attention should be on that God, Moses' God, Israel's God. Because at the heart of the story is the mighty power in operation at all times, which is the power of God.

The power of God that works salvation, the power of God that works healing, the power of God that brings redemption to a lost race.

In verse 7 we read, In verse 7 we read, Notice the emphasis, This is the emphasis, It's not, Yes, he says, Moses you're going to do this for me.

But here in these verses, We read, I have surely seen, And I am the one who is going to do this thing.

[45 : 42] And that is what God means us to understand. Now there are many things that we can speak about. We have looked at this passage, I suppose, this chapter occasionally in the past.

But today I want us to think of one or two things. First of all, consider how Moses looks at this sight which is to him inexplicable.

A great sight which he acknowledges that he cannot explain. Secondly, what he does see, because of the inability to explain it, needs to be explained to him.

He needs to be given light. He needs to be given knowledge as to what, in effect, he has seen. Because of the inexplicable nature of what he sees.

And the third thing is that what he saw, and what he had explained to them, results in Moses being changed in effect by reason of what he saw.

[47 : 01] And I hope I'll try and make sense out of that. It made sense to me when I was looking at it. But hopefully it will make sense to you as well.

If we go back to verse 2. The angel of the Lord appeared unto him, unto Moses, in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.

And he looked, and behold, the bush burnt with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

Now what Moses saw clearly, he was not able to understand. And he saw what he saw.

He saw a bush. He saw a bush burning. And he could not understand why the bush was burning the way it was.

[48 : 01] And why, more importantly, what was burning was not being consumed. We all understand physically why this would be difficult for him to explain.

Because we're used enough to consuming fuel in our stoves, in our fires. We have coal, we have peat, we have oil.

And one thing that's true about our generation is we know that we do not have an inexhaustible resource of any of these things. If we burn coal, we need to replenish it.

If we burn oil, we need to replenish it. If we burn peat, we need to replenish it. Would it not be great if we didn't have to do that? But amongst everything else, we suffer from fuel poverty.

And our island knows all there is to be known about it. What would it be like if we had this wonderful resource, something that was burning but not being consumed?

[49 : 11] But we know that's not the case. And Moses knew that it was not the case that what he saw could possibly be true.

And he saw it and he looked at it and he wanted to see for himself what was behind this thing that he saw.

And that's obvious, I think, to everyone here. You can understand how unusual it was. But, you know, when you study a passage, like I have to study a passage, and you look at modern commentators, you'll find that some people, you know, they want to remove the miracle out of the word of God, if at all possible.

Rationalize every event that requires to be understood as a miracle from God. And some have gone so far as to say, what Moses encountered for the first time was a type of rose that grew in the wilderness from a distance that flowered.

And when the sun was upon it, what you saw was something that appeared to be fire, but wasn't really. But that rationalistic explanation does not hold water as far as this account is concerned.

[50 : 40] Because he looked at it in order to secure for himself a solution to the problem that confronted him.

Now, Moses looked at it, and God saw him look at it.

Did you notice that? When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush.

And God responds to Moses' endeavor to understand what he was saying. Now, as I said, there are always attempts made by some to bring explanations to bear upon God's activity in the world that dismiss the power of God, that dismiss the miracle element of what God is doing.

There are many who cannot explain the actions of God, and yet they are ready to supply an answer that excludes God from their explanation.

[52 : 10] I want you to be aware of that because we know Moses. We are aware of who Moses was. And we know that the relationship that he developed with God was such that God would be at the heart of his explanation, or as close to it as possible.

But imagine that Moses tried to explain what he saw without God in his explanation. And that's the way that many people in the world encounter what God is doing in the world.

They want to explain it without including God in their explanation. That's the point that I want to make. That's the point that I want to make. There are many things that God does, and God has done, and God will yet do.

And the eye of many look upon it, and they do not see God in it, nor do they want to see God in it.

So, like for example, I've been reading recently, I'm not a scientist, and there's much that scientists do that baffle me.

[53 : 29] I can't understand how they arrive at their conclusions. And even Christians, Christians who are scientists, I don't want to use the word Christian science as a completely different entity.

But Christians who are scientists are able to explain their science with God at the heart of it, which is always important or useful.

But there are scientists, and they believe that God has been explained away. And their whole ethos is presented on the presumption that there is no God, nor can God be considered to be at work in any of what we see in the world.

Particularly with regard to creation, or what comes before it or after it. And I suppose, if you were to summarise what they say without being too blunt, what they would say is, you can't explain this with God in it, because there is no God.

And if there is no God, you can't approach it as if God is in it. And yet, God has something to say to them, even though they have nothing to say about God.

[54 : 57] They have already disqualified God, because in their theorising, in their approach to science, God is taken out of it. And if God is taken out of it, then God cannot in any way be responsible for anything that science presents us with.

And God says about that approach, he has something to say about it, even though they can't say anything about God, because God doesn't exist, as far as they are concerned.

The fool, he says, says there is no God. God has something to say about them. And they can't say anything about God, because they have already concluded and insisted that it doesn't exist.

Now, what I have to say, and whatever the scientist who is a Christian has to say, however they reconcile what they believe from science to the truth of God, the truth of God, as far as they are concerned, is paramount, is all-important.

And what God is saying to the person who doesn't do that, he says, it is the fool who says in his ark there is no God. Now, before Moses can go down the path of the fool, God speaks to him out of the burning bush.

[56 : 22] Before God, before Moses can arrive at any other conclusion that excludes God from what he is saying, what he is seeing, he is seeing something that cannot possibly be.

Yes, a bush can burn in the wilderness. That may or may not be an unusual occurrence. It may be a regular occurrence.

What is unusual and impossible is a bush burning that is not consumed by the fire. So Moses looks at that and he looks at it again.

And before he can arrive at any other conclusion than that there is God in this, when God sees him look at the bush, he speaks to him from the bush.

And he says to him, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham. And so on. Now that's important because if we approach the miracles of God in the scripture, if we approach the things that God does in the world historically or in the current experience of our life in the world, if we approach that as if God cannot be in it, we are at once disadvantaging ourselves.

[58 : 07] We are depriving ourselves of something that is all important in relation to the need of our soul.

You know, you remember the words of the apostle Paul when he's writing his epistle to the Romans on the first chapter.

He tells us this. Now what Paul is saying there is basically simple.

It is possible for every living man, woman and child to discern God in creation.

They cannot but conclude that there is the fingerprint of a creator on this world in which we live. The moment we say that we refuse to acknowledge what our eyes are telling us, what our understanding is saying to us, that is the moment we are embracing a road or a life that is taking us away from God.

[60 : 09] I've spoken about this just briefly, I suppose, in passing. We're all, for example, rightly concerned about our environment and the state of the world.

We are often confronted with the activity of what are called eco-warriors. And when you listen to much of what they have to say, you would think that these people are God's gift, even though many of them deny God.

They are what you would imagine are necessary for the survival of our planet, of our race. And you would think, you would think from what they are saying, this should have been done long ago.

This should have been said long ago. This should have been highlighted long ago. As if this generation has given birth to some who possess insights into the plight of the planet that were previously unknown.

But that's not the truth. That's not the truth. The scripture, God's word, which is ancient, tells us that this planet is the way to us because of man's rebellion against God.

[61 : 48] Just recently I was reading one of the Puritans. The Puritans were preaching 300 years ago, some of them.

And one of them said the following. And he was referring to what the Apostle Paul was teaching.

The words of Romans 8, verse 22. For we know, he says, that the whole of creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

That was the Apostle Paul who was saying that, describing the state of the planet. As if the planet was physically groaning as a woman groans when she is about to give birth.

The pains of the planet were there for all to see. But the Puritan, Joseph Alain, said this. What is it that the creation groans under?

[62 : 59] The fearful abuse it is subject to in serving the lusts of unsanctified men. And what is it that creation groans for?

For freedom and liberty from this abuse. That's what was said 300 years ago.

That the cause of the planet lying on the abyss of the world. Is in the hands of men and women.

And it is at the heart of what they are guilty of. Is there ignoring of God? Is there going on living their lives as if God doesn't matter?

The creator of this world of ours is forgotten, abused, denied. And that's the true cause of it.

[64 : 02] Whatever the extenuating circumstances that are before us may be. Truth be told, God himself understands what he has before him.

And God needs to change the thinking of men and women in order for that to happen. And there's another account given to us.

And I suppose this is the most worrying one. How far we can go away from God. Even though we are taught much about God.

In the biography of a preacher by the name of Rabbi Duncan. He's quite a famous preacher in the Scottish church. Famous for his abilities.

Famous for his linguistic abilities. He was a professor in the Free Church College. At one point he went to Hungary. And worked there amongst Jews. And he did a great work there.

[65 : 13] He was born and raised in a Christian home. He was taught the truths of the Bible. He, you could say, He drank in the truths of the gospel with his mother's milk.

So much so that in his youth he thought of himself as somebody who was going to preach the gospel. That was his great desire, to go out and preach the gospel.

As a missionary. But when he went to university. When he went away to university to study.

He suffered a crisis of faith. And he lost his faith.

This is what is said about him. By the biographer. In his speculations.

[66 : 17] He cast away the Bible. And this ground once lost. He sank down through unbelief. Deism. Pantheism.

Into material atheism. Whence there. There was no lower depth into which to sink. Denying the existence of God. Now why is that important?

Well it's important from this perspective. If we do not see God in what God has done, is doing, will do.

There is an inevitable consequence to that. Our own thinking will be so perverse and so corrupt that we cannot understand what God is doing.

God saw Moses looking towards the burning bush and he initiated contact with him at that moment where he spoke to him out of the bush.

[67 : 24] Moses, Moses, Moses, and he said, draw not nigh heart thither. Put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place where in thou standest this holy ground.

Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face. He hid his face.

But not until that moment. He saw the bush, but he didn't see God. He saw the bush not being consumed, but he didn't see God.

But when God spoke to him, he understood that it was God that was in the bush. And that is what we need to understand.

That we can at times allow ourselves to be skirting around the periphery of what is necessary for our faith to be strong and substantial and soul-saving.

[68 : 34] And that's all we're doing. We're skirting around the edges. Until we see God. Until God deigns to reveal himself to us.

Until we get down on our knees and ask God to do the very thing that he did for Moses. Then we will go on as we are. If we are not already atheistic, then our descent into it will be most certain.

Moses had to be reminded that the same God that was before him was the God that his fathers worshipped. God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.

He has made himself known to him. Now has he made himself known to you? Has he made himself known to you in his word? Can't be any more direct a question than that.

Has God made himself known to you in his word? How knowledgeable are you of this God? If your knowledge of God has not taken you to him to surrender yourself into his salvific, powerful arms, then you have not sufficient knowledge of him.

[70 : 01] You remember how Moses had to deal with Pharaoh. And Pharaoh saw miracle upon miracle upon miracle upon miracle.

He acknowledged that these miracles were God's doing. And yet at the same time, he did not believe. God is the God of promise.

God is the God of promise.

The God who is covenant keeping. The God to Adam who was the creator. The God to Noah who was the preserver. The God to David who was the one who shut the mouth of the lion.

Who did so many things to Daniel rather. When God reveals himself to us in his word, what do we make of it?

[71 : 03] Well, I'll just finish with a quote from John Blanchard. The God of the Bible, he says, is unique. And that's the God you need to know for yourself.

The God who revealed himself on this occasion by way of miracle to Moses and by way of a voice that Moses understood to be his.

He is the only God, the personal God, as Blanchard puts it, and as all the Puritans describe him, to a self-existent, eternal, transcendent, imminent, permeating all of this world, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, all of these attributes that are divine, that are in exercise at this moment.

A loving God who has sent to us his son. A gracious God who upholds this world by the word of his power.

You don't believe that, perhaps. But I can tell you that as long as this world is held in God's hands, he has the power to uphold it and to preserve it from extinction, which is what he has promised.

[72 : 35] But extinction will be the end of this world. As he said. As he will.

May he speak to you from this word that speaks of a bush that was burnt but not consumed. May he speak to you from this word, which is his word to us.

A word that is eternal. Remind yourself of that, this word. There are many who believe that the Bible is a word that is no longer relevant.

But it is God's word. It is a word that is on fire. But it is not consumed. And for that reason, it will go on speaking to this world for as long as this world exists.

And no matter how many theologians even have dismissed it as an irrelevance, they will find that once spoken, God will not allow his word to fall to the floor.

[73 : 52] And this is the word by which you and I will be judged at the last. May he tell us before then of his will for us in Christ, that we may believe it.

The saving of our soul, let us pray. O Lord, O God, help us to understand that you are indeed a God who is a God of miracles. You do great things.

You have done great things. You changed water into wine. You turned the laughter of fools to their shame.

You have so much at work in this world that not one of us dare ignore what you are doing, what you are saying. We pray your blessing upon it today to all who are entered throughout the world.

Pardon sin in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll conclude singing from Psalm 46. Psalm 46.

[74 : 56] God is our refuge and our strength in straits at present days. Therefore, although the earth remove, we will not be afraid. Though hills amidst the seas be cast, though waters roaring make untroubled be, yea, though the hills by swelling cease to shake.

We'll sing to verse 5. Four stans as God is our refuge and our strength. God is our refuge we with them.

Amen. We will not be afraid. You are w Carrie if you are before the Christian God.

God bless you.

God bless you.

[76 : 51] The holy praise. When the Lord. Most high.

And in the Lord. God bless you.

The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love.

The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love.

The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. The holy love. Amen. May grace.

[77 : 48] Mercy and peace. God the father. The son. And the holy spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.