

# Lamenting, Repenting and Returning

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Date: 05 February 2023

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now let us worship God. Let us sing to his praise from Scottish Psalter and Psalm 119 in verses 169 to 176.

In Scottish Psalter and Psalm 119 and verse 169.

O let my earnest prayer and cry come near before thee, Lord. Give understanding unto me according to thy word. Let my request before thee come. After thy word me free, my lips shall utter praise when thou hast taught thy laws to me.

My tongue of thy most blessed word shall speak and it confess, because all thy commandments are perfect righteousness. Let thy strong hand make help to me. Thy precepts are my choice. I longed for thy salvation, Lord, and in thy law rejoice.

O let my soul live and the child give praises unto thee, and let thy judgments gracious be helpful unto me. I, like a lost sheep, went astray. Thy servants seek and find. For thy commands I suffered not to slip out of my mind.

[ 1 : 29 ] This whole section, verses 169 to 176 of Psalm 119, to God's praise. O let my earnest prayer and cry come near before thee, Lord.

Amen. O let my earnest prayer and cry come near before thee, Lord.

Yet I was talking unto thee, I call thee to thy earth.

Let my request be for thee, come home after thy birth be thee.

My lips shall act of grace, when thou hast come, thy love to thee.

[ 2 : 57 ] My journal, I will bless them, were just sick and give for rest.

Be God's light on earth, by breath and righteousness.

Let my strong hand be held to thee.

I know for thy salvation, Lord.

And in my glory rejoice. For let my soul, let my dishonest thou give praises come to thee.

[ 4 : 34 ] And let thy child externe us, be helpful unto thee.

I know for thy life, O Lord. Keep when thou hast with thy self.

I'll seek thou out. I know for thy life, O Lord.

I suffer not. To still have come my life.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Let us pray. Lord, we desire to thank you this morning and you.

[ 5 : 49 ] For your great kindness to us. In enabling us to be here. Gathered with your people. In the house of God.

On the Lord's day. With an open Bible before us. With an open Bible before us. And access to the Lord himself in heaven.

Because you have provided and opened up. A new and living way into your presence. In our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We confess with David, whose words we have just been singing. That we, like lost sheep, have gone astray. We have turned every one of us into our own way.

But the Bible says, regarding God's people. That the Lord has laid upon Christ. The iniquity of them all.

[ 6 : 54 ] And give us this morning to rejoice in Jesus Christ as our Saviour. We might look to him. As the scripture commends and commands us to do.

To run our race in this world with patience. Looking unto Jesus. Jesus Christ. Who is the author and finisher of our faith.

We thank you this morning for the privilege of gathering in this way. We thank you for your people present. And we pray for your rich blessing to be upon each one of them.

According to the needs that each one has. We praise you that you are able to supply all our needs. According to your riches in glory. By Christ Jesus.

We thank you for the gospel presence in this congregation. Down through the years. For ministers who have served here.

[ 7 : 55 ] And through whom the word of God has been expounded. To the eternal benefit of many. And we pray as the congregation looks forward in your kind providence.

To the settlement of a new minister. That that blessing and blessedness may continue. That your servant who is to be inducted and installed here.

Would be the means and channels of blessing. To many more. In the days and months and years. That may lie ahead. We thank you Lord that you are the fountain of all blessings.

And that you appoint men to declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. To a needy world. And we praise you for raising up young men.

Men of your own choosing. To minister the word of God. In this difficult and hard day. We acknowledge the hardness of the day.

[ 9 : 04 ] And the godlessness of our society. We acknowledge that many have turned their back upon you. We acknowledge that many leave you out of their thinking.

Out of their lifestyle altogether. Lord our God have mercy upon us as a nation. That you be pleased to draw near us. In a day of rich blessing.

Not that we deserve blessing. We deserve to know your anger. As many others have known in years gone by.

We think of the historical experiences of Israel of old. Where a people of great privilege. Nevertheless they turned their back repeatedly upon you.

And embraced the idols of the age. To their detriment. We pray Lord that that may not be true of us anymore. As a people.

[ 10 : 08 ] But that we may turn unto the Lord. And seek to commit ourselves to you. As a mighty and willing. Saviour of sinners. We pray for your blessing to be upon us.

This day in every detail of our services here. Grant oh Lord your spirit to be upon us. Whether we are speaking or hearing. And may everything be done.

To the praise of your great name. And for the advancement of your cause among us. Remember those who aren't able to be present physically. Who are laid aside in sickness.

And who have other reasons for which they are not able to be here. Bless them where they are we pray. We thank you that you are able to reach them. At the very point of their need.

You know all the details of the lives of each one of us. And we thank you that you are able to apply your balm. To those whose hearts are broken. And whose situations are difficult.

[ 11 : 09 ] Go before us then we pray. And forgive every sin we ask. In Jesus' blessed name. And for his sake. Amen. Now I'd like to say a few words to the children.

And there's been a verse on my mind for a few days. And I'm just going to approach it like this.

That each one of us. That each one of us. Ought to see ourselves. Like a little garden. Little garden.

And immediately you begin thinking about a garden. You think of things to plant. I don't know if many of you are interested in. Planting seeds for flowers.

A number of packets of seeds. That you can get in the shop. In the shop. Sunflowers. Or sweet peas. Or marigolds. Many others.

[ 12 : 13 ] That you can just put into the soil in your garden. And then. As the days go by. And as the sun gets warmer. As time goes on.

The flowers appear. And they're beautiful. In the garden. And those of us. Who may be involved with vegetables. You'll be thinking maybe ahead.

God willing. In the next month or two. Of planting. Maybe potatoes. Or carrots. Or turnips. Or sweets. Or beetroot.

Or something like that. And all of these are very good vegetables. That you're able to eat. And when you harvest them. And when you harvest them. Our garden around our house.

And at the back of our house. Can be used very profitably. With vegetables. Or made beautiful. With lovely flowers.

[ 13 : 10 ] People. Remember. But ourselves. But ourselves. We ourselves also. Can be seen. As a little garden. And our life depends.

On what kind of seeds. We plant. In our garden. In our life. I mean if I were going out to plant some thorns in front of our house or some thistles or nettles or put dandelions everywhere throughout the garden it wouldn't be a nice garden, it wouldn't be an attractive garden, it wouldn't be profitable at all in the autumn time if you went out and looked for something to eat, well you wouldn't go for thorns or thistles. And the Bible talks like this, it says don't be deceived, God is not mocked, what a man sows that also shall he reap.

If you sow to your own flesh you will reap corruption, but if you sow to the Spirit you will reap from the Spirit eternal life.

That all talks to me about what I introduce into my life as I live. All you younger people here, it's as if it's the springtime of your life when you would want to plant nice seeds and lovely flowers would grow in your life.

What kind of nice seeds would you plant or could you plant into your mind for example? What about the seeds of the Word of God? What about the Psalms, the whole of the book of Psalms, 150 of them?

[ 15 : 32 ] What about planting a verse every day in your mind? And what about thinking of watering that seed with your prayers?

What about asking the Lord to shine the sun of his blessing upon you as you plant the seed of the Word of God into your young mind?

And what about your body? What are you going to introduce into your body? Well, a lot of people nowadays take drugs and plenty of people down through the years have been intoxicated with alcohol.

And that's not helping their body at all. The abuse of drugs is very destructive. I know that there are some medications that are very helpful to our health, but I'm talking just now about drugs that people buy on the street and inject into their veins to get a high for a few moments.

[ 17 : 08 ] Your mind, your body, your soul needs to have the best of all seed planted into it.

And the Bible here in the letter to the Galatians says, God is not mocked. If you sow good seeds into your life, the Lord will bless you.

But if you sow all the rubbish of the day, the rubbish thinking and the rubbish activities in your life, you will not gain by it.

You won't mock God. What a man sows, so shall he reap. If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption.

But if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap from the Spirit eternal life. What about it?

And on Thursday as well, if you're able. That would be like that you were making your mind and soul available to hear this good seed of the kingdom of God.

To give your spirit to be warmed by the blessings of God. Remember, you are like a garden. And your ultimate end and mine will depend on what is sown into our life.

Psalm 106 and verses 1 to 6. Give praise and thanks unto the Lord, for bountiful is he. His tender mercy doth endure unto eternity.

We with our father sin it have, and of iniquity too long we have the workers been, we have done wickedly. The wonders great which thou, O Lord, didst work in Egypt land.

His hand clear will sing, and heaven's poor. Our Lord is He. His hand will want jusqu'n UP.  
 Jesus, ¶ Lord, will instilling his reign. zaman██. ███ current██ikal █ ███ █ ███ ████  
 ███ ███ sabes █ █gebra And for his sins, Destiny may have tried men preparing And  
 salted dlouge always, Remember every old will God, I will come to life as in, with thy  
 salvation. O my Lord, to this victory of the end.

[ 24 : 00 ] Try on with thy glory. Try on with thy glory. Try on with thy glory.

Try on with thy glory.

So we'll turn to the Old Testament scriptures and read from the first book of Samuel and chapter 7. 1 Samuel and chapter 7 and reading at the beginning.

1 Samuel and chapter 8. 1 Samuel and chapter 8.

And the men of Kiriath-Jerim came and took up the ark of the Lord and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. 2 Samuel and they consecrated his son Eliezer to have charge of the ark of the Lord.

[ 25 : 19 ] 3 From the day that the ark was lodged at Kiriath-Jerim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

4 And Samuel said to the Lord, if you are returning to the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you, and direct your heart to the Lord, and serve him only.

5 And he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. 6 So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only.

7 Then Samuel said, Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you. 8 So they gathered at Mizpah and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord.

9 And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah. 9 Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.

[ 26 : 35 ] 10 And when the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. 11 And the people of Israel said to Samuel, Do not cease to cry out to the Lord our God for us, 12 That he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

12 So Samuel took a nursing lamb, and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. 13 And Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel.

14 And the Lord answered him, As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel. 15 But the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines, and threw them into confusion.

15 And they were defeated before Israel. 16 And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah, and pursued the Philistines, and struck them as far as below Beth-car.

17 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it up between Mizpah and Shem, and called its name Ebenezer. 18 For he said, Till now the Lord has helped us.

[ 27 : 50 ] 19 So the Philistines were subdued, and did not again enter the territory of Israel. 19 And the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

19 The cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath. 19 And Israel delivered their territory from the hand of the Philistines.

20 There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites. 21 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 21 And he went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah.

22 And he judged Israel in all these places. 22 Then he would return to Ramah, for his home was there. 22 And there also he judged Israel.

23 And he built there an altar to the Lord. 23 Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his word. 24 To his name. 24 Amen. 25 Amen.

[ 28 : 50 ] 25 Amen. 26 Amen. 26 Amen. 26 Amen. 26 Amen. 26 Amen. 26 Amen. 27 Amen. 27 Amen. 27 Amen. 27 Amen. 27 Amen. 27 Amen. 27 Amen. 28 Amen.

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08 Make cuplified in earned inec Savannah 35 click on■ KCB 90 Alpha 4v3, 3 devenu infected of a wizard in communist personally. 31 Strategies in that of Zane 24■ene 25 king of Lord 17, holiness renowned, they are the glorious ones in whom all my delight is found. Verses 1 to 7 of Psalm 16 from Sing Psalms, Protect me, O my God.

My profession, I send you on my own.

I send you on my own.

[ 30 : 39 ] I send you on my own.

I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own.

I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own.

I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own.

I send you on my own. I send you on my own. I send you on my own.

[ 32 : 01 ] I send you on my own. The light of Lord in me is in a pleasant sight.

I'm sure we'll find the heaven of God to me this sunny night.

Oh, praise the Lord my Lord, who thou stand by my choice.

And in the air, the light of my heart, with all sin's love shall voice.

Now as the Lord enables us, let us turn to consider the words we have in this chapter we've read.

[ 33 : 34 ] 1 Samuel chapter 7, and focusing on verse 12. Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer.

For he said, Till now the Lord has helped us. Till now the Lord has helped us.

You'll remember from your knowledge of the scriptures that the judges ruled in Israel for 450 years.

And the days of the judges were distressing days in many respects. The book of Judges finishes off with these sad words.

That the people did what was right in their own eyes. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes. And the Philistines had been a thorn in the side of Israel for years.

[ 34 : 51 ] But the Lord raised up Samuel as a prophet to declare God's word to that kind of society.

Even Eli, who was the priest, he had two sons who were perverted in many ways.

And when they heard that the Philistines were preparing to attack Israel, they decided to take the Ark of the Lord with them into the battle.

It was, like somebody said, reckon to be something like a good luck charm to them. That's what they thought of the Ark of the Lord. So that if they had the Ark of the Lord with them in battle, that they were bound to succeed.

But they didn't succeed. And in chapter 4 here we find that the Philistines captured the Ark.

[ 36 : 02 ] And the daughter-in-law of Eli the priest, when she heard that that had happened, she said, the glory has departed from Israel, for the Ark of the Lord has been captured.

It's a sad time. Chapter 7 opens with these words, verse 2, From the day that the Ark was lodged at Kiriath-Jerim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

And I'd like just to say one or two words on that, first of all, that at this time that they were lamenting people.

Secondly, when Samuel speaks to them, he calls them to repentance. Verses 3 to 6 in the chapter. A repentant people.

And thirdly, from verses 7 to 10, The Philistines appear, a great threat to them. They were a threatened people.

[ 37 : 19 ] But then in verses 11 and 12, Samuel having prayed and made intercession for them, they were a people prayed for. And verses 13 and 14, A people helped by the Lord.

And Samuel acknowledged the help of the Lord when he erected the stone Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto has the Lord helped us.

Well, one or two words on each of these headings. First of all, at the beginning of the chapter, we find them in verse 2 as a people lamenting.

People who lamented after the Lord. The same word lament, there is used in the original, in the prophecy of Jeremiah, chapter 31, verse 15.

A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children because they are no more.

[ 38 : 32 ] Well, a woman weeping for her children. A woman weeping for her child is a sight of great pity and anguish. And so it was with Israel here.

They were anguished because they longed to see and know the power and presence of the Lord among them. It had been 20 years and the ark of the Lord was not in its place.

And Israel were lamenting after the Lord. Maybe that's the way you feel yourself in our day and in our age.

You remember better days, spiritually speaking. And it's as if you have this lament and longing in your heart that the Lord would come.

You look on the decline of religion in society. You feel coldness of heart in your own experience. You look around you and you see so few people coming to the house of God and you long to see times of blessing as you knew them before.

[ 39 : 51 ] These people were a lamenting people. But when Samuel comes to address them in verses 3 to 6, Samuel said to all the house of Israel, If you are returning to the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and direct your heart to the Lord and serve him only and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth and they served the Lord only. Samuel said, Gather all Israel at Mizpah and I will pray to the Lord for you.

They gathered at Mizpah and drew water and poured it out before the Lord and fasted on that day and said, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah.

It's not enough, as it were, to lament and long for better days. Samuel said, You have to show your colours clearly.

If you are really seeking the Lord, you have to repent of your sins. Turn from every known sin in your life. And when the people gathered, they heard Samuel say, Put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you.

[ 41 : 21 ] Direct your heart to the Lord and serve him only. There are so many gods seeking to have our attention and dominion over our life.

The God of self, the God of riches, the God of comfort, the God of worldliness, the God of acceptability, all of these different things.

And the Lord said, I will not give my glory to any other. I need to be on the throne of your heart. Not the God of the Philistines, not Ashtaroath, not Baal, or any other God.

Through repentance is necessary. And then in verse 5, it says, Samuel said, Gather all Israel at Mizpah and I will pray to the Lord for you.

So he gathered at Mizpah and drew water and poured it out before the Lord and fasted on that day. Poured water out, an indication of the irrecoverability of situation into which the people had brought themselves because of their idolatry and because of their sins.

[ 42 : 52 ] We cannot recover the situation that we have lost apart from the grace of God. You see, we are as water poured forth another one's head.

The mistakes I've made, they've made already. The mess I've made of things. But only in the Lord is there to be help for us.

And this is what Samuel directs them. We have sinned, they said, against the Lord. We have sinned. The prophet Joel in chapter 2 the Lord directs them to call Israel to repentance.

And in chapter 2 of the prophecy of Joel the Lord says, rend your hearts and not your clothing. See, the outward demonstration of sorrow among the Israelites was that they would rend their clothes on hearing bad news or whatever.

but the worst news of all is that sin dominated and pervaded their lifestyle and their society.

[ 44 : 12 ] And Joel says, rend your heart. The heart is the center of things in the life of each one of us. And if our heart has been on the wrong direction, which it was with these people in Samuel's day, they had embraced the gods of the nations and the idolatry that surrounded them, we have to tear that chart as it were by which we have been sailing.

As sailors, people at sea they have to follow a certain course according to the chart. If people in Samuel's day had had a chart and in Joel's day if they had had a chart, they were called upon to tear it up because they had been cruising in the wrong direction.

They had wrong priorities in their lives. And it says here that Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah.

They had fasted on that day and said we have sinned against the Lord. Fasting is mentioned often throughout the scripture and we are called upon to fast and to pray that fasting be a part of our life.

there is a fasting that is spiritual which I believe the scripture particularly commends to us.

[ 45 : 57 ] Denying that is denying oneself things that are not going to be conducive to our spiritual growth. I mean there are places people go to and these places are not conducive to spirituality.

Things they listen to things they view associations they make and they are not conducive to growth and grace at all and we have to deny ourselves involvement with all of these different things.

We have to fast denying ourselves things that interfere with our spiritual growth, things that interfere with our prayer life, things that interfere with our study of the scriptures, things that interfere with our attendance at the house of God.

We have to abandon them. That is part and partial of real fasting. Real fasting has at its very heart a true commitment to all that the Lord commends and an abandoning of things that he doesn't.



And these people, they fasted there before the Lord and they confessed, we have sinned against the Lord and Samuel judged the people at Mizpah.

[ 47 : 33 ] What is the Lord saying about me today? Am I fasting in that spiritual sense? Am I confessing my sin in that real sense?

Am I longing and lamenting after the Lord in a real sense? things? But then along with their internal problems spiritually, we see in verses 7 to 10 in this chapter here that there were a people threatened.

It says, Now when the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel, when the people of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

And the people of Israel said to Samuel, Do not cease to cry out to the Lord, our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.

They felt under threat. So do we sometimes, do we not, the kind of society we are in. There are so many evil influences and movements around us in our present day.

[ 49 : 01 ] But what did the people there say? Don't cease to cry out to the Lord, our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines. We need to be crying out to the Lord in heaven, that he might save us also from this dark day in which we find ourselves.

And then Samuel took a nourishing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. And Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel, and the Lord answered him.

As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel, but the Lord thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel, and the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and struck them as far as below Beth-kar.

These people knew the danger that lay around them, and they asked Samuel to pray for them. And Samuel cried out to the Lord for Israel.

But we have a greater than Samuel at the right hand of the majesty on high. And when we feel surrounded by the enemies of our soul, and the enemy of all that is good, we cry to him, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to intervene and give us help in our day of trouble.

[ 50 : 46 ] Samuel assured the people that repented that God would forgive them.

But then it goes on. In verse 12 in particular, Samuel took a stone and he set it up between Mizpah and Shiloh and called its name Ebenezer, for he said, Till now, the Lord has helped us.

He set up a stone, calling it Ebenezer. The Lord has helped us. us. We as a nation and as a people ought to erect our own Ebenezer, acknowledging the Lord's help to us down through the years.

I mean, as a nation, we have so many reasons to thank God for the number of ways in which he has helped us down through the years.

When you think back to the history of our nation and the various revivals that have come our way, think of the awakenings that killed Scythia in 1742 and Canberra's land revival, the great awakenings in America in the 1720s and 30s and 40s, the awakening in Wales in 1904, the revivals in various places in Lewis since then, in the 1930s and the 1950s and so on.

[ 52 : 51 ] The Lord has remembered us and he has set up, as it were, a stone of remembrance in relation to his goodness to the people of Israel at that time in the days of Samuel.

Samuel erected a stone and he said, I call it Ebenezer, for he said, till now the Lord has helped us.

And you as a congregation have many reasons to thank God also, even today, that the Lord has been helping you down through the years during the vacancy, and that the Lord in his providence has set a man aside who is willing to come and minister to you.

And may the Lord bless him and bless you, as in God's good time and according to God's purposes, the induction takes place next week.

It's a time for erecting a stone, the stone of Ebenezer as a congregation.

[ 54 : 17 ] Hitherto the Lord has helped you. Hitherto, up until this point, the Lord has been good to you and been gracious to you.

And the people around Samuel on that day, they acknowledged that the Lord was helper to them also.

Looking back over the years, the Lord had been good to the people of Israel. Israel. He had called Moses to be their leader and guide in the days when they were led out of the land of Egypt.

He had called Joshua after Moses had passed away. Then the day of the judges and the days of Samuel, the Lord himself had been caring for these people down through the years.

years. And so he's been caring for you also as a congregation. He has raised up men to minister faithfully to you down through the years.

[ 55 : 28 ] And may the Lord continue to bless you as I believe he has blessed you in many ways already. What about our own nation, thinking a little bit more widely of the Lord's goodness?

We have been surrounded by the Lord's goodness as a nation all the way through the years, thinking particularly of Puritan times, the times when the Lord's cause was so strong and ever since then the number of great men whom the Lord has raised, some of them who we have access to their writings, other ones whose voices have been recorded down through the years, we have heard them and we rejoice to know that the Lord has used these men and now the Lord is able to use the men he is raising today to further his cause in this community and throughout all of our communities that the Lord will bless them.

There have been times of revival down through the years where the cause of Christ has been strongly encouraged and the number of people have been added to the communion roles, these have been greatly advanced.

We long for days of revival, do we not? Days of upbuilding of the cause of Christ and we praise him that he is on the throne and able to do great things for us still because his power is not diminished and his work will continue to the end.

Samuel took a stone, he set it up between Mizba and Shen and called its name Ebenezer, till now the Lord has helped us.

[ 57 : 36 ] And there's a sense in which you as a congregation can say that today, is there not? And up until today, up until now, the Lord has helped you.

He has provided for all of you by way of spiritual feeding and instruction and guidance. and he has given now the leading of the Lord to a young man who is willing to come and minister to you.

Hitherto the Lord has helped us. And there's a question in the mind of the psalmist of old, what shall I render to the Lord for all his gifts to me?

We have had wonderful gospel gifts down through our years. What can we render to the Lord in response? Well, the psalmist said, Isle of salvation, take the cup.

On God's name will I call. I'll pay my vows now to the Lord before his people all. That we might continue to commit ourselves to the Lord in heaven, doing what pleases him and living for him who has done so many great things for us.

[ 59 : 02 ] Hitherto the Lord has helped us. When you think of your own personal life, personal experience in life, I'm sure looking back each one of us today is able to say, well up until now the Lord has helped me.

There have been so many difficulties in my life, I couldn't have got through them without the help and enabling of the Lord. Maybe you're thinking of particular times with health problems or other problems in your life, and the Lord has intervened and he has taken you through it.

Hitherto the Lord has helped us. He has surrounded you with his arms of care, with his grace, sufficient for the situation, sufficient for the day.

He has given you grace to enable you to go on. Maybe in your loneliness, maybe through tears, nevertheless he has given you strength to go on and find yourself here today.

And maybe you have felt threatened in many ways down through life. But he has proved that he has kept you safe.

[ 60 : 28 ] He has protected you because he has cared for you in every situation and brought you safely through to this particular moment in your life.

He is your helper and has been so up until now. Maybe you have been tempted by the evil one in many different ways and you have felt sometimes that the evil one has got the better of you.

But hitherto the grace of the Lord has been sufficient for you and his strength has been perfected in your weakness. You are weak in yourself.

As each one of us is weak in ourselves nevertheless by his grace we have been able to move forward. Hitherto has the Lord helped us.

Isn't it amazing that this man he set this memorial up to the Lord's help in times gone past?

[ 61 : 42 ] Hitherto but he may have been looking forward also and on the basis of God's promises God's promises to his people is I will never leave you and I will never forsake you.

Where I have begun a good work in you I will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Into the years maybe that lie ahead the Lord promises never to leave nor forsake his people.

What an amazing commitment that is. From this point onwards Israel could look back and say the Lord has kept us and from that point forward were they not able to look forward and say that he will never leave us nor forsake us.

Hitherto he says the Lord has helped us. And may that be true of each one of us individually. May we acknowledge the Lord's goodness to us as individuals without whom we can do nothing but I am able to do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

May the Lord bless to us these few thoughts. Let us pray. We thank you Lord for your kindness this day in giving us access to your word and to you our God in prayer.

[ 63 : 25 ] You are able to do great things in the lives of each one of us and we ask that you would do so and that you would build us up in our most holy faith.

We ask for this congregation also that you would build them up as individuals and as a body of your people. That you would strengthen them as they go forward and that you would bless the young man that in your providence will be inducted and installed as their minister later on this week.

We pray for your rich blessing to be upon them as they journey forward together. Fill them all with your grace we pray and may your spirit work mightily in the lives of young and old in this community to the salvation of many and the praise of your great name.

Go before us now we pray and forgive our sins in Jesus name and for his sake. Amen. Now we'll conclude our worship at this time singing from the Scottish Psalter in Psalm 54 and verses 4 to 7.

verse 4 The Lord my God my helper is lo therefore I am bold he taketh part with everyone that doth my soul uphold unto mine enemies he shall mischief and ill repay oh for thy truth sake cut them off and sweep them clean away I will a sacrifice to thee give with free willingness thy name O Lord because it is good with praise I will confess for he hath me delivered from all adversities and his desire mine I hath seen upon mine enemies these stances of Psalm 54 from the Scottish Psalter verse 4 to the end the Lord my God my helper is the Lord my God my helper is know therefore

[ 65 : 55 ] I am born great as said of thee saying heavenly he he ■ tongue in autumn he me to heavenARA unser rhymes this year I'm in repay, oh for thy truth dej' of home my sweetymphna grain away, Zwing meek the flashback.

Universüm cidade bekóth Aalleyl mais Amen.

I have saved upon my heaven Do you please give me an opportunity to go to the door at the end.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.