

# God Our Eternal Dwelling Place

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[0:00] Bibles to Psalm 90, our sermon text for today. If you need a Bible, you're welcome to take one off the back table and keep it as our gift to you. A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

You've returned man to dust, and say return, O children of man, for a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday, when it is past, or as a watch in the night.

You sweep them away as with a flood. They are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning. In the morning it flourishes and is renewed. In the evening it fades and withers.

For we are brought to an end by your anger. By your wrath we are dismayed. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins, in the light of your presence. For all our days pass away under your wrath.

[1:07] We bring our years to an end like a sigh. The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength, eighty. Yet their span is but toil and trouble.

They are soon gone, and we fly away. Who considers the power of your anger and your wrath according to the fear of you? So teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom. Return, O Lord, how long? Have pity on your servants. Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil.

Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us.

Yes, establish the work of our hands. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord.

[2:16] Establish the work of our hands. As Andrew prayed, as Moses prays in this prayer. God, we ask that you would show your mighty power, your glorious power to your saints this morning, and that you would take the feeble, ordinary efforts of this servant of yours, and of your people that are gathered here, and God, you would do the extraordinary, supernatural things that you do.

In our midst, and for your glory, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, good morning, church. Good morning. Everyone's maybe a little tired from happy birthday festivities for our nation.

I also know a lot of people maybe had trouble getting here this morning, so we're glad that you all made it safely. If you hear about needs within the body as a result of the storm, circulate that so we can help anybody that might be needing some help.

You know, but as we think about last night's storm, and I don't know, I was kind of finishing things up last night, and the lightning was just going insane, just like back and forth, the heat lightning, and you're left staring and thinking about how awesome and powerful God is.

Like, that's a display of his majesty. And there's things in nature that humble us. For example, does anybody remember the COVID-19 pandemic?

[3:42] You know, it feels like a long time ago. It feels like a lifetime ago at this point, and honestly, it is for some of you. It is more than a lifetime ago. I mean, I think probably half our church didn't exist during that time.

What a surreal season that was, though. And, you know, for most of us, it was, if not all of us, unprecedented in our lifetimes. You know, COVID-19, it swept across the world, bringing sickness and death, and along with those things, masks.

That was weird. So, you know, social distancing, rising levels of fear, rising levels of anxiety, depression, as people isolated themselves for large periods of time.

You know, we learned something during that time, that humanity, with all of our technical advancements and achievements in the 2020s, you know, all of our boasts of scientific progress, we were left grappling with the reality of our utter weakness, our lack of control. And, you know, in the midst of the pandemic, I was listening to a podcast, and a pastor was asked, where in the Bible should Christians turn for times such as these?

[4:49] And his answer was Psalm 90. In Psalm 90, what we find from Moses is a brutally honest assessment of our lives on earth that accords with so much of our human experience.

But we also find the one source of hope amid our toilsome lives. And so, if you haven't already, please turn in your Bibles to Psalm 90.

The title of today's sermon is, God, Our Eternal Dwelling Place. God, Our Eternal Dwelling Place. And the main point that I want to bring home today, Lord willing, is this.

Did I do that or did you do that? It's this. This sin-cursed life is brief and hard. This sin-cursed life is brief and hard.

But in God, our dwelling place, we find eternal meaning and soul satisfaction. And that is the beautiful message of this psalm that, yeah, Lord willing, will hit us in our hearts today.

[5:54] Now, if you're joining us for the first time, as Andrew mentioned earlier, we've been walking through the book of Genesis all year, which has been, I don't know, I've really been enjoying going through Genesis. Hope you have too. But for the months of July and August, we're pausing that series.

And as Andrew said, different men. And this is going to be the only time I'm preaching up here for the summer. And so, other men from within Shoreline. And at the very end, we have a guest speaker from GBC. We'll be walking us through the psalms.

And so, I'm really excited for us to be nourished in the psalms throughout this summer. And it just so happens that the author of Genesis, which we've been reading through, and the other books of the Pentateuch.

So, the Pentateuch is the first five books of the Bible. The same author, Moses, wrote Psalm 90. In fact, it's the only psalm written by Moses in the 150 psalms in the book of Psalms.

And so, we learn this from the psalm's very inscription. If you look in your Bibles at the inscription at the top, it says, A prayer of Moses, the man of God. Now, just a side note here.

[6:58] You should pay attention to the inscriptions in your Bibles. Because those, as opposed to the title. So, some translations give a title on top of the psalm. That title is not the inspired word of God.

It's been put there by, it's not bad, but it's been put there by Bible translators. It's supposed to be a helpful way of summarizing the psalm. But the inscription is the inspired word of God. That was given to us by the Spirit, through the human authors.

And so, we should pay attention to those. And they also give us helpful context that help us understand the meaning of the psalms. And so, this psalm, Psalm 90, is a psalm of Moses, the man of God.

Now, as we read in Exodus, you can read all about the story of Moses and in the Pentateuch. Moses was divinely preserved by God from death as an infant. And then he was raised up in the household of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

And then he was called by God to be the leader of God's chosen people, Israel. It was by Moses' hand, we know, that God brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt. And they crossed the Red Sea.

[7:57] And God established them as a people. And he gave them his law. And Moses, we learn, enjoyed such an intimate relationship with the Lord that is written in Exodus 33, 11.

The thing about this. The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. And so, it's for good reason that Moses is designated here as the man of God.

So, let us this morning learn from this man of God as we follow him into the divine throne room. And here's the first thing that we learn from Moses.

Caleb's going to be helping me today. Here's the first thing that we learn from Moses. God is forever a dwelling place for his people. God is forever a dwelling place for his people.

Moses prays in verse 1, Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Now, he starts by addressing God as Lord.

[8:58] That it's Adonai, the sovereign one. It affirms God as the ruler and creator of the universe. And he's saying that God has been for his people in every single generation a dwelling place.

That is a refuge, a habitation, a shelter, a home. One commentator states, The oasis of refreshment and encampment of his people.

I think Moses, as the author of Genesis, he wants us to look back over human history. Yes, far further back than our young nation of 250 years.

All the way back to our origin in Adam and Eve. He wants us to see how from the very beginning, God intended for his people to enjoy the blessing and the safety of his presence.

And you know, even after the fall, and we've been walking through Genesis, even after the fall, even in the midst of trial and uncertainty, and then with Israel, the slavery that they experienced for 400 years, and then the wilderness wanderings, God has ever remained the happy home of those who trust in him.

[10:02] Now, of course, this reality can only be possible for a God who transcends time itself, which, in fact, the Lord does. And so, Moses says in verse 2, Now, other translations better capture that Moses is here using the language of birth.

The CSB, for example, says, Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth.

Now, this poetic language, it highlights God's intimate involvement in the process of creation.

Like, everything that exists, emerging by the power of his creative word. And emerging by no other, for he is the sole creator of this universe.

That's what Genesis proclaims. And he and he alone is God, and he is God from everlasting to everlasting. Now, this defies our ability to comprehend.

But God has existed from eternity past and will exist into eternity future. The Canaanite nations would use the same word for God, for their own pagan deities.

[11:19] But in these two verses, Moses is, again, he's asserting that Adonai, the Lord, the one in whom his people take refuge, he and he alone is God.

In the Gospels, we find the clearest revelation of God in the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

You see, Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity.

Jesus Christ is the everlasting creator. And Jesus invites us to seek shelter in him. He is a dwelling place for us. And in him, we find rest for our souls.

But, you know, before we get too far down that road, there is a problem here. The psalm takes a dark turn. Moses prays in verse 3, In verses 3 through 6, Moses, through his prayer of lament, he calls us to see mortal man in light of the immortal God.

This is the second thing here. See mortal man in light of the immortal God. Now, Moses laments over three sad realities regarding the human condition.

[12:36] Here's the first one. Our lives are finite. Our lives are finite. With this verse, verse 3, Moses is pointing back to God's curse for sin.

We run through this together in Genesis 3. God pronounced over Adam, By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

So here's our sad reality as humans. The mortality rate is 100%, right? Or about as close as you can get, if you accept Enoch and Elijah. 100%.

See, our lives are like a wind-up clock that is just constantly tick, tick, tick, ticking down the seconds. Each of us has a finite time in this life. And it's known only to the Lord.

Now, he is from everlasting to everlasting. But these mortal bodies, they have a shelf life. They have an expiration date set by him alone. But they're not only finite, they're also, verse 4, they're fleeting.

[13:41] And Moses says, For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. Now, a thousand years, that represents the longest life a mortal man has ever lived.

Again, we saw in Genesis 5, Methuselah lived 969 years, basically a thousand years. Even that lifespan, Moses is saying, a lifespan unthinkable to us today is as yesterday when it is past.

Like it never even happened, just came and went. Such is the brevity, the fleeting nature of our lives on earth. You know, about every 25 years-ish, a new generation is born.

And so that means that in a 1,000-year period of time, 40 generations, 40 generations of humans have lived on planet earth. And that, to the immortal, eternal God, is like a watch in the night.

A blip on the radar. A dot on the timeline of eternity. And that's what Moses is saying our mortal lives are compared to the immortal God. Finite, fleeting.

[14:52] Third, our lives are fragile. And we see this in verses 5 and 6. Moses says, You sweep them away as with a flood. There was some flooding going on last night, sweeping things in its path.

They are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning. In the morning it flourishes and is renewed. In the evening it fades and withers. Now these verses definitely keep speaking to the brevity of our lives.

But they also speak to the fragility, the frailty of men. As compared to the powerful God. His flood sweeps away everyone in its path.

No survivors. You know, we awake from a dream. And we wonder, like, was that real? Did that happen? We can barely remember the details. Was I really dreaming?

That's what our lives are like, Moses is saying. You know, around here in the northeast, grass lasts generally for a season. In the arid Palestinian climate, though, grass would literally spring up in the morning from the dew.

[15:53] And then by evening it was scorched, it's gone. And that's what he's saying our lives are like. That is the fragility of the human life. You know, from kings in their palaces. From our own president in the White House.

To the world's poorest living in the slums of this world. Every single human. Every human. In comparison to the almighty God is utterly powerless.

And we think, okay, okay, Moses. Like, we get it. Ease up a little bit, all right? Don't be such a pessimist, Moses. His lament only darkens.

In the next five verses, he urges us. Number three. To see sinful man in light of the wrathful God. See sinful man in light of the wrathful God.

And he laments over three more grievous realities of the human condition. Our lives, verse 7, are cursed. Moses says, For we are brought to an end by your anger.

[16:55] By your wrath we are dismayed. Now Moses makes explicit in this verse what he had already implied before. The reason that death casts its foreboding shadow over mankind is because of the anger and the wrath of God.

Now this isn't a popular topic to talk about in 2026 or for the last many decades. And there are those within Christianity that would downplay the doctrine of God's wrath, the doctrine of God's anger.

They would explain it away as simply humanity is just experiencing the natural consequences of sin. Well, that may be true. We certainly experience the natural consequences of our sin all the time.

But I don't know if we're reading the same Bible. Because Scripture makes abundantly clear from beginning to end that God is actively responding to mankind's sin with his just wrath.

Now this is true from the first sin in the garden. God subjected the world to curse. He subjected the world to futility because of the sin of man.

[18:02] And you know the story, remember this is Moses writing here, the story of Israel's wilderness wanderings is further proof of this reality. Moses is lamenting out of his lived experience at time and again seeing God's wrath flaring up in judgment towards sinners in Israel.

From the complainers about the manna who died by the plague to the rebels along with Korah who were swallowed up from the ground to the entire generation that died out in the wilderness because of their unbelief and their unwillingness to take the land that God had promised since the time of Abraham.

God is holy, utterly distinct, utterly different than anybody else. God is righteous, perfectly righteous. There is no taint or stain of sin.

And God, the Bible tells us, dwells in unapproachable light. He is a consuming fire that melts away all that is impure so that only what is pure remains.

And this, we actually need to realize, is a good thing. It doesn't sound like a good thing. This is actually what we want.

[19:20] You're saying, I don't think we want that. Listen, even in our everyday lives, we long. We long for leaders from fathers over homes to World Cup referees, you know, refereeing the game to presidents.

We long for leaders who rule with perfect justice, who call the strike when it's a strike and the ball when it's a ball and the red card when it is or isn't. They call it correctly. We long for perfect justice

in every way.

The thing is, though, we simply despise it when it's directed at us because we've been the offenders. Justice is good. Justice upholds what is right.

God's justice means that sinful humanity abides under his wrath and his anger as the holy, almighty God. Our lives are cursed.

Second, our lives are exposed. Look at verse 8. This is terrible news for sinners. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.

[20:32] You know, I'm a Lord of the Rings fan. I haven't watched them in a while, but a fan of Lord of the Rings. And you know, Frodo and Sam, they're able to hide from Sauron's gaze, aren't they? But no man can escape.

No man can escape the all-seen eye of God. Whether public or private, sins of the body or sins of the heart, God sees and he knows all. Now listen, kids, you might fool your parents.

You might escape their notice. Workers, you might fool your boss or escape the notice of your boss.

You might escape the notice of Uncle Sam on your taxes. You're not escaping the notice of God.

No creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Hebrews 4.13. Our lives are cursed. Our lives are exposed.

And here's the third thing. Our lives are hard. Our lives are hard. Look at verses 9 and 10. For all our days pass away under your wrath. God's hand is heavy on us.

[21:31] We constantly feel the negative effects of living in this sin-cursed world. We bring our years to an end like a sigh. Our years come to an end not as in joy and victory, but more like the baseball team that loses 16 to 0 and then sighs that the misery is finally over.

The years of our life are 70 or even by reason of strength, 80. Now, it's amazing how true this remains even to this day. This is 3,500 years later. The average life expectancy in the U.S. is 79 right now.

In the world, it's 73 and a half. 70 or 80 years. Now, I said before that our lives are kind of like a wind-up clock ticking down. Well, I think maybe from our perspective, they're more like a soccer game ticking up to 90 minutes.

And the thing is, after 70 years, stoppage time begins. And you know you're on borrowed time.

That's kind of what Moses is saying here. And listen, if a thousand years, he said, is but as yesterday or a watch in the night, then what is 70 or 80?

Yet their span, or some translations say their boast, is but toil and trouble. Like even our brief lives, the best they can offer is toil and trouble.

[22:48] They are soon gone, and we fly away. The cord is cut, and we're gone. Lamech, Noah's father in Genesis 5, he hoped for Noah that he would be the one to bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.

The curse remained, though, didn't it? Noah didn't bring relief. He did in a kind of. All of humanity got wiped out, and he continued in his sin. Generations later, we're getting there in Genesis one day, Jacob will relate to Pharaoh that few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, Genesis 47, 9.

And still generations later, Moses now, writing from personal experience, writes that our fleeting lives on earth are but toil and trouble. Okay, let's pause for a second.

Does anybody think that Moses is out of touch with reality? Does anyone think that Moses' assessment of the human condition is off base?

The thing is, if you're here and you do, live a little longer, and you'll probably change your tune. Right? Get cut from the team and see how you feel.

[24:03] Get rushed to the ER for stitches. Get broken up with by a significant other. Have a boss yell at you for poor performance. Have your car break down at the worst possible time.

Have your identity stolen. These are just low-level things that we deal with all the time. Experience profound depression. Battle with cancer.

Lose a loved one. I'm starting to think Moses knows what he's talking about. And his lament here from a place of pain and suffering in a sin-cursed world.

This is something that we feel down in our souls. Is it not? Some of you are walking through profound pain right now or have or will. All of us will.

Some days we feel this far more acutely than we'd like to admit. But catch Moses' point here. He's not just saying life is hard. He's saying that the pain and suffering of the human condition is

fundamentally the result not of the consequences that we naturally feel for sin but of a holy God who senses wrath upon sinful men.

[25 : 15] And all of this prompts Moses to ask a rhetorical question. Look at verse 11. Who considers the power of your anger and your wrath according to the fear of you?

Who even knows, he's saying, who comprehends, Lord, the power, the terror of your anger? Now that second line, some translations take as more of an assertion.

Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. However we take that line, Moses is imploring us to consider do I rightly fear God in light of the utter power of his anger and wrath?

Do you? We fear a lot of things in this life. Pain, discomfort, others' opinions of us, death.

God's word calls us to set in proper relation those fears to something else, to someone else. Jesus warns, and do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

[26 : 22] Rather, fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10, 28. Charles Spurgeon writes this, Holy Scripture, when it depicts God's wrath against sin, never uses hyperbole.

It would be impossible to exaggerate it. Whatever feelings of pious awe and holy trembling may move the tender heart, it is never too much moved.

All the pain and the misery that we experience in this sin-cursed life, they are but the rays of the Son of God's wrath that burns millions of miles away. Who even knows the power of his anger?

Who would even want to find out? And friends, before such majesty, the proper response is to bow low low in reverence and worship.

But not only that. Because verses 3 through 11 are in the context of verses 1 and 2. Yes, life is brief and hard.

[27 : 28] Yes, the sin of man incurs the wrath of God. But also, God is the eternal dwelling place of his people. We cannot forget verses 1 and 2.

And so, what does Moses do next? Does Moses abandon his faith? Does he choose another one of the pagan gods that he could go choose? No, no, no. Moses makes humble, earnest plea to God. And he calls us to do the same. So this is the fourth point. Make humble, earnest plea to God. Now, for the final six verses of this psalm, Moses, who is described in Numbers 12, verse 3, as the most humble man on the face of the earth.

He bows himself low before God's throne and he offers these six earnest pleas. And here's the first one. It's a plea for sobering wisdom. Moses, praise the Lord, so teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

Teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Wisdom, simply put, is right knowledge applied to life. Right knowledge applied to life. As my seminary professor said in a lecture just this week, he said, there are a lot of educated fools in this world.

[28 : 40] Why would he say that? Because true wisdom comes from the Lord, not from education. Education's not bad. We need education. What I'm saying is that true wisdom comes from the Lord and him alone.

And so the book of Proverbs, which teaches us wisdom, begins, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction. True wisdom begins with a proper fear of God and then it moves us to action.

It moves us to a life of faithfulness to God and the pattern that he has set for us. Loving him, serving him, walking in his ways and his statutes. And so Moses prays that God would teach his people to live in light of our few days in this world.

To live in light of, eyes wide open to the reality of the brevity and the frailty of our lives, the reality of God's wrath towards sinners. This consideration leads us to, as Paul exhorts, look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time because the days are evil, Ephesians 5, 15, and 16.

Things come and go in this life, don't they? Like British rule over the colonies, it came and went, Crystal Mall used to be a booming center of commerce, not anymore.

[30 : 01] Our lives too will come and go. The question is are we living wisely in light of this reality? And friends, in light of the New Testament, we also know that this world's days are passing away.

The present form of this world is passing away. Christ is soon to return. We want to be a people ready, a bride ready for his return. And that means living, wisely, as revealed by the word of God. Now such wisdom, though, in light of our sinful state, God's wrath for sin, wisdom moves us next to plead with God for restoring mercy.

And here's the second, a plea for restoring mercy. Moses prays in verse 13, Return, O Lord, how long have pity on your servants? Now I don't know about you, but when I read Return, O Lord, my mind goes straight as a believer in Christ to the return of Jesus.

But that's not what Moses is praying for. How long? That's the quintessential cry of lament all throughout the Psalms. In light of their grievous condition of toil and of trouble under God's heavy hand, Moses is crying for God to turn towards his people and relent.

[31 : 18] repent. He's begging the Lord for relief, for mercy. This is precisely what Moses prayed in Exodus 32. Do you know what happened before Exodus 32?

The people of Israel made the golden calf while Moses was meeting with God on Sinai and they foolishly made that golden calf and worshipped that calf and then Moses comes down and God's wrath and his anger is kindled against the people of Israel for turning so soon from Yahweh and God stood ready.

He told Moses, I'm going to wipe them out. I'm going to start over with just you. And Moses begged God, turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people.

Same Hebrew words right here. Turn and relent. Now it's perhaps for this reason, this is interesting, that Psalm 90 is placed exactly where it is in the book of Psalms. If you read Psalm 89, you'll find that Israel, now hundreds of years after Moses, they're lamenting how God has turned away from them.

Now they're probably writing in the context of exile in Babylon. The people cry out in verse 46, How long, O Lord, will you hide yourself forever? How long will your wrath burn like fire?

[32 : 34] It looks and feels as if God's promises to Israel are ended. His promises made to King David that he would raise up a Messiah king after him whose throne will endure forever, who will enjoy God's steadfast love forevermore.

It seems like to Israel, in exile, those promises are ended. But immediately following Psalm 89, Psalm 90, it's as if Israel enlists Moses, the man of God, the ultimate intercessor, to go before the Lord and to beg for God to turn and relent from his anger and show restoring mercy.

Now I want to ask this question, has God answered this cry of his people? Yes. Yes and amen. Has God turned from his just wrath for his people's sin to instead show restoring mercy?

Has God brought his covenant promises to pass? Yes and amen. Hallelujah, he has. Why? How? Because of the once for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross for the sins of all of those who would trust in him.

Jesus has absorbed fully, 100%, the weight of God's wrath for sinners who repent of that sin and believe in him, forgiving, redeeming, restoring, mercy for us through Christ.

[34 : 02] That mercy, like the breaking of a cosmic dam was unleashed at the cross of Christ and it flows mightily to the ends of the earth. Friends, if you're here this morning and you have not received this mercy in Jesus, then God's wrath for sin described by Moses in this psalm, it abides on you.

It abides on you. Your destiny is not a dwelling place with God but away from his presence in hell. That's what Moses is saying, that's what scripture teaches, but if you repent of your sin, this is the great promise of the gospel, if you repent of your sin and believe in Christ, then instead of wrath you get mercy, mercy, loving kindness, the riches of God's grace forevermore and he becomes your eternal dwelling place, a happy home.

He will shelter you from his own wrath which he absorbed himself on the cross. That's the gospel. Now this sobering wisdom leading to restoring mercy, it sets the stage for the four petitions that come after this.

So here's the third one, a plea for joy producing fullness. Joy producing fullness. Moses prays, satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. in Exodus 34, after Moses asked God to show him his glory, God passed before Moses and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands.

[35 : 49] We read the same words in Psalm 103. Why? Because after Exodus 34, God's steadfast love and faithfulness, his mercy and his grace, that would become the thing that people of Israel would continue to look back on over and over and over again for calling to mind God's steadfast love and celebrating that.

Moses prays that God's people would be satisfied, filled up, morning by morning in the steadfast love of God. and how fitting an analogy God gave to Moses and Israel.

Manna from heaven. Do you remember that? All throughout their 40-year wilderness wanderings, morning by morning, every single morning for 40 years, God rained down bread from heaven. this would be an enacted parable for them, an object lesson for them. Yes, it was physical provision, but so much more than that, it was a spiritual lesson in which God was proclaiming to them, children, I love you with steadfast love.

I will provide for you and for your children all that you need. Seek me, trust me, rejoice and be glad in me and my love.

[37 : 08] church, today we have the same lesson only amplified in Jesus Christ who is the living bread from heaven.

Jesus says, I am the bread of life and he invites us, whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believes in me shall never thirst, John 6, 35.

Now, brothers and sisters, you and I know that we can be filled up in an ultimate sense and yet, in a daily sense, going spiritually malnourished.

Christ is ready, he stands ready to continually fill us up once again, fill us up in the morning with his love and that leads us to joy, that leads us to gladness.

Charles Spurgeon again, he writes that when the Lord refreshes us with his presence, our joy is such that no man can take it from us. But saints, this requires us to actually go to him daily, morning by morning, hour by hour, seeking him again for life and for nourishment and for satisfaction and for joy.

[38 : 22] I mean, you don't eat a physical meal just once a week, right? You typically eat two or three meals a day and yet, so many of us live like we're spiritually anorexic.

We come to church for a meal and then starve ourselves during the week. Now think about this for a second. Israel in the wilderness, God didn't cause the manna to just pop up within their tents. He didn't just drop it into jars for them. They had to get up in the morning as an act of faith and they themselves had to go and collect the manna outside the camp and put it in their jars and bring it back to their tents.

God doesn't force feed us either, saints. We have to go to him. We have to receive his word. We have to go before the Lord in prayer and there in his presence morning by morning he will fill us up again with his love and his joy.

One more analogy for you. We need to breathe to live. Do you not? You're breathing all the time. Whether or not you're thinking about it, you breathe in and out.

[39 : 29] In the Christian life, we need to intake the oxygen-rich word of God and exhale in prayer and that is what nourishes us and strengthens us and gives us an encounter with the living God who satisfies our souls.

Fourth, a plea for grief swallowing gladness. Moses prays, make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us and for as many years as we have seen evil.

Moses is essentially asking God to replace the former years of toil and trouble with years of joy and gladness. It's almost, now Moses is old.

He was 80 years when he began to lead the nation of Israel. 40 more years. Right? So he's probably writing at some point around 100, who knows, maybe closer to the end of his life and he's saying replace those former years.

It's almost as if Moses is asking God for another lifetime of favor to swallow up their lives of grief. You know, this prayer would resound throughout the prophets.

[40 : 43] It would resound not as much as a prayer but as a promise that one day mourning would be turned to joy, that sorrow would be turned to gladness and again as the saints of Christ we know that the death and resurrection of Jesus has brought that promise to fulfillment in part.

Jesus told his disciples referring to his death that he was about to go away and they would be sorrowful but then he says I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice and no one will take your joy from you.

John 16, 22. Saints, the resurrection of Jesus Christ means that you and I if we are in Christ we have access to an abiding deep profound source of joy and gladness that cannot be taken away.

Now listen, we live in an already not yet state. Okay, the new age is here, the new covenant is here, Christ has come, his kingdom has been inaugurated but we know that it's not fully here until he

returns.

Christians, we know as Christians God's wrath does not abide on us any longer but we continue to live under the reality of a sin-cursed world, do we not?

[41:58] Continue to live with trial and grief and suffering and pain and so we long for the day when Christ is going to come and he's going to fully undo every effect of the curse, every single one of them.

Death and crying and pain will be forever banished and in that day these lives of difficulty will be swallowed up by everlasting gladness and so we can experience joy now because Christ is risen even in the midst of our pain and then one day when Jesus comes back that pain will be gone. Gladness replacing the former years far more than the years we experienced. Light and momentary Paul says and saints we hasten that day by praying this prayer of Moses.

Make us glad for as many years as you have afflicted us. Number five, a plea for self-evidencing power. Self-evidencing power. Moses prays, let your work be shown to your servants and your glorious power to their children.

Moses and Israel had seen God's power on majestic display, hadn't they? In the ten plagues in Egypt, in the pillar of fire, in the pillar of cloud, in the crossing of the Red Sea, in the manifestation of God's glory on Mount Sinai and on the tabernacle.

[43:18] Moses is pleading, God, show us your power again. Show us your power again. Show your power to the generations that come after I am long gone from this world. And God has answered that prayer.

Has he not? God has revealed his glorious power to generation after generation of the faithful most clearly in the death and resurrection of Christ.

And saints, since then, 2,000 years since then, the arm of the Lord has continued to be revealed, the church being built up, the lost being saved, the gospel of Christ going to the ends of the earth, even amid persecution, even amid opposition.

You can testify to this, can't you? We can testify in this church to the working of God's power among us, to open each of our eyes to the truth of the gospel, to break strongholds of sin patterns in our lives, to preserve us through trials and through tragedies, to bring unsaved family members and friends to repentance, to heal people in this room from sickness, to use a brother or sister to speak a timely word when we needed it most.

In fact, so often God's power is manifested through his people and perhaps it's for this reason that Moses finally offers up a plea for what I'm calling favor displaying fruitfulness.

[44:48] Favor displaying fruitfulness. Moses prays, let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and establish the work of our hands upon us. Yes, establish the work of our hands in light of the futility of life under sin's curse.

Moses knows that unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Psalm 127 verse 1. So he pleads with the Lord, take our natural efforts and make them fruitful, make them effective as a sign of your favor.

He's praying, as one commentator writes, that their work would matter, that it would have lasting significance as we say often up here, the things that we are after as a church are things that we cannot accomplish on our own.

They're the things that I just listed when talking about ways we've seen God's power on display and other things like it. Sinners saved, sin patterns broken, growth in holiness and in godliness, our marriages actually reflecting Christ in the church, our children making their faith their own.

The gospel spread to the ends of the earth. We can't accomplish any of these things on our own. But God uses us. That's the amazing thing that we see in the church of Christ.

[46:15] God uses the church, the saints of God, as the hands and feet of Jesus to bring these things about. We employ our ordinary, natural abilities. God applies His supernatural, extraordinary power to make our efforts matter.

He gives them lasting significance. We simply raise the sails. The wind of God's Spirit blows.

So saints, let's keep raising the sails. Let's keep earnestly praying for God's Spirit to blow through. establish the work of our hands, Lord. Make our efforts matter for the kingdom.

Make our efforts matter for eternity. Now we've come a far distance from the painful lament of verses 3 through 11. We've circled right back to where we began.

Essentially, we are in these petitions. We are abiding in God, our eternal dwelling place. In Him, we find meaning. In Him, we find soul satisfaction.

[47 : 20] Even in the midst of these sin-cursed lives. Now listen, this doesn't negate the brevity of our lives. This doesn't negate the difficulty of our lives. We keep experiencing these things because of the curse that remains.

But even in the midst of it, even when life is hard, and every single day of our lives, we can take refuge in God. He's revealed Himself, remember, as merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Right now, today, morning by morning, brothers and sisters, you can take refuge in the God of all comfort, the God of steadfast love and faithfulness in every circumstance of life.

It also means that even though this pain endures, we have this hope. I'm going to close with these words from Revelation 7, verse 15. Therefore, they, talking about the saints in heaven, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple.

And He who sits on the throne will shelter them with His presence. Oh, make that day come. Heavenly Father, we pray.