

Look to Salvation

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Date: 29 September 2024

[0 : 00] We begin our worship this evening by singing to God's praise. We're singing in Psalm 34, the Sing Psalms version. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 9. The tune is Jackson, Psalm 34 at verse 1. At all times I will bless the Lord, I'll praise him with my voice.

Because I glory in the Lord, let troubled souls rejoice. Together let us praise the Lord, exalt his name with me. I saw it. The Lord's answer came from fears. He set me free. And then verse 5, we have these words. They look to him and shine with joy. They are not put to shame.

The suffering man cried to the Lord, from him deliverance came. And this evening, our theme is really going to be about looking to the Lord. And that verse, they look to him and shine with joy.

We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 9 to God's praise. The Lord's answer came. The Lord's answer came. But all times I will bless the Lord, I'll praise him with my voice.

Because I glory in the Lord, let troubled souls rejoice.

[1 : 25] Together, righteous grace the Lord, exalted sing with me.

I sought the Lord, his answer came, from fear she set me free.

Look to him and shine with joy, they are not good to shame.

Let suffering man cry to the Lord, from him be never to shame.

The angel of the Lord's Sabbath and guards continually.

[2 : 38] All those who fear and not let him, he sends his people free.

Come, taste and see the Lord is good, who trusted him is blessed.

All fear the Lord, his saints with me, you will not be no rest.

Amen. Let's bow our heads in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Our gracious Father in heaven, as we come anew this evening together, worshipping you, praising your name, we do thank you for every reason we have to bless you.

[3 : 43] that we have so much to be thankful for and that we would come with these words of the psalmist in our heart that at all times I will bless the Lord, I'll praise him with my voice.

And may we do that this evening as we sing praise to you. May our voices be what we recognise as a way of praising you. Even if we feel that we cannot sing, even if we feel that we have no voice, the praise is to come from our hearts.

And we pray that you will give us that voice, that you will give us that song to sing, recognising in the words that we offer up to you that it is to give glory to you as the one who is Lord of all, the one who gives us our daily bread, the one who provides and sustains us on a daily basis.

So that even as we begin a new week, we do so looking to you, thankful for your faithfulness in the past and pleading for your faithfulness in these days ahead as well.

That you would keep us, Lord, that you would watch over us, that you would help us to live according to your truth, that you will help us to be salt and light in this world in which we live, that you would help us as a people to recognise, even in our own hearts, how easy it is for us to sin.

[5 : 01] And yet the wonder of your grace, the grace that we heard of this morning, the wonder of the grace of God to sinners such as we are. And may that grace be what keeps us looking to you.

May we realise that when we take our eyes off Jesus, that we start to have faith in ourselves and we go on in our own strength. And in that we fall, in that we fail.

And we see it so often in your word. And even as we read together this evening from both the Old and the New Testament, we see that our great need is to look to you as our God, to look to you as the one who is a saviour for his people.

And so we ask your blessing on your word to us, that you would speak to us through it, that you would build us up by your word, that you would take us deeper into your word, that you would help us in our understanding of your word.

So often we think that we have wisdom of ourselves, but yet we thank you for your Holy Spirit. We thank you that even this evening we can plead for your Spirit to be with us, prompting us, leading us, pricking us in our hearts, that we hear your voice speaking to us.

[6 : 20] And we ask that your Spirit be with each of us, to dwell upon us, to be in us, to guide us in all things. And we thank you for that promise that as we meet in your name, that you are in the midst to bless.

And so hear our prayers as we offer them up together here. Hear them from us as a people, as we offer them up from all our different situations, from all our different hearts this evening.

We thank you that every prayer offered is heard by you, that together we lift our voices to you. Together we come to taste and see of the goodness of God in you.

And we just ask, O Lord, that you will be with us, that you will bless us around your word. And bless us as a people, in our homes and in our families.

Again, as we think of all that goes on in our lives, we give you thanks for all the great reasons to rejoice in you. We give you thanks, O Lord, for your help in so many different ways.

[7 : 21] We give you thanks for our work opportunities, our school opportunities, our day-to-day lives. When we see how different things are for so many, make us thankful for the very homes that we have, the food on our tables, the water that we see so freely flowing in our homes, the things that we take for granted so often.

Lord, we can be a people that grumble, even in the midst of having plenty. But Lord, give us to have a thankful heart, a thankful heart to you for all that is ours, in material ways and practical ways.

And above all, all that is ours, through Christ Jesus as our Lord. the blessings that we have in our communities, of a praying community, the blessings we have of a Christian community.

And even though we see that eroded in so many ways and places, we thank you that there is still that strength in our community. We thank you for your people that are around us, that are with us in so many different ways, in our homes, in our families, and in our communities.

We thank you that even as we go into the workplace, we join with others who are believers, who are Christians, whether that's in schools, or workplaces around our communities, or just in our community in general.

[8 : 44] We thank you that so often, even day by day, we can bump into your people, and be encouraged by them, and build one another up. When there are so many places in this world, where to meet a Christian would be such a shock for people, even so dangerous for people.

And we do pray, Lord, and thank you that you have your people to all ends of the earth. That the blessings that are ours here, although they may not be granted in many parts of the world, and yet the greatest blessing for all your people, wherever they are, is the promise of your presence with them, that you are near, that you are with them to be called upon.

And we do pray, Lord, for your church, near and far, that together as your people, you would hear our cries, that you would hear our voices, offering up praise and thanksgiving to you, but also, Lord, pleading, pleading for your mercy, pleading for your help, pleading for forgiveness for all of our sins, pleading for your help in different situations.

And we thank you that that is the God that you are as well, that you are the one who is a God of compassion, and a God of all comfort, that you look down upon your people, and that you are concerned for them.

You are concerned for this world, and for all its people, that you are concerned even when there seems to be chaos all around us, and as we think of situations escalating in our world, in the Middle East, and in different parts, where there are conflicts going on, where there are threats of terror, where there are persecutions, so many things that seem outwith our control, and yet we bring them to you as Lord and God of all.

[10 : 30] And so hear our prayers, hear your praying people. May you come in your power. May you bring peace. May you bring blessing. May you bring a turning to you.

May you bring days of mercy upon us in the midst of all our needs. And so we ask, Lord, that you will watch over us, that you will be with us, be with those with particular needs as well, even those in their own midst, as a congregation, who have been mourning in this past week, and go on mourning in these days.

We thank you for the way that you comfort, the way that you uphold. And we pray, Lord, for all to know that you are there with them, that you are for them. Remember those who are unwell.

Remember those who are going through times of great trial, going through treatment or diagnosis that is hard, awaiting results or looking ahead and not knowing what the future might hold.

We thank you that in all our cares and anxieties, we are able to cast them on you, for you care for us. And so, Lord, hear our prayers. For those around us with these particular needs.

[11 : 41] Be with us as a congregation of your people. Be with us in the week ahead, as we gather for times of prayer, as we gather for times of helping others.

We think of the Friday of the Free and Explorers, and the Bible study on Wednesday evening, the time with Muriel on Tuesday morning, the toddler time tomorrow, a busy calendar in our congregation.

And yet, we thank you for all these opportunities to be together, to encourage one another, to encourage others. We do pray that in all things that you would bless us, that you would guide us.

And we pray for your church, that you would build it up. We pray for our own denomination, that you would use it for your glory. We pray for even the commission of assembly taking place on Tuesday, the meeting of ministers and elders together, making decisions for the wider church.

We do pray for Ivor Martin, as he oversees our denomination as moderator in this year.
We pray for Callum McLeod as well.

[12 : 48] We remember him. Lord, that you be with him. Help him as role as well as moderator. And just help them together, Lord, to know your hand upon them for good. Help the clerks, help all who are involved in the work of the church.

Help our seminary, Lord, to know your glory in their midst, as well, your presence with them for all the lecturers and students alike. We do pray, Lord, that your blessing would be upon them, each one.

Lord, hear our prayers as we continue in our worship now. Look down upon us. Bless us in all that we seek to do in your name. And help us to give glory and praise to you, as we ask all with the forgiveness of our sins.

And ask it for your glory alone. Amen. We'll sing again to God's praise in Psalm 123.

This is in the Scottish Psalter, version page 417. Psalm 123. We'll sing the whole of this psalm, the tune of martyrs.

[14 : 03] Psalm 123, page 417. O thou that dwellest in the heavens, I lift mine eyes to thee. Behold, a servant's eyes to look, their master's hand to see.

We'll sing the whole of this psalm, to God's praise. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Lord, be gracious to us, and to us, gracious me, because we manage with contempt and seeking we agree.

[15 : 58] My soul is filled with scorn of those that have their ease abide, and with the insolent content of those that have their ease abide.

We're going to read two passages. Our first is in the Old Testament in the book of Numbers. In chapter 21, book of Numbers, chapter 21, you find it around page 154 of the Church Bibles.

We're going to read from verse 1 to verse 9, and then we'll go into the New Testament and the Gospel of John, chapter 3. So our first reading in Numbers, chapter 21, and from verse 1.

When the Canaanites, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim, he fought against Israel and took some of them captive.

And Israel vowed about to the Lord and said, So the name of the place was called Hormah.

[17 : 41] From Mount Hor they set out by the way of the Red Sea to go round the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses.

Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.

Then the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and against you.

Pray to the Lord that he may take away the serpents from us. So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.

So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

[18 : 53] Then we turn to the New Testament, to the Gospel of John, in chapter 3. We take up our reading at verse 14.

It's a count when Nicodemus came to Jesus. And we take up our reading at verse 14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

That whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son.

That whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned. But whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

[20 : 04] And this is the judgment. The light has come into the world, and the people loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

But whoever does what is through comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God. And so on.

And may God bless that reading from his word. We're going to sing again together to God's praise before we turn back to that reading in Numbers. We're going to sing in Psalm 78, in the Scottish Psalter, page 326.

We're going to sing from verse 31 to 35. Psalm 78, verse 31.

God's wrath upon them came and slew the fattest of them all, so that the choice of Israel overthrown by death did fall.

[21 : 19] Yet notwithstanding of all this, they sinned still the more. And though he had great wonders wrought, believed him not therefore. We're reminded here of the children of Israel as they were going through the wilderness, how they were seeing the wonders of God, and yet at the same time forgetting him.

But then in verse 34, But when he slew them, then they did to seek him, show desire. Yea, they returned, and after God right early did inquire.

So we see there a turning to God in the midst of all that's going on. So Psalm 78, verse 31 to 35, to the tune Talos, we stand to sing.

of the William Hementor, the Song ■urata, we stand to All again, the souls and husbands, we stand to theOut■■■■■...

of the Jnatite. And after God right now, our EspINth of Christ is the yard of the blood. So that the joints of Israel o'erpongue, From my death did fall.

[22 : 34] Notwithstanding the fallest, They still lived still the poor.

And though he had made wonders what, Believed him not therefore.

For their disinvaility, He did conserve my grace, And by his wrath their wretched years, How they in trouble pass.

When he's new men then made it, To see him sure desire, If they returned, And after God, Right early in choir.

That the Lord can be fair of, They did remember them, In that the high almighty God, And their redeemer be.

[24 : 19] We'll turn back to our reading in Numbers chapter 21, And we're looking at this section of verse 4, Down to verse 9, Numbers chapter 21, We can read again at verse 8, And the Lord said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent, And set it on a pole, And everyone who is bitten when he sees it shall live.

So Moses made a bronze serpent, And set it on a pole, And if a serpent bit anyone, He would look at the bronze serpent, And live. And we see the connection with John chapter 3, In verse 14, Where Jesus there speaks about even how, Moses, The serpent was lifted up by Moses, In the Old Testament, So the Son of Man had to be lifted up.

And then you have these great words, Of John 3, 16, That for God so loved the world, That he gave his only begotten Son, That whoever believes in him, Might not perish, But have eternal life.

We see the connection, So clearly between the two, When we see the look at the serpent, And live. But ultimately how we look, In faith to Jesus Christ, And there find eternal life.

That asks us the question then, As we begin this evening, Who are you trusting in, With your life? Who are you trusting your life to? We often speak about, Putting our lives into the hands, Of someone or something, But who are you entrusting your life to?

[26 : 03] What's your guarantee for help, For salvation? The psalm that we just sang there, Psalm 78 and verse 35, It speaks about, The God who is the high almighty God, Had their redeemer been, Is that the one, That you are looking to?

We live in a day, When there are many opinions, Of God, And somebody once wrote this, And said, The atheist says, There is no God, The agnostic says, There might be a God, The humanist says, Let's remove God, Greed says, Money is God, Pride says, Power is God, Satan says, Be your own God, There's all these different opinions, That are still constantly, Pressed in upon us, The agnostic, The atheist, The humanist, The pride, The greed, Satan, They're all still active, In our lives, And they all make us wonder, Well who is our God?

Do we have a God? Well the Bible makes it, Very clear for us, Who we need, As God, If we want to live, If we want to move, If we want to be a, A living being, In this place, We have to realise, Who is our God?

The one who sustains us, The mighty, The almighty God, And the God who offers, A redeemer, Who is Jesus Christ, Tonight we see, Just how relevant, As we always do, Who the Bible is, When you think of, When Moses lived, And as he was leading, The children of Israel, It was about 1300 years, Before Jesus, Came into the world, Isaiah then, Wrote later on, In the Old Testament, In chapter 40, Verse 9, He says, Behold your God, Look at your God, That was about 700 years, Before Christ came, And then you come into, The New Testament, When you see Jesus there, Speaking about Moses, Even as Moses, Lifted up the serpent, So must the son of man, Be lifted up, And you think to yourself, 1300 years had passed, Had the Bible lost, Its relevance, Had it lost, Its focus, Not at all, The people were still,

Looking for this one, Who would be redeemer, For his people, And here we are now, 2000 years, After Christ, And so many are saying, The Bible has lost, Its relevancy, It's lost its importance, It's not for us, And yet we still, Should be looking for Christ, Looking for him as saviour, And looking for him, As the one, Who is going to come, Looking to God, Is key, But how are we looking to him, And how are we looking to him, Are we looking to him, That we might live, Are we looking to him, By faith, The setting here, In the book of Numbers, Is one, Just to briefly, Putting it into context, Is, As the children of Israel, Have been coming through, The wilderness, All these years, Moses had led them, Out of Egypt, Out of the captivity, That they'd endured there, God had heard their cry, And he'd sent Moses, To take them out, Of the wilderness, And in their stubbornness,

[29 : 32] In their sin, They had started to grumble, Against God, So early on, After two years, They'd come to the Jordan, To be able to cross, Into the promised land, They'd sent spies, To survey the land, But they'd come back, Saying, Oh there's these giants, There's these problems, We need to look at this again, God was saying, But trust me, Joshua and Caleb, Had come back saying, No, With God, We can go in, And take over this land, But the people had said, No, And so for another 38 years, They'd wandered in the wilderness, This was their punishment, They'd been lost in the wilderness, For all these years, And yet God had still, Continued to provide for them, Through the wilderness, He provided food, He provided water, He provided guidance, To take them from place to place, Their journey was not one, Without hope, And yet still, They grumbled, And that's really what we see again, Here in chapter 21,

Of numbers, God had been faithful, To his people, And yet again, And again, You see them growing sick, And tired of wandering, Tired of God's plan, Tired of God's manna, They were just tired, Tired of everything, Tired of Moses as their leader, Just sick and tired, Of everything, Instead of looking to God, They start looking to themselves, We can do better ourselves, Is almost what they're saying here, And isn't that so common, Isn't that just like we are, How so often, We can just become a grumbling people, An impatient people, You see in verse 4, As they are travelling from Mount Hur, They set out to the way of the Red Sea, To go round the land of Edom, Because it had been forbidden, For going that way, And the people became impatient, Impatient, On the way, Impatient,

And what you find, And what you find so often, As you read through the scripture, You find God's people, Becoming impatient, Again and again, Is this impatience, Leads to disobedience, Forgetting about God, Sinning against God, And this disobedience, Leads to a harsh walk, Not just in the wilderness, Here in Moses' day, But as you go through, The Old Testament, Even into the New Testament, You find that God's people, As they abandon God, Look away from God, The way that they end up going, Is always harsh, Because they take their eyes off God, But God reminds them again and again, That he is there for them, What a gracious God, He is, And what we want to see this evening, Is in this section, We want to see the lessons, That we can learn, From the people here, In their impatience, In their grumbling, In the way they respond, And in the way that they go on, We want to see the lessons,

That we can learn, The way our lives, Can so often be just like theirs, When we become impatient ourselves, When we grumble ourselves, How are we to respond, How are we to act, Even as we think of, The way that we thought there, Of the different kinds of opinions, In God, The atheist opinion, The agnostic opinion, The humanist opinion, All of these things, The way Satan tells us, To be your own God, To live your own life, To think of all of these things, And the lessons that we learn, Who are we entrusting, Our lives to, How are we living, Our lives, Are we living our lives, Looking to the Lord, That we might live, Or are we living in disobedience, And perishing, In that, And there's three, Lessons for us, In this section, We see first of all, The sin,

Of the people, And secondly, We see the sentence, Of the people, But then thirdly, And more wonderfully, We see, The salvation, Of the people, So the first thing, We want to see is, The sin, Of the people, And again, Just to see the context, As we come into verse four, It's in light of what's happening, In verse one to three, Where they've come up against, A challenge, Once again, The Canaanite king, He had, They had fought against Israel, They had taken some of them captive, You see that in verse, One, But then they'd made this vow, The children of Israel, In verse two, The Israelites, They vowed a vow to the Lord, And said, If you will indeed, Give this people, Into my hand, Then I will devote, Their cities, To destruction, And again, You see there, How often, That's the way we live, Making our bargains, With God,

[34 : 39] If Lord, You do this, Then, I will do this, And such a, Common theme, And what's more amazing, Is how God, Agrees with them, In verse three, The Lord obeyed, The voice of Israel, And gave over the Canaanites, And they devoted them, And their cities, To destruction, So they won the battle, They won the victory, Here against the Canaanites, And you'd expect this, To fill their hearts, With praise, To fill their hearts, With thanksgiving, And be grateful, For everything, That God has done, For them, And you see, Here so often, It's almost like, A formula, That we can come up with, Of how we, Live with God, Of how we treat God, How we expect God, To treat us, You pray, You ask God, For something, You do what God, Tells you to do, You see God, Answering prayer, And you praise God, And carry on, And everything's, Going to be fine,

As long as, God is doing, What we want him to do, Everything's going, To be fine, But what we find here, Is that it's not, Long after this, That that grumbling, Spirit, Comes into their midst, God has answered, Their prayers, God has protected, Them once again, God has given them, An amazing victory, And yet, Not long down the road, In verse four, They set out, Along the way of the Red Sea, To go round the land of Edom, And the people became impatient, On the way, They're never, Happy, You would expect, Gratitude, You would expect, Thanksgiving, You would expect, Praise to God, But they're not, They haven't turned over, A new leaf, They're still the same, Kind of people, As they've always been, Grumbling, Against God, Still expecting, God though, To do as they say, Still expecting, God to be with them, When they want him, Still expecting,

All of these things, But becoming impatient, And grumbling, Against God, And what you find, Is that sin, Is never far away, Sin, Is never far, Away, And it's not, So true of ourselves, As well, We can enjoy, Blessing from God, We can enjoy, So much, From the hand of God, And we can count, Our blessings, And we can see it, And look at it one day, Maybe you finish the day, In prayer, And think, Oh thank you Lord, For all of these, Good things, That you've given to me, Thank you Lord, For all the people, In my life, Thank you Lord, For where I am, For the blessing, Of your word, And yet by midday, Tomorrow, You'll be impatient, And grumbling, And that's just, The sin, That is always, In us, Because what kind, Of sin, Do you see, In the people here, You don't think, Here is, A huge sin,

An obvious sin, A serious sin, You see, Where is their sin, Well you see it, In verse 4, And 5, And it's not, Like these, Huge sins, You think, Well that deserves, The judgment of God, It's not, They're not murdering, They're not, Going against God's word, Just so, Obviously and blatantly, In one sense, It's the little sin, And yet it's, So the sin, That so easily, Comes in and spoils, It's a sin, That we see, Again and again, Through the scriptures, It's just the little sins, That become, Collectively together, Build up, And lead us away, From God, They became, Impatient, Just that, Little word, Is enough, To trigger the warning sign, In verse 4, The people became, Impatient, On the way, The word,

They are impatient, Behind it all, Is something, Being shortened, And what was being shortened, Was their temper, Their short, Tempered, They are easily, They are easily, Frustrated, Their patience, Is easily, Running thin, The people, Became, Impatient, And that, Can describe, Me, I'm sure, I'm sure, I'm sure, I can describe, Many of you, Where you think, To yourself, Even in the midst, Of giving thanks, And being thankful, To God, For so much, It doesn't take much, To become, Impatient, It doesn't take, It doesn't take much, For my temper, To be short, In that sense, Where frustration, So easily, Comes in, There is frustration, Here for them, In so many, Different ways, They've had to take, The long way round, They've had to go, A different way, To what they would have, Planned themselves, It's taken longer,

[39 : 43] And yet, It's all because, Of their sin, And then it carries on, Into verse five, And you see there, The complaints, Through impatience, Like it's rising, To the surface, It's like just, Spilling something, You spill a little, Water on the floor, And yet, It can go everywhere, Or worse still, You can spill paint, On the floor, And it just spreads everywhere, And the more you try, And clear it up, The worse it seems to get, That's the way sin, So often is, Just little spots, Here and there, But it just seems, To get worse, And worse, And you look at, What's going on here, And you just see, The sin that is coming out, In their hearts, In verse five, This people, Spoke against God, And against Moses, Why have you brought us up, Out of Egypt, To die in the wilderness, For there is no food, And no water, And we loathe, The worthless food, So it's just,

Let's just, Pour out everything, Before you, This impatience, Now is coming to our head, Let's just get it all out, Into the open, The frustration, Just leads to this groaning, Against God, And everything else, And you look at this, And you say, Well how selfish, You know, Why are they like that, Surely you should see, What God has done for them, And been thankful, And yet, Again, It just shows, Our own hearts, How easy it is, For us, To judge them, When in our own hearts, In our own spirit, We're just the same, Impatient, And we start grumbling, Again, It's not the big sins, It's just the little things, That together work, To bring us, Away from God, And to take our focus, Off God, And you just look, There's really, Maybe five, Probably sins, Here you can see, Five ways that, This leads them away, From God,

That first thing is, Impatience, They became impatient, They allow things, To get on top of them, To weigh them down, And this is what starts, Taking them away, From God, And then you see, That leads to, To the way they speak, The way they speak, Against God, And against, Moses, They speak against God, They complain against God, But then they turn, It on to Moses, Himself as the leader, So, They're speaking against God, And against, God's people, And again, You see, How, How rude, How ignorant, How brash, And yet, Do we not have to be, On our guard, Against ourselves, How we, Speak against God, When things aren't going, The way we want them to be, How we speak against others, Our own Christian, Brothers and sisters, How we speak about them, About them to others, Or about them to their face,

How we treat, One another, Impatience, Can lead us, Down that path, And then, And then, You almost see them, Questioning God's plan, Questioning, Why, Why are we here, Why have you brought us up, Out of Egypt, To die in the wilderness, What are you doing, Lord?

And again, We see that in our own lives, Lord, Why, Why is this happening, Why are you allowing this, Why is this the way, My life is going, Why is this my experience, Just now, Why have you brought us here, And then, You see, They doubt God's ability, To provide for them, Why have you brought us, Into the wilderness, For there is no, Food, And no, Water, And that's a lie, That's just a blatant lie, A lie that's shown, And the next thing they say, They are swell, We loathe, This worthless food, So they doubt God's ability, To provide, And they're ungrateful, What God has provided, And again, Does that not reveal, Our hearts to us, As swell, We say to God, Why don't we have this, Why don't we have that, We're not happy, About what we don't have, And what we have, We're not happy with either, We're never happy,

[44 : 08] With our lot, And so you look at these things, And you say, Well, There's not really a serious sin there, But all together, What it's doing, Is leading them away, From God, They are turning, Against God, They are grumbling, Against God, And that is sin, Forgetting God, Is sin, Not being thankful, To God, Is sin, Not trusting God, Is sin, All these little things, Add up, And if we allow them all, To go on and on, Then we end up just turning, Away, From God, So their sin, And our sin, Is before us, And this leads us secondly, To see, Their sentence, We see this in verse 6, No sin, Will go unpunished, Verse 6, It says, Then the Lord sent fiery serpents, Among the people, And they bit the people, So that many people of Israel,

Died, There was a punishment, For their sin, And you see, What the sins that you say, Well, They're not really that serious, Are they? Well, The Lord shows how serious it is, When he sends these fiery serpents, Among the people, They bite the people, And many people of Israel died, That is just how serious sin is, Every sin, Is serious, In Romans 6, We read there in verse 23, The wages of sin, Is death, That is what sin, Deserves, And that's what the Lord is showing, Here in verse 6, The Lord, Shows this, The seriousness of your grumbling, Your impatience, And all of these things, Is it will not go unpunished, And these serpents, That come in their midst, Are the judgment, That comes upon them, A judgment, That leads, To death, And that is what sin does,

We come under the judgment, Of God, And we are all judged, According to our sins, And all our sins, Deserve death, Someone once said, Sometimes we only learn, The lessons that we ought to learn, In petty trials, By facing greater ones, And so, You think of that, In the light of, Where the children of Israel, Are here, They've seen God, Deliver, From the Canaanites, They've asked the Lord, To help, He's helped, And they're unthankful, They're impatient, They're grumbling, And you would expect, In these small trials, That they would see God, And trust him, Well now, God is bringing, A greater trial, Into their midst, The trial of this, These fiery serpents, That's bringing death, Into their midst, Surely, They would see, Surely, They would see, God in the midst, Of this, The Lord,

Uses these trials, And in many ways, You can see about, The children of Israel, The experience of going, Through the wilderness, Was all a time of testing, They were being tested, In their relationship, With God, And Deuteronomy, Makes that so clear, For us, Even as they go, Into the promised land, There's a test, Put before them, Remember, When you go into the land, When you have all of these, Homes that you have not built, And the food, That you have not planted, Do not forget, The Lord, The lessons, That they should have been learning, In the wilderness, Are the same, As the lessons they learn, In their plenty, Do not forget, The Lord, And that speaks, To ourselves as well, The sentence, That we are under, Our sin, Deserves death, But it also, Asks the question, Well what do we do, In our sin, Where do we go, In our sin, As we see our sin, Before us, Where do we go,

Well you learn that, In verse 7 here, Do we come, In repentance, We turn, To God, In verse 7, It says, The people came to Moses, And said, We have sinned, For we have spoken, Against the Lord, And against you, Pray, To the Lord, That he may take away, The serpents from us, And so Moses, Prayed, For the people, You see their sin, You see their sentence, But you see here, The way they respond, And that is what sin, Should do to us, As well, As we realise, How we are, Not trusting God, As we should, How we are sinning, Against God, What should that do, For us, Well it should help us, To realise, We need God, We are lost, Without God, We will be dead, In our trespasses, And sins, For eternity, Without God, And we see the wonder,

[49 : 17] Of what God does, For us, Does our sin, Bother us that much, Does it bother us enough, To bring us, To God, Or do we just, Push it away, As if it's insignificant, Well the series of, Sin is here, Many people of Israel, Died, And that's, For ourselves, To recognise too, In our sin, The wages of sin, Is death, But the Lord, Is there, The Lord is here, For us, And we can come, Pleading, With God, We can come, Looking to God, Seeking mercy, From God, Just as it is, In verse 7, That is to be, Our response, We have sinned, For we have spoken, Against the Lord, And against you, Pray,

To the Lord, That he may take away, The serpents from us, Pray to the Lord, That he might take away, Our sin, God so often, Uses, All our lives, Trials, To bring us, Closer to himself, One preacher, Described it, In this way, He said, It's like a joiner, Bringing two bits of wood, Together, Using glue, He says, A joiner, When he glues, Two boards together, He keeps them, Tightly clamped, Until the glue, Is set, So if you've ever, Set two bits of wood, Together, You know the glue, If you put it on, You just let it go, Straight away, It's just going to, Separate immediately, So you have to use, A clamp, To clamp the two bits of wood, Together, Until that glue is set, And that clamp, Is tight, That clamp, Is applying, Pressure, To crush, The two bits of wood, Together, That's the way, This preacher,

Was describing it, How our trials, How our calamity, So often, Crush us, Closer to God, How they weigh, Heavy upon us, But the pressure, Is kept, As this preacher said, Until, Our soul's union, With God, Is set, God will keep, That pressure on, Until we are, Fully, Thrusting him, And fully, Stuck, To him, He pressed, Israel, In their trials, That they might come, Close to him, That's, The cycle, That you so often see, And for ourselves, It's a reminder, Not to drift, Back away, Not to separate, Ourselves from God, Again, But to remain, Close to him, To remain, Trusting, In him, The easy, Way for them, Was to trust, God, They had trusted him, In the first place,

They wouldn't have had, These years, In the wilderness, But they took, Their eyes, Off him, They didn't trust him, With all their heart, They were looking, At all the different gods, To find their own answers, But time, And time again, You see them, Coming back, Coming back, To where the answer lies, And that is with God, The living God, And that's the third thing, We want to see from here, We have, Their sin, We have their sentence, And their response, But then we have, The salvation, That God offers, God made a provision, For the Israelites, God heard, Moses' prayer, And the Lord said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent, And set it on a pole, And everyone who is bitten, When he sees it, Shall live, And so Moses made, A bronze serpent, And set it on a pole, And if a serpent bit anyone, He would look, At the bronze serpent, And live, That God,

We see here, As a plan, A plan, For salvation, A plan that we, See there, In the Psalm 78, That we sang, In verse 34, They returned, And after God, Right early, Did inquire, They came back to God, They inquired of him, And then they saw, That wonderful truth, That even the high, Almighty God, Had their redeemer, Been, That there was, Salvation, That there is, Salvation, In God, And here is the provision, Of God, And who made, This plan, Who came up, With this plan, Well you see immediately, That it's the Lord, In verse 8, The Lord said, To Moses, The Lord, Has, A plan, God has a plan, For salvation, That's never changed, And we see that plan, Fulfilled in Christ, In that great passage, That we read,

[54 : 20] In John 3, For God, So loved the world, That he gave his son, God's plan, For redemption, Is a redeemer, Who is Christ Jesus, And it's this, Plan that we see, Throughout scripture, And it's still, The way to be saved today, It is, To see God's plan, To look to him, And to trust, In him, In Isaiah 45, Verse 22, It says, Turn to me, And be saved, All the ends of the earth, For I am God, And there is no other, There is no other God, Who can save, There is no other way, To salvation, In Romans 6, Where we mentioned earlier, The wages of sin, Is death, What does it say after that, The free gift of God, Is eternal life, In Christ Jesus, Our Lord, Christ Jesus, Who we are to look to, God, Has, A plan,

And God's plan, For the children of Israel here, Was this serpent, On a pole, That as they looked, At this serpent, They would live, Whenever they were bitten, They would live, If they looked, To this serpent, And the same is true, As we look at, John chapter 3, There Jesus says, As Moses lifted up, The serpent in the wilderness, So must the son of man, Be lifted up, That whoever believes in him, May have, Eternal life, The connection is there for us, Look to the serpent, And live, That's what we have, In the old testament, Here in the new, We have the same, But different, We look to Jesus, Believe, Believe, In the Lord Jesus Christ, And you will, Be saved, The serpent, On the pole,

Reminded the people, Of their sin, It reminded of their, Disobedience, But as we look, To the cross, What do we see, We see there, Christ, Without sin, And yet, It was made sin, For us, The wonder, Of the grace, That we heard of, This morning, The grace of God, That he should give, His son, For us, The substitute, Of the serpent, In numbers 21, And our substitute, Jesus Christ, On the cross, So we look, To the cross, We are to look, To Jesus, We see our sin, We see the sentence, It deserves, It deserves death, And yet there is salvation, In Christ Jesus, Whoever, Whoever, Does not believe, Is condemned, Already, That's the warning, We have, In John 3,

As well, But whoever, Believes, In him, Is not condemned, You live, You live, Just like those, Who look to the serpent, In numbers, 21, You live, Through faith, In Jesus Christ, But this is an individual thing, They all, Had to look for themselves, If a serpent, Bit anyone, He would look, At the bronze serpent, And live, No one else, Can do it for you, You can't depend, On somebody else, And it had to be there, And then, It wasn't to wait, It wasn't to put it off, For another time, You look then, Or else you die, And so the warning, For us today, Is that as well, You, Must believe,

Whoever, Believes in him, Will not perish, But have, Everlasting life, That is, Your choice, Are you looking, To Christ, As your saviour, Are you, Trusting, In him, A young, University student, He'd, Come under the word, Of God, He was going to church, Under the preaching, Of the word, And he was becoming, Troubled, By the word, That we was hearing, But at the same time, He was pulled, In another direction, He was pulled, Back into the world, Back to his friends, Back to going out, Parting, And that kind of lifestyle, And this was going on, For a while, The word was troubling him, The world was calling him, And so it was going on, And it came to a point, Where he thought, I've got to ask, Someone about this, And he went to one of his, Professors, Who was a Christian, And asked for advice, And he had a question,

[59 : 26] He wanted to ask him, I said, Professor, I've got a question, For you, I'm troubled, By the word of God, But I'm pulled, In this direction, As well, And he said, How long, Can I safely put off, Following Jesus, Well the professor, Had a reply, And it seemed, A bit odd at first, The professor said, Well you can put it off, Until the day, Before you die, But the student then said, But I can't tell, When I'll die, And that's true, The professor said, Therefore you must decide, Now, It's not something, To be toyed with, It's not something, To be dismissed, And put off, For another time, It's not something, You can say, Well I'll put it off, I'll come another time, I can safely put it off, Until later on, Because you do not know, When that day will come,

When the decision, Is taken out, Of your hands, They couldn't, Leave it, For another moment, When it came to, Looking at the serpent, They had to look, Or else they died, But when they looked, They lived, And as we think, Of the cross, It's not something, To be put away, For another day, Jesus isn't there, Just to be toyed with, And put away, For another time, It is today, To look, And live, There's a hymn called, Turn your eyes, Towards Jesus, And the words say this, Oh soul, Are you weary, And troubled, No light, In the darkness, You see, There's light, For a look, At the saviour, And life, More abundant, And free, Turn, Turn your eyes, Upon Jesus, Look full, In his wonderful face, And the things, Of earth, Will grow strangely dim, In the light,

Of his glory, And grace, His word, Shall not fail you, He promised, Believe him, And all will be well, Then go, To a world, That is dying, His perfect salvation, To tell, Turn, Turn, Your eyes, Upon Jesus, That is what we are being told, To do here, To look, And to live, Do you see, Your sin, Today, And if you do, Who are you entrusting, Your very life, And eternity to, You see, You see, The sentence, Your sin deserves, The wages of sin, Is death, But do you see, The salvation on offer, There were those, Who were stubborn, In Moses' day, That didn't look, And died, But the serpent, Is there, For them to look to,

And live, And for us, We have Christ, Just as Moses, Lifted up the serpent, So the son of man, Must be lifted up, Why?

That whoever believes, In him, Should not perish, But have, Everlasting life, Look, And live, Let us pray, Our father, In heaven, We thank you, That your word, Helps us to see, And we pray, That your spirit, Will help us to see, To see our need, Of Jesus, To see, The salvation, On offer, Before us, To see, The seriousness, Of sin, The sentence, It deserves, But the salvation, That is on offer, To us, We thank you, That in Jesus, We have one, Who is able, To take away, Our sins, And that if we believe, In him, We will not perish, But have, Everlasting life, May you lead us, And help us, To look to him, As we ask in Jesus name, Amen, We'll conclude, By singing, To God's praise, We're singing in Psalm 63, We had it this morning,

[63 : 44] As well, And it's, My fault, Gordon had chosen it first, But I thought, Well the words tie in, To our service, This evening as well, Psalm 63, And we sing from verse 1, To verse 6, O God you are, My God I long, I seek your face, With eagerness, My soul and body, Thirst for you, In this dry weary wilderness, I've seen you, In your holy place, Your power and glory, Held my gaze, Far better is, Your love than life, And so my lips, Will sing your praise, So we'll sing from verse 1 to 6, To God's praise, And the tune is, Herongate.

O God, O God, In our my God alone, I seek your face, With eagerness, My soul and heart, My soul and heart, It thirst for you, In this dry weary wilderness, I sing you, In your holy place, Your power and glory, y stages for you, It thirst may as if you're Stay orange,

And theorem, And so my lips, will sing your praise.

I bless you, Lord, throughout my life, and raise my hands to you in there.

My joyful lips will sing your praise. My soul is filled with riches fair.

[66 : 15] Upon my bed I lie awake, and in my thoughts remember you.

I meditate throughout the night, and keep your constant love in you.

After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my left. We'll close with a benediction. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore.

Amen.