

# A New Year - A New Dawn?

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[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome and let me first of all wish you all a very happy and blessed new year. We do trust that this will be a year of better things than the year we've left behind with the pandemic.

Still ongoing but there's hope on the horizon I think for that. For all of you watching at home as well, thank you for joining us and I do hope too that you have a blessed new year as the weeks, months go by.

There is a collection being taken today as you know, it's for the campaigners. And if you didn't manage to contribute to that on the way in, you can do it on the way out through this door here. Or else if you want to send a cheque later to the treasurer, that'll be fine as well.

Just send it directly to the treasurer. Now we're going to begin by singing today. I know we're not singing here, I'm going to sing. And for the benefit of those at home, they can join in the singing. And one of the reasons for this is that it perhaps helps those at home to feel more meaningfully part of the service. It's always difficult, I know, not to sing when we're actually here together physically.

[ 1 : 04 ] But I'm going to try and sing with the miser on, which is allowed. And it's Psalm 95, if you want to follow the words. Psalm 95 in the Scottish Psalter and from the beginning.

O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation.

We'll sing to a tune of Gainsborough. O come, let us sing to the Lord.

Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation.

Let us, before his presence, come with praise and thankful voice.

[ 2 : 23 ] Let us sing psalms to him with grace. And make a joyful noise.

Our God, a great God and great King, above all gods he is.

Depths of the earth are in his hand. The strength of his hand.

O come, and let us worship him. Let us bow down with all.

And on our knees before the Lord. Our maker, let us fall.

[ 3 : 47 ] Let us unite now in prayer. Let us call upon the Lord in prayer. O Lord, our gracious God, once again we do give thanks that we are able to gather together in worship.

That we are able to participate even at home in this service of worship on this New Year's morning. O Lord, our God, as we have turned from one year to another, we pray that you would help us to reflect upon all that has happened in the past year.

So that we may, in carrying this forward into a new year. Lord, that we may truly give proper consideration spiritually, morally, mentally, in every way to all those things that have happened to us.

The experiences that are now behind us and in our memory. So that we may, O Lord, prepare for whatever this new year has in store. We thank you, Lord, for your faithfulness.

For your unchangeable commitment to your own covenant promises. We build our hopes upon your unchangeableness. Even as you remind us in your word that you are the Lord.

[ 5 : 01 ] You change not. Therefore, we are not consumed. Lord, we thank you for your forbearance with us. For the many ways in which we know of your patience with us.

But we confess before you, O Lord, as we open this new year. That we did many things in the past year that we are now ashamed of. That our commitment to you was not what it should have been.

That we knew of ourselves as sinning against you in thought, word and deed on a daily basis. And we know, Lord, that this is our lot in the world. And yet we do come with the confession of our sin.

And ask that you would help us as we make this confession. And to depend upon the atonement that has been made for your people. In the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank you at the beginning of this year for him. For the way that he is majestic in his reign over all things. Now that he has succumbed into this world and taken out human nature.

[ 6 : 05 ] And died in the Roman place of his people. And risen from the dead and exalted to glory. Lord, we give thanks to you as our Father today. That you have made him head over all things to your church.

And therefore, Lord, help us to see. Even in a measure as much as we can. That whatever happens in the course of history. Is itself directing things towards.

The way in which he will have the preeminence at last. And in which your church will be glorified with him. We thank you, Lord, for that indissoluble bond between us.

And the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray today that that bond may be even more precious to us. And we know in this past year of many that have gone from our midst.

We think of those who used to gather with us. And have passed from the scene of time. We thank you today, O Lord, that we can come. To bear our burdens and our bereavements to you.

[ 7 : 08 ] And we do pray for those who sorrow. For those who at this time of year remember. Loved ones of times gone by. Who were taken from them in the course of time.

We know that this time of year, Lord, is a time for reflection. And that some of these reflections are poignant. And bring us painful memories. Yet also treasured things.

Treasured people. Treasured experiences. And we ask, O Lord, that our thankfulness may be increased. As we consider especially how you have led us and guided us.

And taught us and dealt with us as you saw our need. Bless us, we pray, today in this service. We give thanks for your word to guide us. We give thanks for being able to join in together in listening to your voice.

As you speak to us through the scriptures. Bless those at home, we pray. Granted, you bless them as they partake of the service. We give thanks for all who have shown interest over the year.

[ 8 : 11 ] That is by. In joining us online for services. For pre-recorded and live stream as well. And, O Lord, we give thanks for the many that come to pray for us.

Pray especially for the gospel. And for those of us who are set to proclaim the gospel. O Lord, our God, we thank you for these prayers. And we pray that you would hear us as we continue to pray for the gospel.

To have amongst us a time of prosperity. A time of increase. A time of blessing. We ask that you would now bless us as we wait upon you here.

And help us as we turn to your word. Help us, Lord, we pray, to know the guidance. The power of your spirit. Applying your word to us. Hear us, Lord, we pray.

And forgive our sin. For Jesus' sake. Amen. Our reading today is from the prophecy of Malachi. Prophecy of Malachi.

[ 9 : 17 ] And reading from chapter 3. And we'll read from verse 13 on to the end of the book, chapter 4.

So Malachi chapter 3 at verse 13. Your words have been hard against me, says the Lord. But you say, how have we spoken against you?

You have said, it is vain to serve God. What is the profit of outkeeping his charge? Or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? Now we call the arrogant blessed.

Evildoers not only prosper, but they put God to the test. And they escape. Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them.

And a book of remembrance was written before him. Of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name. They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts. In the day when I make up my treasured possession.

[ 10 : 20 ] And I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. Then once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

For behold, a day is coming, burning like an oven. When all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the Lord of hosts.

So that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name. The sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

You shall tread down the wicked. For they will be ashes under the soles of your feet. On the day when I act, says the Lord of hosts. Remember the law of my servant Moses.

The statutes and rules that I commanded him. At Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet. Before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.

[ 11 : 20 ] He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children. And the hearts of children to their fathers. Lest I come and strike the land. With a decree of utter destruction.

And I'd like us to give some consideration today to the words of verse 2. Especially the first part of it. But for you who fear my name.

The sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. It seemed very significant today when I'd chosen this verse to preach from.

That it was such a beautiful morning. And emblematic really of the contents of this verse itself.

Which gives us a picture of the sun of righteousness.

Which we'll see is a name for Jesus. And that sun rising to cast its wonderful light and warmth over creation. Malachi can be dated to the time of Ezra Nehemiah.

[ 12 : 23 ] In other words, it's a time after the Jews had come back from their captivity in Babylon.

The 70 years that they spent there. And Malachi is dated around that period after they had returned.

And it's similar therefore to the context in which you find Ezra and Nehemiah also setting out their ministries. It was a time of disillusionment.

A time when hopes seemed to have been dashed. Because they came back from captivity in Babylon. Expecting perhaps that things would be restored even better than they had been before.

And the prophecies and the promises of God's word had followed them into exile. And now back again to try and re-establish things back in Jerusalem. So they would have discouraged people.

And not only that, but they had succumbed to the temptation. Not all of them, but some had succumbed to the temptation to turn away from God. Which of course is the reason that they had gone into exile in the first place.

[ 13 : 27 ] But the disillusionment and the discouragement. The doubting in fact. You can see it there in the passage we read previously there in chapter 3. Where you have said, God is speaking to them here.

You have said, it is vain to serve God. What is the profit about keeping his charge? Or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? And to that extent they had really turned again from God with a dispirited mind that had simply decided, Well, what is the point?

It's not worth following this God anymore. And the book therefore of Malachi is written for such times as we are facing just now as well.

Because we've faced and are still facing this difficult providence of this pandemic. And although we know God is in charge of everything that happens. Nevertheless, it's so easy for us.

So tempting to succumb to that same temptation that they succumb to then. Where we begin to get so disillusioned. And we're wrestling with the implications of this pandemic.

[ 14 : 39 ] And struggling in faith perhaps at times. Or many people seem to be throughout our nation. Struggling with the question as to whether it's really worthwhile going on with following the Lord or not.

Why is the Lord doing this? What is the purpose for it? Why is it going on for such a long time? So many questions come into mind. And it affects how many people look at things spiritually.

So the book is very relevant. As indeed we always see scripture relevant. But the context for Malachi therefore in times of discouragement, testing. Times of temptation. It's very much a relevant book for our own context today.

And I want to look at two things. First of all the immediate context. Or the immediate application of it. Which was for the arrival of Jesus Christ. The arrival of the Son of God in the world.

The incarnation if you like. And secondly the extended application. The ministry of Jesus through the gospel. Which is what I want to deal with more than the first point.

[ 15 : 41 ] But it's important to notice the first point really is about the coming of Jesus. The coming of the Son of God into the world. Which is what we've been thinking of over the past week or so or more.

The incarnation. The Lord Jesus Christ. The Son of God taking human nature so that he would come to bear the sin of his people. And die the death of the cross. And rise from the dead.

And you can see the reference here to Elijah. Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord come. Sometimes in the prophets it's difficult to just see the distinction between the coming of Jesus the first time.

And the second coming on the day of judgment. They're sometimes kind of squeezed together. Somebody pictured it like looking at a mountain range from a distance. Where you find all the giant peaks as you look at them.

If you look from here to the mainland for example. It's something you can see. And they seem to be the mountains seem to be very close together. And yet when you go to that particular place. So you get nearer to them.

[16:46] You really then begin to understand that actually many many miles apart some of them. And it's the same with some of the prophecies in the Old Testament that speak about the great and awesome day of the Lord.

It can be applied to the coming of Christ the first time. It can also be applied and is relevant to the second coming. It's just by the way. But you see he's saying here Elijah the prophet will come before that great and awesome day.

Well Jesus himself taught as you find in Matthew chapter 11. That Elijah really was John the Baptist in terms of the prophecy. That Elijah would come before the Lord himself.

He was the forerunner of the Christ. And the title that's given here to Jesus. The son of righteousness. It's really a wonderful title. This is the only place in the Bible where you find Jesus described in these terms.

With this description. The son of righteousness. It's a new dawn.

[18:05] It's difficult for us to just understand what a great difference the coming of Jesus made in comparison with the Old Testament.

What a wonderful difference. What a wonderful addition there was to the revelation that God had given in the Old Testament. By the coming of his son. By the coming of Jesus himself.

The coming of Jesus was a new age. We're living in that new age of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. Which is a huge advance. A huge upward step if you like. In terms of God revealing himself.

And the light that Jesus brought in his own coming. By his teaching. By his person indeed being in the world. The way that that has self shed light on the Old Testament promises.

Is one of the things to note in the New Testament age. And of course he's called here as well the son of righteousness. Righteousness being one of the chief characteristics of God himself.

[19:08] Of Jesus the Saviour. But also of the kingdom of God. Jesus many times emphasized that himself in his ministry in the world. Where he spoke about the righteousness of the kingdom.

And how we need to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Or we will not enter the kingdom of God. And you remember in Matthew 6. That great counter to materialism.

And trusting in things that are tangible and material. Where he said seek first the kingdom of God. And his righteousness. That's the priority.

That's what Jesus is saying is central to a Christian life. And to the life of hope. Well here he's described as the son of righteousness. And the immediate application of that is to the coming of Jesus.

To his arrival in the world as the light of the world. The one who brought such a light to what was promised in the Old Testament. But I want to turn to the extended application.

[20:10] The extended application being the ministry of Jesus through the gospel. Because he is still the son of righteousness. As through the Holy Spirit he blesses his word.

And blesses the gospel. And blesses the witness of his people. And that's what we're thinking of at the beginning of this new year. A year that we trust will bring an end to the COVID pandemic.

A year that will bring on top of that much blessing spiritually through the gospel. And that's what the son of righteousness arising over us really indicates as well.

Think of it as Jesus coming with these healing in his wings. Of course the wings they refer to the beams of the sun. Just as if they were outstretched wings.

But that's the description that's given. The impact of this pandemic has been enormous. The impact in terms of economic, physical and mental dimensions to the impact.

[21:14] And it's difficult to measure at this stage just what an impact that has been. Although you can see it in obvious ways as well. We still don't know how long it will take the economy for example to recover from the amount of money that has had to be spent in countering the pandemic.

We don't know yet what a physical or mental toll it's taken on us as a people, as a society. And so the impact has been huge.

And in addition to that we can say the lack of impact is also a concern. Because what I'm talking about there is the lack of impact in terms as it seems at least from a distance for us. And seeing what's happening throughout the land. That there seems to have been a lack of spiritual assessment of what's happened. On the part of so many people it isn't really important in a spiritual or moral sense.

It's just something that's happened. It's just a pandemic. It's just a virus that's come from somewhere and affected and taken many lives and has affected many families in a negative way. [ 22 : 27 ] In an awful way. But how much is there of a spiritual assessment? How much is there of a questioning of things morally? How much is there of a searching for God? Of questions in relation to trusting in God and turning to God.

See this is Malachi preaching to the people of his day. And here what are people saying well what is the point? What's the profit of us keeping his charge? Keeping God's charge.

Let's just keep him out of it. That's still sadly what you see in many of the declarations. Many of the pronouncements. Many of the assessments that are made in regard to the pandemic in our own age.

And it's a concern to us as Christians that we don't find an increase as far as we can see in people. People actually speaking about the Lord, introducing the Lord into their conversation.

Especially those who are in positions of influence and power. And that lack of assessment, that lack of applying things spiritually should be something we bring and do bring to the Lord.

[ 23 : 27 ] Of course in prayer. So not much seems to have changed in that sense. Even that of course remains unknown. Because I know that many people have actually been taking part in online services in their own homes.

That weren't before that used to coming to church. That didn't have a commitment to church attendance. And we can only hope that that is something that's going to lead whenever we're able to come back as we were normally in church.

That we can see people who are more interested in coming to join together in worship. Which is such an important thing. As of course we're finding even to a limited extent today. And as we join together in thinking about what's happened.

And thinking about this ongoing pandemic. The impact it's had on our lives. We too are looking for a new dawn. We're looking for a fresh dawn. We're looking for Jesus to come and through the gospel bring his power to bear upon our situation.

And that hope is indicated here actually in the text. A fresh dawn of blessing through the gospel. We need the power of Christ. We need the power of God. We can actually have so much done by way of vaccines and medical professionalism.

[ 24 : 50 ] And all that's important about that. And it is important. It's vitally important. But as I've said before over the past months. The danger is that we actually once these things come on stream.

And people have the vaccine. And the Covid is pushed to the background as it were of our life nationally. The danger is that we'll think well we've made it. And that's it. It's behind us.

And that we haven't actually assessed it spiritually at all. And the danger is that our hope will not actually be in God himself. But in the things that he has providentially and wonderfully provided for us in countering the virus.

We need the sun of righteousness to rise over us once again. We need the beams of Christ and of his power in the gospel to actually come and rest upon us as a people.

Upon us as a nation. Upon us in our homes and families and individuals. Because that's the only thing ultimately that will save us. We mentioned in prayer the Lord's unchangeableness.

[ 25 : 54 ] Which really we mention it because it's there in verse 6 of the previous chapter. I the Lord do not change. Therefore you O children of Jacob are not consumed.

And what a great basis of confidence and hope that is. The Lord has not changed. Whatever has changed through this COVID pandemic. And much has changed.

And perhaps even much in regard to church practices will need to change. And go on being changed by what's happened. But God has not changed.

And all the way through the scripture you have that as the basis of the hopes of his people. Why do I have hope today? It's because I believe in and follow an unchanging God.

A God who is not going to be diverted from his commitment to blessing his people. A God who is not going to be thwarted by anything that comes. Whether it's pandemic.

[ 26 : 52 ] Whether it's an act of Satan. Whatever it is. This God is committed to his people. This God is committed to his kingdom. To building his church. Nothing's going to prevail against that.

However much it will be challenged. So the unchangeableness of God. Is something we carry with us into this new year.

And that's the power that we're seeking. To bless us as time goes on. The healing that Christ can bring to our land.

Is one of the main points that we need to pray about. In these months to come. The sun of righteousness. Shall arise with healing.

In his wings. And interestingly in the Bible you find. In terms of healing. You find the physical. We could say mental as well. But that side of things very often combined with the spiritual.

[ 27 : 52 ] It's interesting isn't it. When Jesus carried out some of his miracles. Like the woman who came and touched the hem of his garment. For example. You find the words that are used there.

Very interesting. He says. To the woman. Your faith has made you whole. And literally. The words there.

Made you whole. It's exactly the same verb that's used. For saved. Your faith has saved you. Some of the older translations have that. And you can see. The wonderful connection there.

The close connection between the healing. Physically or mentally. That Jesus carried out in these miracles. And the salvation. Of which he is also in charge.

So when he's talking there about being made whole. As you read that. You're thinking not just of mental and physical healing. You're thinking also of spiritual healing. Of salvation. Of the healing that involves forgiving our sins.

[ 28 : 50 ] Establishing us in righteousness. Giving us to walk in the ways of the Lord. Respecting the Lord. And that's why. The son of righteousness. Jesus with healing in his wings.

Is what we pray for. And anticipate. And hope for. In this year to come. But it begins. With the church. It begins with the church.

Yes we're praying. That people will come. Even through this pandemic. To think more about God. And to think in terms of. Coming to worship God. Whenever that's going to be possible.

For us to do so freely. Again. But. You notice here. It says. For you who feared my name. The son of righteousness. Shall rise.

With healing in his wings. He's addressing. Especially. Those people of God. Who in the days of Malachi. Were still. Faithful believers. In God. Surrounded by.

[ 29 : 47 ] Departure. From walking in faith. From following the Lord. Surrounded by. Complaints against the Lord. Surrounded by. This. Discouraging. And disconsolate.

Attitude. That we've mentioned earlier. Surrounded by that. These people were waiting. For something. These people were praying to God. These people were anticipating. Something. From the Lord himself.

And hoping that the Lord. Would come. And intervene. And bring his power. To bear upon. The situation. And when you look at that. Phrase.

You who fear my name. There are three things. I want to mention. Just before we close. Three. Three things that. That. That follow from that. It is to them.

Especially. That this is addressed. And it's to us. Especially. That these words. Are addressed today. As the church. Of God. As the professing church. Of Christ. As the visible church.

[ 30 : 43 ] Of Christ. In the world. First of all. A commitment. To godliness. Because the fear of the Lord. As we mentioned. Even through.

Our studies. In Ecclesiastes. Where it occurs. A few times. The fear of the Lord. Is one of the central. Descriptions. In the Bible. For a godly life. The fear of the Lord.

Being. Not being afraid. Of God at all. In a sense of. Slavish fear. But fear. In terms of respect. And all. And love. And commitment.

To him. Fear of. Disrespecting him. Fear of. Of. Misrepresenting him. Fear in terms of. Living.

In the sense. Of God's eye. Being upon us. Of God's word. Being with us. Fear in every. Sense. That you find. Christians. Committed.

[ 31 : 38 ] To the ways of God. And to holiness. Of life. So that's such an important. Emphasis for me. And for you. At the beginning. Of this new year. That as we wait. For the sun of righteousness.

To rise again. In power. We do so. As the people of God. We do so. As a people. Committed to. The Lord. And to loving the Lord. And to walking.

In a godly life. Those who fear the Lord. This is addressed. Specifically. To them. And of course. That includes. Mutual. Encouragement.

And one of the things. That we miss. Is being. Unable. As much as we used to. To be together. In fellowships. And mutual. Encouragements. Meetings. Whatever kinds.

They were. Apart from. The worship. As well. But. You notice. Even. Here itself. There's. In verses 16. And 18. Then those who feared.

[ 32 : 32 ] The Lord. Same description. Spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention. And heard them. And a book of remembrance. Was written before him. Of those who feared the Lord.

And esteemed his name. In other words. He's saying. Despite everything. That they were surrounded by. And all the discouragement. And. That. That. They were aware of.

They met often together. They feared. The Lord. So. Fearing the Lord. They spoke with one another. The idea of that. Is they. They gave. Encouragement. To one another.

To progress. In the life. They lived. To uphold each other. To actually. Bear each other's burdens. As the New Testament. Puts it. All of those things.

That. You associate. With that sort of. Fellowship. With that sort of. Mutual support. It's in this term. Those who fear the Lord. A commitment.

[ 33 : 25 ] To godliness. But that involves. Not just listening. To sermon. Not just reading the Bible. Although all these things. Of course are important. Also involves. Mutual encouragement.

It involves. Having a sense. Of belonging. To each other. If you like. So that we come. As they did. To speak often. One with another. Discuss the things of God.

Secondly. We're thinking of it. Being a concerned. Prayerfulness. A committed. Commitment to godliness. And also a concerned. A concerned. Prayerfulness. It's saying here.

But for you. Who fear my name. The son of righteousness. Will rise. In other words. He's saying. For you particularly. With reference. To you.

Who fear my name. I'm saying. I'm saying this in particular. God is saying. Through the prophet. To you. Who fear my name. To you especially. The son of righteousness. Will arise.

[ 34 : 19 ] And I think. There's built into that. An assumption. That they were praying. For this. That they were praying. For God's promises. To be fulfilled. For the Messiah. To come. For the son of God.

To come into the world. Oh that was. Wasn't distinct. At that time. In history. And that's why. We're mentioning it today. Because we come. As God's praying people.

And we're coming. With these prayers. That the son of righteousness. Will again be seen. And manifested. In its power. In his power. Over the whole. Of our society.

Indeed. Over the whole. Of the world. That the son of God. The son of righteousness. Will arise again. That he will. Actually. Ascend. Into the spiritual sky. As it were.

To such an extent. That many. Many more people. Will come. To be brought. Into the kingdom. Of God. Under the influence. Of Christ. Under the influence. Of the gospel. Under the influence.

[ 35 : 16 ] Of the righteousness. That God himself. Presents to us. In his word. And there's a concerned. Prayerfulness there. And over this year.

Let's make it. A point. Of prayer. For ourselves. That we. Plead with God. For the son of righteousness.

For the light. Of the world. For Jesus. Through the Holy Spirit. Through the gospel. To rise upon us. As a people. To come with his light. And with his warmth.

Because as a society. As a society. As a nation. Of people. As communities. Of people. Or as individuals. We need both. We need the light. And we need the warmth.

We have the cold. Of the pandemic. The cold. Of death. The cold. Of that environment. Where things are so difficult. So challenging.

[ 36 : 15 ] And we need the warmth. Of Jesus. To warm up our lives. To warm up our communities. Nothing else is going to do it. Nothing else is going to melt.

The ice. The frost. That has set in. In our society. Nothing less than. The son of righteousness.

Will do that. You see. The son coming up. On a frosty morning. Very soon. You see the droplets. Falling off the roof. Where the son hits.

The ice. And it melts it. Nothing else is going to do that. For us spiritually. The son of righteousness. Is what we need. He is the one. Who alone has the power. And that's why we plead with him. Lord arise over us again. Let your beams flood out. Warm us. Enlighten us. Lead us.  
[ 37 : 12 ] Change us. Make us better people. A concerned. Prayerfulness. Joyfulness. And there's finally.

A consequent. Joyfulness. Along with. This commitment. To godliness. And the concerned. Prayerfulness. You find the healing. That Christ can bring. To our land. Set out. In terms of. A consequent. Joyfulness. That's in the second half. Of the verse. But for you. Who fear my name. The son of righteousness. Shall rise. With healing. In his wings. You shall go out. Leaping like calves. From the stall. So if you have seen that. I'm sure. I remember when I. Worked on a farm. At one time. It was such an enjoyable. Moment. To see. Cattle. Calves. And. Older cattle as well.  
[ 38 : 06 ] Having wintered. Inside. Being let out. On a fresh. Spring morning. And honestly. It just made you. Double up. With laughter.

Watching them. Because they just went. Berserk. If you've ever seen. Cows dancing. That's when they do it. And calves. Of course. Skipping around. And for the first. Half hour or so. That's all you saw. Through these fields. All these. Cows and calves. Gambling about. Just going berserk. That's the kind of picture. You have here. Of. The revived. Church. Of God. That's what you've got there. When the sun of righteousness. Arises with healing. In its wings. You shall go out. Leaping like calves. You look at. The context. In the Bible. Where you find. Accounts of revival. Where you find. Reflections.  
[ 38 : 59 ] Of revival. Like you find. In the book of Psalms. For example. And when you find. The psalmist. Actually. Using similar. Expressions. To this. When. Psalm 1.

2. 6. Where. Seems to be. Certainly. A psalm. That's associated. With returning. From exile. And. The joy. That came into. Their experience. Then. When the Lord. Restored. The fortunes. Of Zion. It's. Perhaps better. I think. That's one of the places. The older translation. Might be best. When the Lord. Turned. The captivity. Of Zion. The church. Being in captivity. The church. The church. In a time. That's. Largely. Frozen. Spiritually. And the Lord. Turned. That captivity. In bringing. Them back. Then. Our mouth. Was filled. With laughter. And our tongues. With shouts. Of joy. Then.  
[ 39 : 52 ] They said. Among the nations. You see. The onlookers. Actually joined in. They were obviously. Very visible. To the onlookers. The joy. That. These returning.

People of God. Experienced. Was something. That was felt. Something. That was noticed. On the part. Of those. Who didn't belong. To them. But were seeing it. The Lord. Has done. Great things. They said. Among the nations. The Lord. Has done. Great things. For them. Yes. The Lord. Has done. Great things. For us. We are glad. And then. It turns again. To prayer. Because this is a reflection. Of past times. This is what the Lord. Did to us. And for us. But we want it done again. We want it repeated. We want something. Even better. We want it restored again. Restore. Our fortune. Turn again. Our captivity. Oh Lord. Like the streams. In the Negev. And so on.  
[ 40 : 46 ] To the end of the psalm. Well that's. The consequent. Joyfulness. Following the. Answer to. The prayers. For. God to really come. Again. With his power.

And. Just like the calves. Going out on that. Fresh spring morning. What a difference. It makes. When the Holy Spirit. Kicks into your life. When the Holy Spirit. Comes to bless his word. Above. What you've known before. When the captivity. Of the church. Is turned. And when you go out. Then. Like calves. From the stalls. Leaping. May this year. Be one way. We see this happening. Let's keep. Praying for it. Let's keep. Putting it. Before the Lord. That we will see. The son of righteousness.  
[ 41 : 45 ] Rising with healing. In his wings. That Jesus. Will come to be. Visibly. Noticeably. Spiritually. I mean. Evident.

To ourselves. And to our society. That our hopes. Will be realized. For the healing. That Jesus. Will bring to our land.

Healing in its beams. The light. And the warmth. Of Christ. Through the gospel. And so. That extended. Application.

Of the text. For you. Who fear my name. The son of righteousness. Will arise. With healing. In its wings.

May that be. Your personal experience. May it be. My experience. May it be. Our experience. Together. May it be. A year of leaping.

[ 42 : 40 ] A year of joy. A year of truly. Experiencing. The power of Christ. For our light. And our warmth.

Let's pray. Lord our God. We thank you. For the prospect. Of an increased. Blessing. On your part. And we pray. That that will indeed. Be our experience. As this year. Goes by. We don't know. Lord. What it will contain. We don't know. What people's reactions.

Will be. We don't know. Where we ourselves. Will be. Before. This year. Runs through. And we pray. Oh Lord. That you would.

Bless your word. Bless your gospel. Bless your people. And lift upon us. We pray. The light of your countenance. Shine into our hearts. Revive us.

[ 43 : 35 ] Quicken us. And give us. Oh Lord. The joy of our heart. To be realized. In seeing your hand at work. We pray this. For the congregation.

We pray it. For our own personal lives. For our homes. And families. For our neighborhoods. For our nation. And for those who lead us. As a nation too. Lord. Lift.

The light. On them too. May the son of righteousness. Rise in their lives. And flood light. And warmth. Into their souls. Hear us now. We pray.

And forgive. The many sins. For Jesus sake. Amen. We're going to sing some more verses. Just in conclusion again. This time from Psalm number 30.

Psalm number 30. And sing Psalms this time.

[ 44 : 31 ] Sorry. Psalm 30. And sing Psalms. From the beginning. Of the Psalm. O Lord.

I will exalt your name. For you have rescued me. You did not let my foes rejoice. And gloat.

Triumphantly. Lord God. In need I cried to you. And you restored my health.

O Lord. You brought me from the grave. And saved my soul from death. You holy ones. Sing to the Lord. Sing with. Out with joyful voice. When you recall his holy name.

Then praise him and rejoice. His anger but a moment lasts. Life long his favour stays. Though tears may last throughout the night. Joy comes.

With morning's rays. Sing to the tune. Saint Paul. Saint Paul. Saint Paul. Saint Paul. Saint Paul. Saint Paul. O Lord. I will exalt your name.

[ 45 : 31 ] For you have rescued me. You did not let my foes rejoice.

Saint Paul. In need I cried to you.

And you restored my health. O Lord. You brought me from the grave.

and saved my soul from death. You holy ones sing to the Lord, sing out with joyful voice.

When you recall his holy name, then praise him and rejoice.

[ 46 : 50 ] His anger but a moment last, lifelong his favor stays.

Though tears may last throughout the night, joy comes with morning's rain.

liquide. Let me just thank you again for your attendance at the service and for those of you watching at home and pray God's blessing for you in the days to come.

As you know by now, those who are here, please leave in the orderly way that we need to. We need to keep the social spacing, so just please go through here and also remember to use the antiseptic, to use the bottle that's actually on the stand out as you're leaving.

And again, a reminder, if you haven't already, you can contribute to the collection for the campaigners. Now for the benediction. And with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit, rest and upon and abide with you now and evermore.

[ 48 : 16 ] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 50 : 18 ] Thank you. Thank you. I'm very intelligent. I'm very intelligent. We did that. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Yes. Yes. Beautiful message. It's all. Okay. What do you have saw tonight?

So what? What do you have saw tonight? Absolutely. Oh, yeah. You're going to be encouraged.

You're going to be encouraged. You're going to be encouraged. Special. Special. I hope nobody will hear it today.

Well, of course. I'm sure. Still. Got a few online. Yeah. It's very encouraged. Great. Great.

[ 51 : 15 ] Great here. Great here.