

The Prophet and Judge at Work

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Preacher: Paul Barker

[0 : 00] God, your word is light and truth, and so shine your light on our hearts and fill them with truth, that we may believe and obey for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

And they all lived happily ever after. Well, so end many fairy tales, but real life often doesn't.

Real life usually doesn't. They don't always live happily ever after. And the same in the Bible. Because in the Bible we deal with real life, we don't deal with fairy tales, and we deal with lives that don't always end happily.

And that's what we find here. If you cast your mind back to last week, the Philistines had captured the Ark of the people of Israel, the Ark of the Covenant, and it had wrought havoc amongst the Israelites.

And it had come back in a sense of its own accord, directed by God, back to Israelite territory to the people of Beit Shemesh, a border town between the Philistines and the Israelites.

[1 : 16] And we might well expect, and they all lived happily ever after. The people of Israel rejoiced. They've got the Ark back. They had a big feast and a big sacrifice. And everybody's very happy and delighted, apart from the Philistines, were the baddies, of course.

But the Bible's real life, not a fairy tale. And they don't all live happily ever after. Because after the defeat of Israel at the hand of the Philistines, after the Philistines had captured the Ark and the death of Israel's priests, Hophni and Phinehas, as well as the death of their father, the chief priest, when he heard the news, the priest Eli, the Ark had come back.

But the havoc that it wrought, but the havoc that it wrought amongst the Philistines is a little bit like what we see at the beginning of this passage tonight. The descendants of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the people of Beit Shemesh when they greeted the Ark of the Lord.

And he, the Lord, killed 70 men of them. The people mourned because the Lord had made a great slaughter among the people.

70 men in a little town like Beit Shemesh is a significant part of the population. No wonder the whole population laments and mourns at this massacre or slaughter of 70 people of their midst.

[2 : 42] So much for them all living happily ever after. Yet again in that verse, we see the failure of people to appreciate the awesome sovereignty and holiness of God.

We saw it a few weeks ago when Israel was fighting against the Philistines. And they thought that the Ark was a box that they had under their control, that they had God in their box and they could manipulate him to bring them victory.

But it wasn't to be. Indeed, going back even further before the Philistines were even mentioned, The gross immorality and idolatry of the priests Hophni and Phinehas and the weak leadership of Eli shows their lack of appreciation of the holiness and sovereignty of God.

And when the Philistines captured the Ark and plonked it on the mantelpiece alongside the statue of their own God Dagon, it showed their lack of appreciation of the awesome sovereignty and holiness of the God of Israel.

Thus the havoc that was wrought in three of their towns at least before they wanted to get rid of it back to Israelite territory. Indeed, we could well say of God in these chapters that the slogan is, Handle with care.

[3 : 56] And what Israel didn't do in the earlier days, what the Philistines didn't do with the Ark when it had captured it, the Ark that symbolised the footstool of God's throne and symbolised his indeed presence in the midst of the people.

And what the Israelites saw, some Israelites of Beth Shemesh, the sons of Jeconiah, did not do when they rejoiced that the Ark had come back. Handle with care is what they ought to have known.

Back in the book of Joshua, 2,000 cubits was meant to be the distance that an Israelite should keep between them and the Ark. A cubit being the length from your elbow to the tip of your finger.

2,000 of them is quite a significant distance, let me say. Unless, of course, you're a Levite that was entrusted with the care of carrying carefully the Ark on the poles that it was attached to and so on.

But here, the sons or descendants of Jeconiah did not show due reverence for God's holiness and sovereignty. They didn't show the proper respect that God deserved.

[5 : 02] They show an absence of godly fear with respect to the God of Israel. The old Greek translation of this verse says that they gazed into the Ark.

It's hard to be sure exactly what they did in not showing respect and why they didn't rejoice. That's probably a very early edition of this verse. But the Ark was not to be approached other than by the Levites.

Handle with care. You see, the return of the Ark to Israelites didn't vindicate them. It didn't say, you Israelites, you're okay. God's come back to you.

He's vindicated you. He's brought you victory in effect against the Philistines. You're right with God. Not at all. Through all of this travel of the Ark from Israelite territory in Shiloh out into the Philistine territory and back and still here, God is teaching a deep lesson to the people of Israel.

To the people of Beit Shemesh in this particular circumstance. You see, the sovereign God has not in effect come back to Israel as symbolised by the return of the Ark.

[6 : 12] That doesn't mean that Israel's been vindicated. All that's going on is that the sovereign and holy God is continuing to pursue his good purposes for his people.

The survivors of Beit Shemesh, that is, those not killed in its slaughter of verse 19, they sort of begin to get the picture.

Not quite, totally at least, but they begin to get a sense of the holiness and the sovereignty of God. See, in verse 20, the people of Beit Shemesh said, Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God?

A question that begs the answer, no one can stand. And in effect, their question is, would that answer right? That is, they've asked the right question. Nobody can stand before the holy God and live, that is.

For God is so holy and people are not. And it's a question that begs the answer, no one can stand. But rather than work out how they can then live with the Ark in their midst, they, like the Philistines before them, decide to send the Ark on its way.

[7 : 22] So the end of verse 20 says, To whom shall he, the Lord, go, so that we may be rid of him? You see, as they're confronted by the holiness of God and tremble rightly with fear at the holiness of God, their reaction is, well, let's get rid of him.

Send him on his way. Rather than work out the Bible's whole big plan of how can a person and the holy God coexist. But not for them.

Let's send him on the way. And so they sent an invitation to the inhabitants in verse 21 of Kiriath-Yarim, saying the Philistines have returned the Ark of the Lord.

Come down and take it up to you. A confrontation with the holy God of the Bible always leaves people trembling. You see it several times in scripture.

The prophet Isaiah, with a vision of God, falls down, prostrate before him. Woe is me. You see it also in the reaction of people to Jesus after he's cast out demons.

[8 : 27] In Mark 5, for example, sending Jesus on his way, begging him to leave them because they've been confronted by the sovereign holy power of God in Christ.

Who can see God and live is what ancient Israelites said at Mount Sinai, for example. You see, a confrontation with a holy God leaves us in fear and trembling as it did for the people of Beit Shemesh after the descendants of Jeconiah were killed.

And the descendants of Jeconiah made the mistake of approaching God, it seems, casually or indifferently, gazing into the Ark if that's what they did, certainly not rejoicing and not showing proper respect to the Ark.

And so the same danger applies to us. It's the same God. We are sinful people too. When we're confronted by a holy God, we ought to be full of fear and trembling.

And yet one of the astonishing things in the New Testament is that we are to approach with boldness to the very throne of God. Not to keep whatever it was, 2,000 cubits distant from God's throne, but to approach with boldness.

[9 : 38] But boldness is not casualness. It's not indifference. Boldness, we're taught in the New Testament, to approach God's throne comes because of the cleansing blood of Jesus.

Approach with boldness the throne of God's grace through the blood of Christ shed for us to deal with our sins. Yes, God is to be handled with care.

He's too hot to handle, in effect. And yet, by the extraordinary mercy of Christ's blood, we can and should and must approach with confidence based in him, not us.

The people of Kirith Urim, in verse 1 of chapter 7, came, they took up the Ark of the Lord, they brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill, and they consecrated his son Eliezer to have charge of the Ark of the Lord.

In a sense, they recognised that here is the holy God's presence symbolised by the Ark. They recognised that he can't be approached casually or indifferently. They consecrate a person, in a sense, as a priest.

[10 : 45] After all, the priesthood has been so corrupt and most of them, the line of Eli, almost wiped out, etc., that they need now to consecrate somebody else to be a priest, to handle the Ark, to look after it, so that it can coexist in their midst.

We, of course, have a better priest in our midst, the great high priest, Jesus Christ, who brings us and this awesome holy God together in harmony, approached with boldness and confidence, but because of his blood.

But even then, still, they didn't live happily ever after. The Ark has now come to Kirith Yerim. We're told that it lasts and stays there a long time, 20 years, verse 2.

And notice the end of verse 2. All the house of Israel lamented after the Lord. That is, they didn't sort of relax or rejoice that now, finally, the Ark of God is in the midst of God's people and they're looking after it properly and as though that was all right now.

There still is ongoing, for 20 years, it seems, lament after the Lord, as the end of verse 2 says. They may still be lamenting the 70 dead.

[12:05] They may still be lamenting the military might of the Philistines on their borders. We're not exactly sure what the lament was about. It may be a lament that Shiloh, their shrine, the tabernacle is no more.

Probably it had been destroyed by the Philistines, as I mentioned a week or so ago. But for 20 years, they lament. Now, some laments are just expressions of self-pity and I find people do that all the time.

Woe is me. Look at my life. What a catastrophe this life is. Look how difficult it is. How hard it is to get on in life. My job that's too demanding or it doesn't pay enough or the illness in this family or that family, the difficulty I have with mothers-in-law, etc., etc., etc.

It's just a litany of self-pity often, people's laments. Far from that self-pitying lament, there is a godly lament, a godly grief that leads not to self-pity but in fact leads to repentance.

The Apostle Paul makes the distinction very clearly in 2 Corinthians chapter 7. He says there, For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret.

[13:29] But worldly grief produces death. What is their lament? Is it a worldly grief wallowing in self-pity?

Or is it a godly grief that will lead to repentance and salvation? We don't really know from the end of verse 2.

Samuel, the prophet, comes back on the scene. We haven't seen him since chapter 3. He comes back on the scene and he now in effect tests. What is this lament? What is this grief? Is it self-pitying worldly grief?

Or is it godly that leads to repentance? And in the words that follow from Samuel, the prophet, he gives three indications of what would be godly grief leading to repentance.

See how it begins in verse 3. If you are returning to the Lord with all your heart. Literally returning is the word repent. Well, repent is literally the word return the other way around I suppose.

[14:36] That is returning to the Lord is about repentance in the Old Testament. So he is in effect saying here are the tests of repentance to see whether your lament is a godly grief or a worldly self-pitying lament.

And the three tests follow. Firstly, put away the foreign gods and the Astartes from among you. It is an imperative, a command. Put them away.

The foreign gods would be the male gods and the Astartes are the female gods. Fertility symbols, female gods. Some have been found by archaeologists full of figures of breasts and vines of grapes and so on.

Symbols of fertility because the gods were mainly fertility gods. They'd be statues, totem poles or carved stones, those sorts of things. People would have them in shrines or on hills or whatever. Put them away.

Get rid of them. It's the first test of repentance. Is this real grief, godly grief or not? In order to find out Samuel gives them this test.

[15:40] Get rid of them. That is, if you are returning to Yahweh, Jehovah, the Lord with all your heart, there's no place for a divided heart where there's a sense in which, yes, I'll serve Yahweh on these days of the week with half of my heart but the rest, well, I've got still the Astartes and the foreign gods over here.

Not at all. Real repentance, you see, is total heart following God, the God of Israel. Therefore, real repentance will be seen in putting away false gods, putting away idols, turning only to the God of the Bible.

Secondly, and following on from that, also in verse 3, direct your heart to the Lord. That is, face Him. Literally, if you are returning to the Lord or repenting, the idea of the word is a turnaround, a 180 degree turnaround.

So, if you are returning to the Lord, then direct your heart to Him. Don't direct your heart this way to foreign gods or this way to serving your own ego. Turn to God with all your heart and direct your heart in that direction.

That is, set it or fix it in that direction. Literally, that's what the word direct means, to fix or establish it in a particular direction. Set it in that direction as though you sort of turned your steering wheel and now you lock your steering wheel so that you're set in a straight direction towards God.

[17:08] That's the second aspect of repentance. What's being demanded here by Samuel of the people to see if it's real grief or not. Indeed, the word fix or establish has also got a tenacious determination about it.

That is, it's fix it and keep it there. Keep it in your sights. Lock it in tenaciously like a dog with a bone. And then third command in verse 3.

Serve Him only. It picks up what's been said of the other two. Says it in a slightly different way. Serve Yahweh, God, only. The word serve is the word worship, really.

Only Him. Exclusively Him. Not shared, not compromised, not half-hearted, but total-hearted. You see, as Paul says in 2 Corinthians, godly grief leads to salvation.

And here we find the commands that lead to salvation and show that it is grief that is godly, not worldly. If it is a godly grief that Israel is lamenting with these 20 years, then it will lead to this turning to the Lord with all the heart, setting the heart in that direction, serving Him only, putting away the foreign gods and that will lead to salvation and not to death.

[18:26] You see, real repentance, whether it's Old or New Testament, means giving up sins and other gods. But so often we cheapen the idea of repentance. We think that it's just saying, sorry, but we go and do it all over again.

We think that repentance is sort of a bit of regress. Oh, I wish I hadn't done that, but I actually quite enjoy doing that, so I'll sort of say sorry to God, but I'll probably go and do it again and hope that I get away with it.

Real repentance is an exclusive turning to God that means putting away and turning away from whatever else is wrong, idolatrous or sinful.

It's a big call because most of the sins we commit, we enjoy and they are not easy to give up. If we didn't enjoy them, we probably wouldn't do them.

We enjoy being greedy. We enjoy being proud, lustful, boastful, arrogant, etc. But real repentance means turning away to God alone, serving Him alone and putting aside once and for all those sins.

[19:39] Modern Christianity, in fact, often understates and underplays the importance of repentance. There are evangelistic programs that go through the gospel and never mention the idea of repenting of sin or God's punishment against sin.

Frequently, it's subsumed under the idea of saying sorry, which weakens it and cheapens it, no end. But see what's required here. All of the heart is to be devoted to God, an exclusive and total following of God.

That is an internal orientation towards God, not just playing games on the outside like we saw Israel doing a few weeks ago, but an internal heart that is set and directed to God and God alone.

Not a superstitious religion as we saw in chapter 4, playing games of manipulation with God that you can keep up the appearances and somehow God's deceived, not at all.

You see, God wants here the heart, the insides, not just the outside and certainly not an indifferent faith like perhaps the descendants of Jeconiah were guilty of but rather the heart that is totally serving God and not treating him indifferently.

[21:00] Well, what's the result? What is Israel's lament these 20 years? Astonishingly, verse 4 tells us that Israel put away the Baals and the Astartes, the male and the female gods, the totem poles, the stones and all the other paraphernalia of the fertility religions of the Canaanites and they served Yahweh only.

That's astonishing. That repentance of the people of God, an amazing act by them but it's not their own doing.

It's been brought about by the events that we've seen last couple of weeks and the beginning of this passage tonight as well. After they repent, Samuel says, gather all Israel at Mizpah and I will pray to the Lord for you.

So they gathered at Mizpah and drew water and poured it out before the Lord. We're not sure exactly what that ceremony is about. There's no mention of it as an instruction elsewhere in the scriptures. It may have been a statement of pouring out by way of confession.

We're not totally certain. But we're told then that they fasted that day, an act of devotion and then they said, we have sinned against the Lord and Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah. Presumably, he took their confessions, he declared their forgiveness, maybe he ruled in particular circumstances, etc.

[22:19] Here's the godly leader praying for his people and leading and guiding his people. But now comes the real test. They have repented, they've put away those gods, they've confessed their sin, an astonishing turnaround really, 180 degrees from what we've seen of Israel through the rest early chapters of this book, 1 Samuel.

But now comes the problem on the border, the Philistines. The Philistines now attack. They're attacking Israel that is gathered together at Mizpah.

They've gathered together for this religious ceremony, their confession of sin and their acknowledgement of repentance to God. Either the Philistines attack because they think Israel has gathered at Mizpah ready to form an army to come and attack them or perhaps the Philistines are attacking to seize the opportunity.

After all, get them when they're least expecting it. Get them in the middle of a religious ceremony while they're all gathered. We're not really sure but whatever, Israel was afraid. So in verse 7, the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah.

So the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel and when the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. Now comes the crunch. A people who've repented and turned back to God now confronted with their enemy.

[23:41] How now will they act? Will it be like chapter 4, let's get the ark and run into battle again? No, we actually find a very different response. Fear, yes, but a changed behaviour that flows from repentance.

You see, repentance issues forth in changed behaviour. If you set your heart in the right direction and not the wrong direction, if you've put away the sins, then repentance will issue in a right walking, right direction, right behaviour.

And that's now what we find of the people of Israel here. So different from chapter 4. See in verse 8, the people of Israel said to Samuel, do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us and pray that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

No manipulation of the ark, no brazen running off into battle will beat the Philistines. No, they recognise their weakness and they call on Yahweh for strength and they ask Samuel to pray to God for them.

Finally, they've got it right. Finally, they know where the power comes from. God. And they know that they don't deserve it and they know that they cannot manipulate it.

[24 : 51] So Samuel, we're told in verse 9, took a sucking lamb, probably a very young lamb still sucking on its mother and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. The first sacrifice commanded in the book of Leviticus and it deals with sin.

You see, the people of Israel and Samuel know that the people have got to be right with God if they will have victory over the Philistines. It's not about arms, it's not about the size of their army, it's not about military strategy, it's about being right with God because God alone can bring victory and defeat as indeed we've seen in chapters 4, 5 and 6 already.

So Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel and the Lord answered him and then notice that as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel but the Lord thundered with a mighty voice that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion and they were routed before Israel.

What's Israel doing? They're gathered around for a sacrifice. They haven't even fought the Philistines and the Philistines are fleeing. Why are they fleeing? God has brought the victory.

God single-handedly has brought the victory. What an awesome power that is. And you see Israel has finally at least here understood it. They fail again in a few pages.

[26 : 05] They're very fickle. But here finally we understand what it's meant to be like. God brings the victory single-handedly.

He thunders like he did at Sinai. Maybe literally thunder and lightning and earthquake sort of stuff. He throws them into confusion as he done in the book of Joshua a couple of times and in Judges and brought victory for his people.

You see it's not Israel's might that will bring them victory. It is God. God alone. He's the only one who determines who wins and who loses if we can put it like that.

All Israel does in verse 11 is mop up. The men of Israel went out of Mizpah, pursued the Philistines, struck them down as far as beyond Beit Kar.

What a reversal from chapter 4. There they were roundly defeated at a place near Ebenezer. Here at Ebenezer they set up a stone we're told in verse 12.

[27 : 12] A stone called Ebenezer. Ebenezer literally means stone of help in Hebrew and they quote saying, thus far the Lord has helped us.

that's an astonishing thing to say. Thus far the Lord has helped us. That is it's an expression that is not just God's helped us here by defeating the Philistines at Mizpah and sending them on their way.

But thus far meaning all the way up to this point. God has helped us. But look back to the last three chapters, chapters 4 to 6, we see two significant defeats of Israel and the slaughter of the descendants of Jeconiah and incorporated in all of that history they are saying thus far the Lord has helped us.

He's helped us in defeat. Beginning of chapter 4. He's helped us even when we lost more tragically and lost the ark later in chapter 4.

He helped us at Beit Shemesh when the descendants of Jeconiah were slaughtered, all 70 of them. That is the help of the Lord is not just bringing a victory. But the help of the Lord is in the midst of defeat and chaos and disaster and humiliation and shame as well.

[28 : 29] Now this is a very important point to grasp it seems to me. We must beware of the very simplistic view that God helps means that life is easy.

Sickness becomes health, job loss becomes job, exams get passed, we win a game, whatever it is. So often I hear on the lips of Christians God's helped me here.

I've done well, things are okay, they've picked up. But the Israelite language of Ebenezer, thus far the Lord has helped us, is looking over not just the immediate past but the whole past leading up to that and incorporates defeat and humiliation and shame.

God's not on the time.

He's not on the time. He's not on the exam or getting a job if we're unemployed. Not those little things as though if they don't happen God's not acting. Not at all. See what God's on about in the scriptures, what God's on about for this universe and in history is to bring you and I to him perfect.

[29 : 40] That's what God's on about. And if that means we are sick on earth, if that means we live short lives on earth, if that means we're bereaved on earth, if that means we live catastrophic lives on earth, if that means we suffer all sorts of indignities on earth, if that means that we're in the midst of turmoil after chaos after turmoil, if it means that we fail our exams, if it means that we're ugly and unloved on earth, so be it.

What God is on about is making us perfect in his sight on the final day. And if that dredges us through what we might call humiliation and defeat and shame and difficulty and strife and depression and whatever it is, so be it.

Because at the end of history what matters is that we will be perfect in the image of Christ. on the final day. I find far too many Christians have such a short-sighted and blinkered view of what God is on about, as though the good things, that's God helping me.

And the bad things, well, where was he? But not here. Because if you follow these chapters of 1 Samuel, you realise what God has been doing.

God has been working to bring his people to their knees, literally, to trust him. To repentance of their sins, of idolatry and immorality.

[31 : 10] And he's not done that through what we might say a simple nice thing happening for Israel. He's done it by bringing them to defeat. And defeat after defeat.

And the capture of the ark. And the destruction of the Lion of Jeconiah. And the end of the priesthood of Eli. He's done it through the mockery of the Philistines over them. Shame.

Humility. Humiliation, I mean. And now they see, thus far, the Lord has helped us. He's brought us to a point where now we're in a relationship with God.

A holy God. An awesome, sovereign, holy God. We've repented of our sins. We are trusting in him. Do you see how God has brought it about?

How is he bringing it about in your life to make you perfect on the final day? Not just through buoyant Sunday services and sort of happy, clappy times of Christian fellowship.

[32 : 10] Not just throwing open your Bible and filling you with nice, easy verses from scripture to remember. But through the low times. The pits.

The cesspools of life. The strife. The difficulty. Whatever it is. That's how God's operating because he's not just on about day by day little joys.

He's on about something much more lasting. Much more important. He's wanting us to get to the end of our life no matter how difficult. Standing in his presence on the final day and looking back and being able to say, God, thank you for every single thing.

Thank you for the times when I was down. Unloved. Jobless. Sick. Depressed. Despised. Whatever it is. Thank you. Because now I'm perfect in your sight in Christ on this final day.

That's what God's purpose for us is. That's what God's purpose for ancient Israel was as well. Not just secure borders. Not just a secure shrine at Shiloh.

[33 : 21] But something much more important. See, I often find Christians were unwilling to be chastised and chastened and moulded by God. We think we expect God to just deliver some nice little gift each day.

But what God's on about is much deeper. And it takes a lot of pain to change us. We are far from being perfect in the image of Christ. And chipping away the sins and difficulties and failings of our life causes us great grief and pain.

But it's worth it in the end. That's what God's been doing here in 1 Samuel in these chapters through the ups and downs of all this political stuff that we read.

He's bringing Israel to its knees so he can bring them to himself. Finally perfect in the image of Christ. And that's what he's doing for us.

It's a huge reversal we see here as we saw even in the very first week in the Song of Hannah at the beginning of chapter 2. But God's the God of reversals. He brings down, he lifts up, he causes death, he brings to life.

[34 : 30] The rich become poor and the poor become rich. He exalts the humble and brings down the proud. The God of reversals has acted here. For now finally Israel is triumphant over the Philistines but it's actually God who's won them the victory.

They've repented of their sins, they've turned away from them and reversed their direction. Now finally facing God. Oh we know for ancient Israel it doesn't last forever. It's part of the warning if you keep reading on the chapters that follow.

And don't forget that at the heart of the Christian gospel lies this same message of repentance. Don't underplay it or ignore it or despise it. God calls us to repent of our sins and that is not an easy thing to do.

For we love them so much. But as Israel repented of theirs and humbly trusted in God so ought we. And finally notice how this awesome and sovereign power of God is a merciful act of God.

Oh it may not seem merciful to bring Israel to defeat. It may not seem merciful to take the ark away from them. It may not seem merciful to kill off their priestly line almost. It may not seem merciful to end Shiloh as the shrine.

[35 : 45] But it is because God is bringing his people to himself. And he acts in mercy. Sometimes a severe mercy to us.

But real mercy indeed. Keep the big picture of God's awesome sovereignty in mind. As not only you read the scriptures. But as you think about your life.

And God's hand in it. Let's pray. God our sovereign God. Holy beyond our imagination.

We tremble before you but stand because of the blood of Jesus shed for us. We are reminded again Lord God that your good purpose for us is to make us like him on that final day.

And Lord God take whatever it needs to do that in our lives we pray. and give us eyes to be thankful for all that you are doing in our life.

[37 : 00] No matter how painful, difficult or hard. And give us confident hope that through your sovereign mercy we may finally stand in your presence.

Perfected in Christ. Amen. Amen. Lord God bless you. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.